

# A few basics about the Pennsylvania Unemployment Compensation claims process



## What is Unemployment Compensation (UC)?

The Pennsylvania Unemployment Compensation (UC) program provides temporary income for eligible employees who lose their job or have their hours reduced through no fault of their own. Both PA employers and employees pay taxes into the program, with benefits intended to help workers meet expenses while they seek new employment.

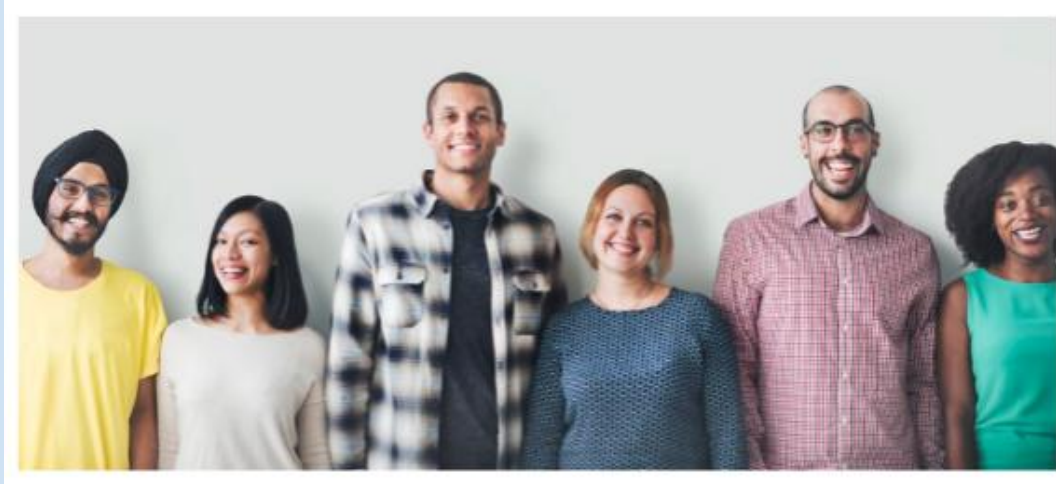
## **PA workers may be eligible for UC if they:**

- were laid off by their employer or had their hours reduced.
- were terminated, but not because of intentional wrongdoing.
- voluntarily left work because of necessary and compelling reasons, such as health, safety, or significant changes in work conditions.
- are able, available, and legally authorized to work in the US.



**Immigrants that are legally authorized to work in Pennsylvania  
ARE eligible to apply for Unemployment Compensation.**

UC will NOT affect citizenship status in any way, including eligibility of applicants for citizenship, visas, readmission to the US, or lawful permanent resident status (also known as a Green Card).



# Proof of work authorization to apply for Unemployment Compensation

Claimants will be asked for their A-number (alien registration number) and copies of their work authorization documentation. Claimants can submit color photos of whatever signed work authorization documents (front and back) they have as part of their online claim filing application.

They can also email their documents to **ra-liucpuc-greencard@pa.gov** as soon they file the initial claim. They can provide printed copies at an in-person appointment with a UC Connect staff person, or they can mail them to: **Mail Processing Unit 651 Boas St 5th Floor, Harrisburg PA 17121.**



Please note, Unemployment Compensation does not share any documents or immigration status with any entity. UC only verifies the Immigration status. If additional information is needed, claimants will be notified.

For more information on work authorization and documentation, visit the US Citizenship and Immigration Services website: [www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-processes-and-procedures/employment-authorization-document](https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-processes-and-procedures/employment-authorization-document)

## Replacing expired Green Cards

If claimants have an expired version of the Lawful Permanent Resident registration card (also known as the Green Card) they must replace it with a current Green Card (shown below.) Fill out and file Form I-90, Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card. The Form I-90 receipt notice can be used with your expired Green Card as evidence of lawful permanent resident status.



Example of 2023 Green Card redesign: The USCIS green card number is printed on the card's back. It begins with three letters and ends with 10 numbers as shown in the example at the top right, outlined in red.

# Where to file your UC claim:

- To file a claim online at the PA Benefits UC website, claimants can go to **www.benefits.uc.pa.gov**
- To file a claim by phone, claimants should call 1-888-313-7284. Mondays to Fridays from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. The best days to call are usually Thursdays and Fridays.
- If claimants are unable to reach someone by phone, they can email [UCHelp@pa.gov](mailto:UCHelp@pa.gov), with the subject line "Need help filing my claim." They should provide their phone number, and request a return call. When the UC Service Center calls, the number may appear to be blocked or unknown, so they should be sure to answer all calls. If the claimant provides a cell phone number, a text will be sent prior the call.
- To schedule an in-person appointment with UC staff through the UC Connect program, claimants can call 1-855-284-8545 Mondays to Fridays from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO FILE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

### ABOUT YOU



Social Security number

Home address

Phone number

Email address

### ABOUT YOUR RECENT EMPLOYER



Employer's name

Mailing address

Phone number

### ABOUT THE JOB



First and last day worked

Reason for leaving or working fewer hours

Gross earnings

ALT

LEARN MORE AT [UC.PA.GOV](http://UC.PA.GOV)



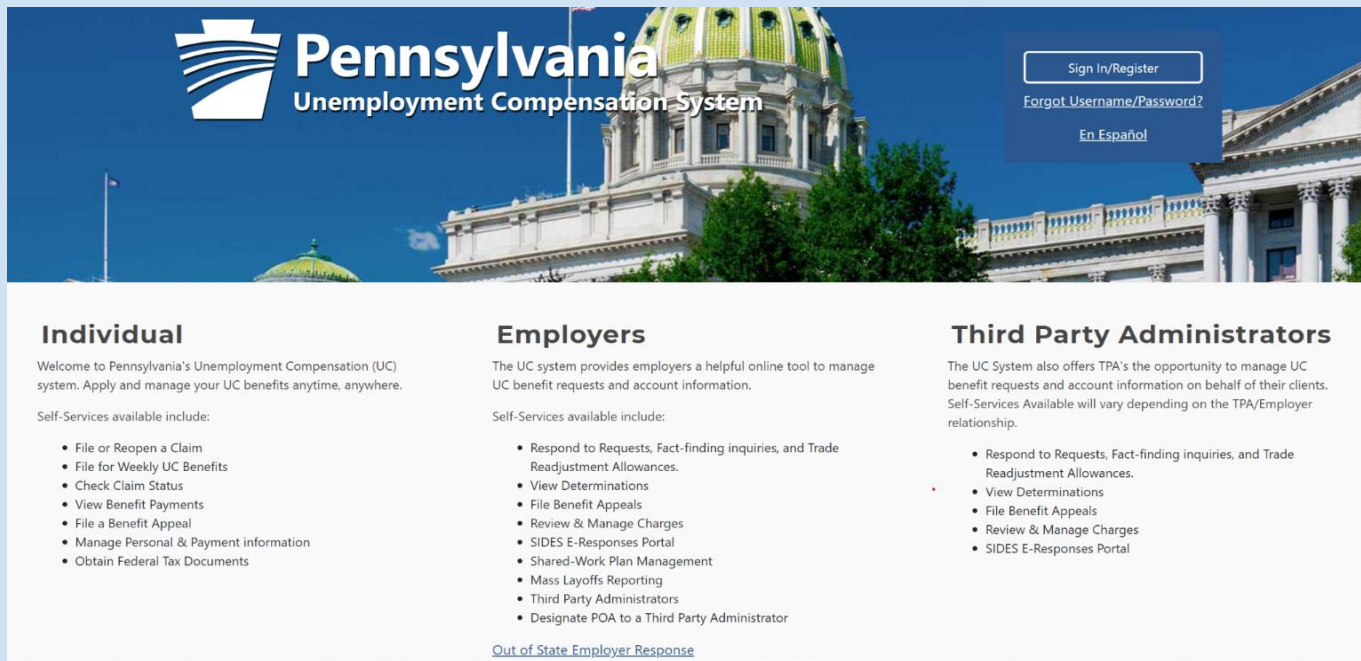
## If you do not speak English, interpretation is available by phone or in-person.

- Claimants can request an interpreter free of charge when they call the UC Service Center at 1-888-313-7284 or they can email [UCHelp@pa.gov](mailto:UCHelp@pa.gov) and ask for an interpreter, providing their phone number for a callback.
- Claimants can also ask for a conference call with an interpreter and a person of their choice, but the interpreter must be at least 18 years old.
- Claimants can also schedule an in-person appointment for UC assistance at a local PA CareerLink® office by calling 1-855-284-8545 (UC Connect program) and requesting an interpreter for the appointment.



# Filing the initial claim online

If the claimant has online access, they can go to **[www.benefits.uc.pa.gov](http://www.benefits.uc.pa.gov)**. They should click the top right button to register. This website is also available in Spanish (Choose “En Español” to switch to Spanish). **Claimants should be sure to save their username and password!**



**Pennsylvania**  
Unemployment Compensation System

[Sign In/Register](#)  
[Forgot Username/Password?](#)  
[En Español](#)

### Individual

Welcome to Pennsylvania's Unemployment Compensation (UC) system. Apply and manage your UC benefits anytime, anywhere.

Self-Services available include:

- File or Reopen a Claim
- File for Weekly UC Benefits
- Check Claim Status
- View Benefit Payments
- File a Benefit Appeal
- Manage Personal & Payment information
- Obtain Federal Tax Documents

### Employers

The UC system provides employers a helpful online tool to manage UC benefit requests and account information.

Self-Services available include:

- Respond to Requests, Fact-finding inquiries, and Trade Readjustment Allowances.
- View Determinations
- File Benefit Appeals
- Review & Manage Charges
- SIDES E-Responses Portal
- Shared-Work Plan Management
- Mass Layoffs Reporting
- Third Party Administrators
- Designate POA to a Third Party Administrator

[Out of State Employer Response](#)

### Third Party Administrators

The UC System also offers TPA's the opportunity to manage UC benefit requests and account information on behalf of their clients. Self-Services Available will vary depending on the TPA/Employer relationship.

- Respond to Requests, Fact-finding inquiries, and Trade Readjustment Allowances.
- View Determinations
- File Benefit Appeals
- Review & Manage Charges
- SIDES E-Responses Portal



**ID.me** +

## Sign in to ID.me

New to ID.me?

[Create an ID.me account](#)

Email

Enter your email address

Password

Enter password



☐ Remember me

For your security, select only on your devices.

Sign in

[Forgot password](#)

OR



[View more options](#)

## Identify verification through ID.me:

During the initial online claim filing process, claimants will be directed to create an ID.me account. ID.me is a digital network that helps people prove their identity. If they are an immigrant legally authorized to work in the US, they should be sure to have their appropriate identification documents available.

If they tried verifying their identity using Self-Service and weren't able to do so, they may have the option to finish verifying on a video call with a Video Chat Agent. Interpretation will be provided upon request.

Also, all the PA Careerlink® offices have an ID.me kiosk where they can do the process of verification there, but they will need to have the access code and/or the QR code that the system will provide at the time of selecting services in person. PA Careerlink® may have staff to help them.

When claimants complete ID.me, they will be redirected back to the UC claim form. They should answer all questions to the best of their ability and double check their information before entering it.

For more information about the ID.me network visit <https://network.id.me/>

## Immigration status question on the UC claim form

**The claimant should choose a citizenship status that best describes their status.**

The options are defined below:

- **Citizen of U.S. or U.S. Territory** – A person either born in the United States or a United States Territory, or a person who has become a naturalized citizen.
- **U.S. Permanent Resident** – A non-citizen who has been given permission from the United States government to permanently live in the United States without deportation, and who has a permanent resident card or an I-551 passport stamp indicating the individual's status.
- **Alien/Refugee Lawfully Admitted to U.S.** – A non-citizen who has been given protection by the United States government for a specific reason.



A screenshot of a web form titled "Citizenship:" with a red asterisk. Below the title is a dropdown menu. The menu is open, showing four options: "None Selected" (highlighted in blue), "Citizen of U.S. or U.S. Territory", "U.S. Permanent Resident", and "Alien/Refugee Lawfully Admitted to U.S.".

Citizenship
None Selected
Citizen of U.S. or U.S. Territory
U.S. Permanent Resident
Alien/Refugee Lawfully Admitted to U.S.

**Claimants can take a photo of their work authorization documents (front and back) and upload them as part of the claim.**

## Immigration status question on the UC claim form (cont)

If **U.S. Permanent Resident** is being chosen, the following drop down menu will pop-up and they will need to choose the type of documents that they have.

\*Citizenship: U.S. Permanent Resident

\*Selected Document Type:

- None Selected
- None Selected
- Certificate of Citizenship
- DS2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status)
- I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status)
- I-327 Reentry Permit
- I-551 Permanent Resident Card
- I-571 Refugee Travel Document
- I-766 Employment Authorization Card
- I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) in Unexpired Foreign Passport
- I-94 Arrival/Departure Record
- Machine Readable Immigrant Visa (with Temporary I-551 Language)
- Naturalization Certificate
- Other
- Temporary I-551 Stamp (on passport or I-94)
- Unexpired Foreign Passport

If **Alien/Refugee Lawfully Admitted to U.S.** is being chosen, the following drop down menu will pop-up and they will need to choose the type of documents that they have.

\*Citizenship: Alien/Refugee Lawfully Admitted to U.S.

\*Selected Document Type:

- None Selected
- None Selected
- Certificate of Citizenship
- DS2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status)
- I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status)
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- Other
- Temporary I-551 Stamp (on passport or I-94)
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# Weekly certifications: Option 1 - online at the UC dashboard

**My Dashboard**  
Welcome to My Dashboard. This page introduces you to system features and offers suggestions. Select from the items below to start customizing the content that interests you.

My Dashboard | Directory of Services | My Resources

▼ Unemployment Status

**Benefits Week 20**  
Nov 16th, 2024  
You have filed 19 weekly certifications on this claim.

Claim Information:  
Effective Date:  
Benefit Yr End:  
Claim Status:  
Claim Type:  
Balance:

**Claim Status**  
Results Claim review complete  
In Review  
Waiting for Review  
Claim Filed  
View Claim Details

**Claim Issues**  
Claim Issues are details in your claim that must be investigated [learn more](#)  
0  
Open Issues  
View Claim Issue Status

**Work Search**  
Unless you qualify for an exemption, you are required to apply for two jobs and participate in one work search activity each week, beginning with the third week in your benefit year.

**Work Registration**  
Unless you qualify for an exemption, you are required to register for employment search services on PA Careerlink® within 30 days after filing an unemployment claim.  
Register for or View Account

**File Certification**  
View Certification History

**Payment**  
View Payment History

**Appeals**  
View Appeal

File weekly certifications by clicking on the link at the bottom of the “File Certification” tile.

If claimants have internet access, after they file their initial claim for UC, every week they must go to their UC dashboard at **[www.benefits.uc.pa.gov](http://www.benefits.uc.pa.gov)** and file weekly certifications. They will be asked about their ability and availability for suitable work, part-time earnings, confirmation that they are doing work searches, etc. They must keep filing every week even if they are: waiting for a determination; OR if they have received an ineligible determination and they will appeal the decision: OR if the determination has already being appealed and they are waiting for the hearing date.

## Filing weekly certifications: Option 2: By phone call

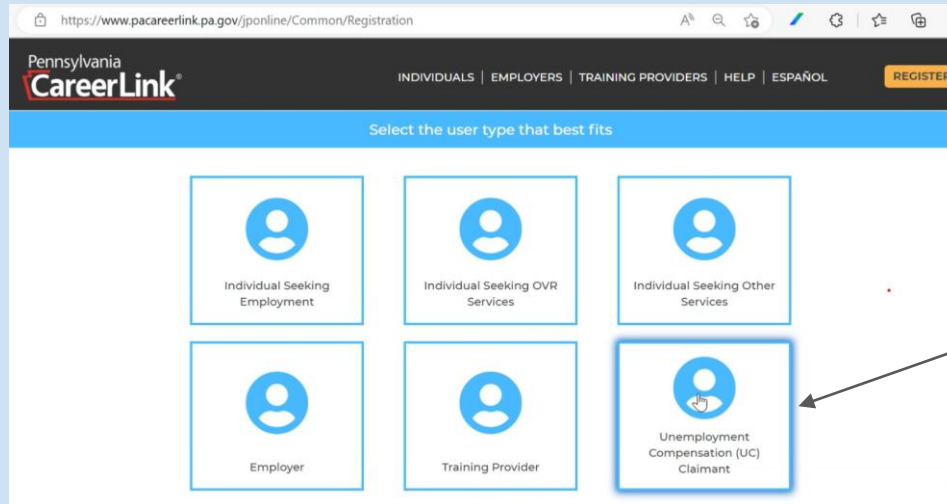


Claimants can also file their ongoing weekly certifications by phone through the Pennsylvania Teleclaims (PAT) system. They will need the UC PIN that is mailed out after the initial claim filing process. If the claimant misplaces the PIN, or they never received it, they should contact the UC Service Center to have a new PIN mailed to them.

After they receive the PIN they should call the PA Teleclaims every week at 1-888-255-4728 (English) or 1-877-888-8104 (Spanish) and enter their Social Security Number and their UC PIN to answer the work certification questions regarding their ability and availability for any work, any part-time earnings, their work searches, etc.

## PA CareerLink® work registration requirement

After filing the initial claim application, claimants will need to complete their work registration as soon as possible at the PA CareerLink® website, [www.pacareerlink.pa.gov](https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov) or at a CareerLink® office. Even if they have registered before, they will need to update their resume. They should be sure that they have fully completed the process and then download and save their confirmation page. **If claimants don't register within 30 days, they will be disqualified for UC benefits until they register. And remember: claimants will need to BOTH complete weekly certifications at the UC website AND also do weekly job searches throughout the duration of their claim.**



Click this  
box



# Determination of eligibility:

## Step 1 - Financial determination

The UC system will first determine the financial eligibility at the moment of the application. After the claim is processed a Financial Determination will be issued, including a weekly benefit amount that they will be entitled to receive **if** they are ALSO determined to be eligible based on the reason of separation (Step 2 - the Separation Determination). The benefit amount will be based on the claimant's wages and weeks that they worked in their base



~~Year~~ If the Financial Determination seems to be incorrect, if wages seem to be missing, or if an employer is not listed on the financial determination, claimants may file a wage protest without a Referee hearing or formal appeal. The wage protest must be filed no later than 21 calendar days after the mail date on the determination.

**How to file a wage protest:** Log in to the UC dashboard, go to the Unemployment Services section, and then select "File a Wage Protest." Claimants should upload proof of earnings such as W2s and pay stubs for the relevant period. After review, the UC Service Center will issue a new financial determination with an explanation of what they found. If the claimant disagrees with the results of the wage protest, they have another 21-day period in which they can file an appeal.

# Determination of eligibility:

## Step 2 - Separation determination

After the financial determination, the UC Service Center reviews information from the claimant and from the former employer to determine whether the cause of the separation qualifies the claimant for benefits. The review may take 4-8 weeks. **There are several types of very common separations.**

- **Layoff:** Elimination of a position due to an employer's lack of work to offer, a lack of employer funds, and/or because of an employer reorganization. Layoffs may be temporary, seasonal, or permanent. Sometimes the employer will not call a separation a layoff but a furlough, a "position elimination," or reduction of work hours to zero.



**Collect and submit ALL information you are provided by your employer regarding your layoff or reduction of hours.**

**Termination or Discharge**, means that the employer ended the employment.

For UC benefits to be denied to employees, employers have the burden of proof to show that the claimant was terminated for wilful misconduct and/or for deliberate violation of company policies.



- Unintentional mistakes or inability to perform tasks are not misconduct. Claimants can share testimony and evidence that they did their job to the best of their ability.
- Claimants can present or upload company policy documents to show that conduct for which they were terminated is not an official policy violation.
- Evidence that the employer did not follow their own policies regarding progressive disciplinary procedures, such as a series of warnings or counseling before termination, may be considered.
- Tardiness or absenteeism due to health or other valid reasons may not be misconduct. Claimants can present evidence to show that they followed employer's policies regarding timely communications and documentation of reasons for absences/tardiness.

**Resignation** means that the claimant ended their employment.

**To be eligible for UC, claimants must provide evidence of necessary reasons to quit, such as:**

- documented medical conditions that made it hard to continue that job but still allow the claimant to do other types of work.
- significant changes in work conditions from the time of hire, such as schedule, work location, responsibilities, pay, benefits, etc.
- unhealthy or unsafe conditions at the workplace
- ethical or professional standard violations by the employer.
- transportation problems that made it difficult to reach the workplace, such as bus route changes, car loss, etc.
- the need to care for family members, such as a sick relative or to stay home with children if daycare is not available.

**To be eligible for UC, claimants must also show that they made reasonable efforts to communicate their concerns to managers and other employer representatives and that they asked for changes or accommodations to keep their job that were then not provided.**

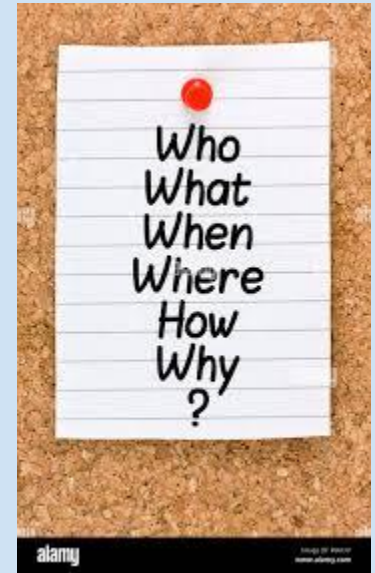


# Evidence of eligibility

To determine separation eligibility, the UC Service Center may interview both claimants and employers, send fact finding forms, and review available evidence that the claimant and the employer submit. **Timely responses to calls, messages, and fact-finding forms are very important!**

Important information and evidence to prepare and provide regarding claimant separation could include:

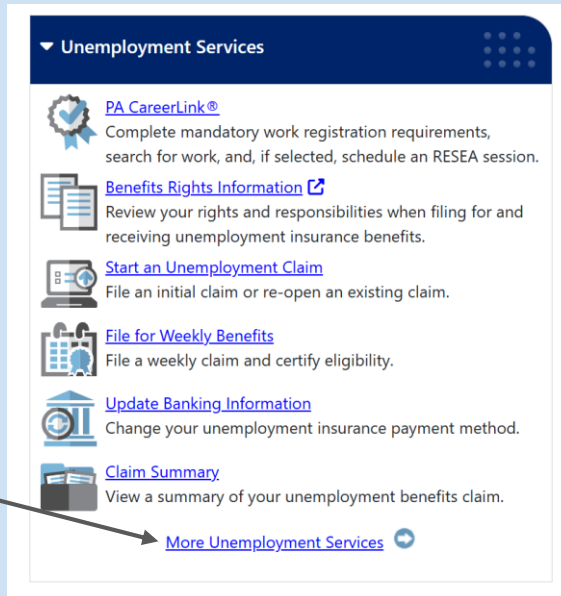
- A timeline of relevant events, meetings, conditions, and communications regarding causes of separation.
- Documents such as company policies, contracts, medical documentation, letters, emails, memos, app messages, disciplinary forms, texts, paystubs, timesheets, safety checklists, photos, etc.
- A list of the names and positions of those involved in the situation which led to the separation.
- Claimants may also wish to contact first-hand witnesses that would be willing to testify to incidents and communications relevant to the separation in case they need to appeal a separation determination.



# Filing an appeal

If a claimant receives a determination that they are not eligible for unemployment compensation, they can file an appeal ***no later than 21 calendar days after the date on the determination notice.*** An appeal hearing will be scheduled at which the claimant can present the types of evidence listed in the previous slides to show that the determination was based in UC Service Center error or was based on misrepresentation of the facts by the employer, witnesses, or employer representatives.

To file an appeal on their UC online dashboard, claimants can scroll down to the Unemployment Services section and click on “More Unemployment Services.”



On the next page, claimants should click on the gavel icon for appeals.





## Other ways to file an appeal

- **By fax** using the number on the determination notice.
- **By mailing** the Petition for Appeal in your determination letter to Mail Processing Unit, 651 Boas St, 5th Floor, Harrisburg PA 17121
- **By email** at [UCAppeals@pa.gov](mailto:UCAppeals@pa.gov);
- **In-person** by delivering a petition for appeal or appeal letter to a PA CareerLink® office.

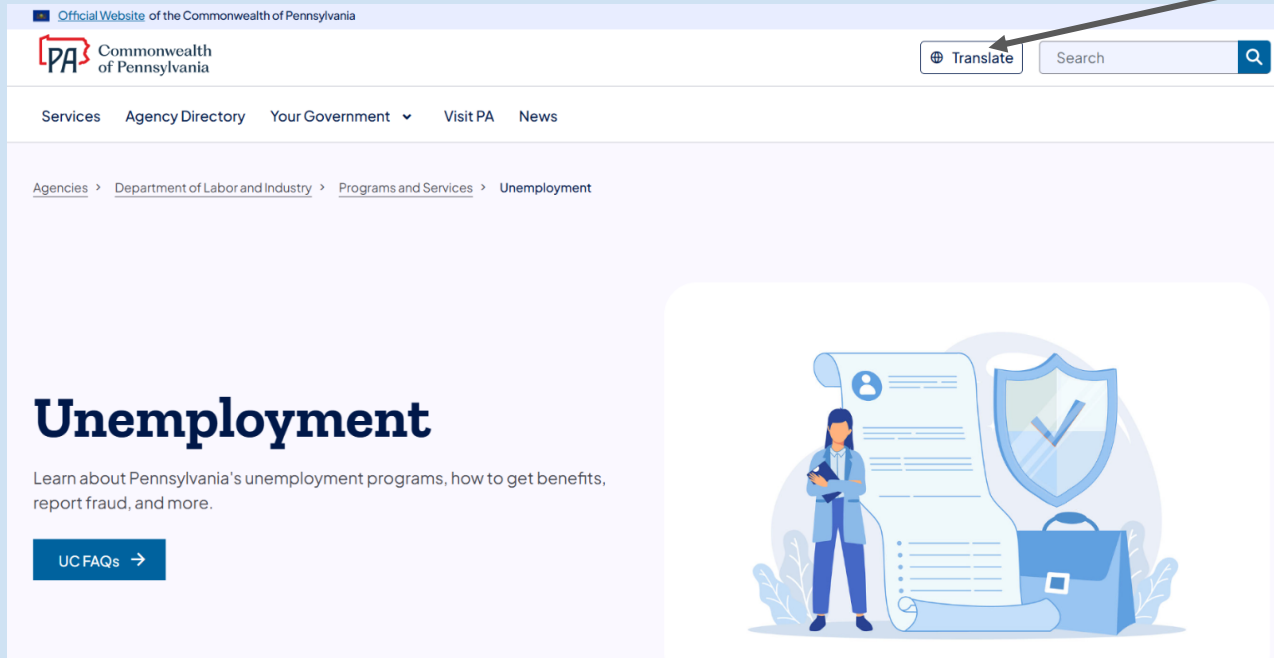
Include the social security or claimant's work documentation ID number, address, determination date, and reason for the appeal.

**If an interpreter is needed, the claimant should request one at the time of the appeal or when they receive the Hearing Notice. The interpreter is a free service that the Department provides. Claimants cannot bring their own interpreters.**

The appeal will be assigned a number and forwarded to a UC Referee. The Referee will send all parties a Notice of Hearing with hearing time and place, the issues, and parties involved. The claimant should gather any relevant documents and invite witnesses to testify as soon as possible, even if they don't have an appeal date yet.

For more information about unemployment compensation go to [www.uc.pa.gov](http://www.uc.pa.gov)

For translation into a variety of languages, click on the “Translate” button in the top right corner and select your preferred language.



You can also find information about the Pennsylvania UC system at the Philadelphia Legal Assistance (PLA) website: **UHelp.org**

The image shows a screenshot of the UHelp.org website. The header includes the logo "UHelp.org" with the tagline "Helping Pennsylvanians Navigate Unemployment Compensation". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: "Regular Unemployment Compensation", "Pandemic Unemployment Benefits And Extensions", "The UC System", "Find Help", and "About". The main content area has a "Home" section with a breadcrumb "Home / Home". Below this, there are four informational cards: "Information about regular unemployment compensation (UC)", "Information about pandemic unemployment benefits", "Information about the online UC System", and "Legal assistance or in-person help". To the right, there are sections for "Apply For Benefits" (with links to "Apply for regular unemployment compensation" and "File a UC weekly claim") and "Find Help" (with a link to "Click here for different ways to get help with your UC claim"). At the bottom, there is a search bar with a "Search" button and a link to "Learn About Important". A language selection dropdown menu is open on the right side of the page, showing options: "English", "Español", "简体中文", "Tiếng Việt", "ភាសាខ្មែរ", "العربية", "Kreyol ayisyen", and "Français". An arrow points from the "English" option in the dropdown to the "English" option in the language selection menu.

UHelp.org  
Helping Pennsylvanians Navigate Unemployment Compensation

Regular Unemployment Compensation ▾ Pandemic Unemployment Benefits And Extensions ▾ The UC System ▾ Find Help ▾ About ▾

Home  
Home / Home

What are you looking for?

Information about regular unemployment compensation (UC).

Information about pandemic unemployment benefits.

Information about the online UC System.

Legal assistance or in-person help.

Apply For Benefits

Apply for regular unemployment compensation

File a UC weekly claim

Find Help

Click here for different ways to get help with your UC claim.

Search

Search

Learn About Important

English ▾

Select Language

English

Español

简体中文

Tiếng Việt

ភាសាខ្មែរ

العربية

Kreyol ayisyen

Français