

Frequently Asked Questions for Employers

1. Why do I have to file partial claims? Why can't my employees file for themselves?

Your filing partial claims is the fastest way for your employees to receive unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. When individuals file claims, the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) has to determine that they are not working due to no fault of their own. When employers file partial claims, the employer is affirming the employee is not working due to a lack of work and benefits can be paid immediately.

It is important for you to know that an emergency GDOL Employment Security Law Rule 300-2-4-0.5 Partial Claims was re-adopted on March 19, 2020 mandating employers to file partial claims online on behalf of their full and part-time employees who work less than full-time due to a partial or total company shutdown caused by the COVID-19 emergency. Employers who refuse to file partial claims are in violation of the rule and will be required to reimburse GDOL for the full amount of benefits paid to their employees.

NOTE: Employees who voluntarily choose to not come to work must file their own claims.

2. Which employees can I file for?

You may submit partial claims for full and part-time employees who are temporarily laid off or whose hours have been temporarily reduced because of a lack of work due to COVID-19. Employees must be expected to return to work when the COVID-19 emergency ends. They must also be United States (U.S.) citizens or non-citizens who are authorized to work in the U.S.

Do NOT submit claims for employees who:

- are on scheduled/customary vacation, scheduled/customary plant shut down, or scheduled/customary plan closure (O.C.G.A. Section 34-8-195).
- employed by a temporary agency and are currently working at your place of business.
- were employed in another state in the last 18 months.
- were employed with the federal government or on active military service in the last 18 months.
- are 1099 employees.
- are voluntarily out of work, e.g., quits, requested leaves of absence, self-quarantined, etc.
- have been permanently separated from your company.

3. How do I file?

File on the GDOL website using the Employer Portal. You must be a registered user on the Employer Portal with administrator or user privileges permitting you to submit partial claims. If your company is not registered on the Employer Portal, you must first establish an administrator account. Download the [Administrator Guide](#) on the Employer Portal login page and follow the step-by-step instructions. If a third-party service provider is the administrator on your account, ask them to add you as a user and give you the ability to file partial claims. If you are already a registered user on the portal, but are not currently permitted to file partial claims, contact your Employer Portal administrator for assistance.

Follow these steps to file partial claims on the Employer Portal:

1. Log into the [Employer Portal](#).
2. Select the employer account number under **Registered Account**.

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3. Select the **File Employer Filed Claims** link under **Common Links**.
4. Select your method of filing—Multi-Claims Upload or Single Claim Entry. You must download and use the GDOL Excel template for Multi-Claims Upload. The Partial Claims application will not retain your employee information when using Single Claim Entry. You must re-enter it each week.
5. Follow the on-screen instructions.

NOTE: See the *Employer Filed Claims Desk Aid* for instructions.

4. What information do I need to have available when I file?

You will need the following information for each employee:

- Name
- Social Security Number
- Address
- Date of Birth
- Whether or not they want federal and/or state income taxes withheld (GDOL will withhold 10% for federal and 6% for state taxes.)
- Earnings (Report gross wages—amount of pay before deductions—for any work they performed during the week for which you are filing. Report any leave pay, vacation pay, holiday pay, and/or earnings during the week in which it was earned, NOT during the week it was paid to the employee. Report any additional income employees are receiving to the GDOL, except Social Security benefits, jury duty income, and pay for weekend military reserve duty.

5. What do I tell my employees?

Advise your employees of the following:

- They do NOT have to file an unemployment insurance claim. You are doing that for them.
- They can elect to have state and/or federal taxes withheld by GDOL.
- They have the option of using direct deposit or the Georgia UI Way2Go Debit MasterCard®.
- Employees choosing direct deposit must enter their direct deposit information on the GDOL website by selecting **UI Benefit Payments Method** under **Individuals** on the [Online Services](#) page.

A personal identification number (PIN) is required. A letter (DOL-8475) will be mailed to them notifying them of their PIN. If they do not receive the letter or forget their PIN, give them the following instructions:

1. Go to dol.georgia.gov.
2. Select **Claim Weekly UI Benefits Payments. You will NOT claim benefits**. This online application allows you to establish a new PIN.
3. Enter your Social Security Number.
4. Leave the field labeled “If you have already set up a PIN, enter it here” blank.
5. Enter a 4-digit PIN of your choice in the field labeled “If you need to set up a PIN, enter it here.”
6. Re-enter your 4-digit PIN in the field labeled “Reenter for verification.”
7. Click on the Submit button.

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- Unemployment benefits are paid on a weekly basis. All weekly earnings over \$50.00 are deducted dollar for dollar from the benefit payment.
- They are NOT required to report to a career center, register for Employment Services on EmployGeorgia.com, or search for work.
- If they receive notification from GDOL that their claim is not monetarily valid due to insufficient wages **and** they know they have other employment in the quarters, they should contact their local career center for assistance.
- Claims for non-citizens cannot be processed until their legal presence in the U.S. is verified by Homeland Security. If Homeland Security cannot verify their legal presence using the information you submitted when filing their claim, the GDOL will mail a Request for Verification of Citizenship or Alien Status (DOL-5154PC) to the employee. They must submit a copy of the DOL-5154PC letter they received and the required documentation to the GDOL by the deadline stated in the letter to avoid delay or disqualification of benefits. See the *Employer Filed Claims Filing Instructions* for additional instructions.

6. The first thing I am asked is to enter my pay week ending date. How do I determine that?

UI benefits are paid on a weekly basis. You must establish a week ending date that GDOL will use for each week's benefits. It is recommended that you choose a date that coincides with the normal end of your pay period. Once you establish the pay period for partial claims, you will file for each pay period. There must be seven (7) days between payment week ending dates. The week ending must be in the past.

7. When can I start filing claims?

You cannot file until after the payment week has ended. Begin filing after the pay week ending date of the first week your employees are off from work or work reduced.

8. Do I have to re-enter my employees' information every time I file?

If you use the Single Claim filing method, you will have to manually enter the information on the Employer Filed (Partial) Claims application each week you file. If you use the Multi-Claim Upload filing method, you can upload an Excel spreadsheet using a GDOL template. This method saves time by eliminating the need to manually enter each employee's information each week. You can simply update their earnings information and upload a new spreadsheet for each week. You must use the GDOL Excel template. The template is available in the Employer Portal on the File Employer Filed Claims application.

9. Can I file partial claims for employees who have self-quarantined for fear of exposure to COVID-19?

No. Employees who voluntarily choose not to go to work must file their own claims.

10. Can I file for employees who has COVID-19 or has been exposed to the virus?

If you directed the employee to not return to work because of their exposure to COVID-19, you may file a claim on their behalf. If the individual voluntarily chooses not to report to work, he/she must file their own claim. GDOL will determine eligibility of benefits for such claims on a case-by-case basis.

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11. Will my DOL account be charged for the benefits?

You will NOT be charged for benefits paid on partial claims that you submit because of COVID-19. However, you will be charged for claims filed by your employees, and you will be required to reimburse GDOL for the total amount of benefits paid on individual-initiated claims.

12. Will these claims affect my UI tax rate?

The employer-filed partial claims will NOT affect your tax rate. Claims filed by your employees may affect your tax rate.

13. Can I submit a mass separation notice?

Yes. Mass separation is intended for employers who are permanently separating 25 or more employees on the same day for the same reason. If you are filing employer filed claims, then it is not necessary to submit a mass separation notice.

14. If I am the owner and a W-2 employee, can I file for myself?

Yes, if you are not working or your hours are reduced due to COVID-19.

15. How should I answer the question #21 “Is this claim being filed because of a federally declared disaster?”

Answer “No.” This question applies when Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) is available in a geographical area that has been declared a federal disaster area due to a natural disaster such as a tornado or hurricane.