

On April 30, SAG-AFTRA Nashville President Mike Montgomery was part of a group discussion between representatives of the Tennessee entertainment community and officials from the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development. The meeting was hosted by the Tennessee Entertainment Commission and was intended to provide greater clarity about Tennessee unemployment resources and processes for members who might be gig workers, part-time workers or have multiple sources of income.

The Tennessee Department of Labor provided a summary of that meeting which is included below. We are sharing it with their permission.

TENNESSEE ENTERTAINMENT SECTOR Q&A | UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS | PART 1 & PART 2 APRIL 30TH, 2020

Industry Participates: IASTE, AFM, SAG/AFTRA, NFG, NSAI, Recording Academy, Music Artist Coalition, Artist Rights Alliance, Future of Music, Song Writers of North America

Hosts: Tennessee Entertainment Commission, Department of Labor & Workforce Development, WorkForce Essentials and Department of Economic and Community Development

Q1: Applicant receives W2s AND 1099s. The W2s make the system think that the applicant is an employee, even though they filed as self-employed. Applicant receives a letter from TN dept of labor and workforce asking them to submit a “notice of separation and wage” request. To do this, they need to be registered with the state as an employer and have an EAN number, which they don’t have. So, they hit a dead end.

If they are self-employed and receive a notice of separation and wage request on themselves, they don’t need to do anything. No response is required to complete the processing of their claim. If they own their own business don’t respond to the letter.

Q2: If you apply for state UI are you automatically qualified for and enrolled for the PUA benefits?

If someone files for unemployment and is not monetarily eligible for regular TUC benefits, then they will be automatically enrolled in PUA. If they are eligible for TUC, they will not be automatically registered for PUA.

Q3: Unemployment Extension: Under the CARES Act, states are permitted to extend unemployment benefits by up to 13 weeks under the new Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) program. Several of our members filed for unemployment in January and have recently exhausted their eligibility for regular unemployment and have tried to apply for the 13-week extension. They are unable to find where to do so on the website and, when completing the weekly certification, receive notice that their benefit payment is \$0. Do they need to reapply or will benefits be an automatic extension under the CARES Act and If they are no longer eligible for any unemployment benefits, is there a way for them to still receive the weekly \$600 pandemic payment?

The department is currently working to implement the PEUC program. If claimants have continued to certify weekly since they exhausted benefits, they will automatically be set up once the program is ready. If not, they will need to reapply.