



Real Estate Q&A on Unemployment Benefits

Source: Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development

1. What should a REALTOR® do if they receive a commission check from the previous month? Will that disqualify them from drawing unemployment?

You are required to report money when you earn it, not necessarily when you get paid. If you receive a commission check April 15, for the month of March, the wages would be reported for March, and would not impact your April weekly certifications.

2. If I have a closing one week, but no more business in the foreseeable future, how does that affect my UI benefits? What is the maximum amount you can earn in a week under the pandemic unemployment benefits and still receive unemployment?

You are required to report your earnings each week during certification. Each claimant has an earning allowance based on their weekly benefit amount. For example, the earning allowance for the maximum weekly benefit of \$275 is \$68.75. Anything you earn over that amount will be deducted from your benefits. If you earn an amount equal to or greater than your weekly benefit amount, you will be disqualified for the week.

3. Can REALTORS® continue to do real estate business if it is not producing income (i.e. providing information on a listing, taking a listing, etc.) if receiving unemployment?

Yes, you can, you would only need to report actual wages earned.

4. We just received a Notice of Separation and Wage Request (Unemployment Compensation) for one of our agents. The form requests a start and end date of employment. We have received information regarding unemployment benefits becoming available to independent contractors but are not sure how to annotate the dates.

If the employee was laid off due to COVID-19, you do not need to respond to the separation and wage request. A response will delay benefits. Independent contractors may file claims. They need to report the last physical day of work.

5. What are some general changes on the form that would pertain to REALTORS®?

[THIS VIDEO](#) addresses those changes.

6. For REALTORS®, would a housing lead qualify to meet the job search criteria?

There is currently no weekly job search required to receive unemployment benefits.

7. As you know, NAR has guided us that independent contractors DO qualify, and they do not have to put their license in Inactive status. Can they apply “b/c business has dropped” and still keep doing real estate-related activities?

You can still keep doing real estate-related activities, you just have to report any earnings that come from doing business.