Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims for the Three-State Region

For the week ending October 3, workers filed 43,694 initial UI claims (NSA) in our three-state region — fewer than the prior week’s 51,954 (revised), but far below the historic peak of 599,446 (revised) for the week ending March 28.

However, workers also filed 35,691 initial Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claims for the week ending October 3 in our three states (Pennsylvania accounted for 24,660 of these PUA claims; see note on the next page). The PUA program provides benefits for workers who are not eligible for regular UI benefits.

Initial UI claims plus initial PUA claims were 79,385 for the week ending October 3, 2020. Prior to the pandemic, the 52-week average of initial UI claims was about 24,000 for the week ending March 14.

Compared with the prior week, initial UI claims across our three states:
- fell to 1,658 from 1,815 (revised) in Delaware;
- fell to 22,715 from 27,184 (revised) in New Jersey; and
- fell to 19,321 from 22,955 (revised) in Pennsylvania.

For the week ending September 26, continued UI claims in our three-state region fell to 755,385 (NSA) — from the prior week’s 831,937 (revised).

Compared with the prior week, continued UI claims across our three states:
- fell to 25,845 from 26,824 (revised) in Delaware;
- fell to 279,472 from 322,414 (revised) in New Jersey; and
- fell to 450,068 from 482,699 (revised) in Pennsylvania.

For the week ending September 19, workers in the three-state region also filed continued claims in these special programs:
- 1,205,284 PUA claims (Pennsylvania accounted for 799,173 of these PUA claims; see note), and
- 141,701 Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) claims. The PEUC program provides additional weeks of benefits for workers whose regular benefits have expired.

Total continued UI claims for the week ending September 19 fell to 2.2 million compared with a 52-week average of about 200,000 for the week ending March 14.
Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims for the U.S. (see note below about California’s estimates)

For the week ending October 3, workers filed 804,307 initial UI claims (NSA) — more than the prior week’s 798,995 (revised). Workers also filed 464,437 initial PUA claims for the week ending October 3 — for a total of 1,268,744 initial claims. The 52-week average of initial UI claims was about 215,000 for the week ending March 14. Initial UI claims set a historic peak of 6,211,399 (revised) for the week ending April 4.

Continued UI claims for the week ending September 26 fell to 10,612,021 (NSA) from the prior week’s 11,622,301 (revised). The 52-week average of continued UI claims was just 1.7 million for the week ending March 14. However, for the week ending September 19, a total of 25.5 million continued claims were filed from all programs, including:

- 11.4 million PUA claims, and
- 2.0 million PEUC claims.

Continued UI claims typically fall slowly from recession peaks. During the Great Recession, continued UI claims peaked at 6.5 million and about five years passed before continued UI claims returned to pre-recession levels.

Notes:

PUA claims data for any given week may include backdated claims from prior weeks.

California, with roughly one-fourth of the nation’s UI claims, has stopped reporting weekly estimates while the state’s procedures are being enhanced. Until California resumes reporting, the national weekly estimates will incorporate prior California estimates reported as of the week ending September 19. [See Technical Note: https://oui.doleta.gov/press/2020/100120.pdf.]

Source:

Initial and continued (UI) claims are gathered by individual states and are typically released on Thursday mornings at 8:30 a.m. by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor.

https://www.dol.gov/ui/data.pdf
ASA Weekly Staffing Index

The ASA Weekly Staffing Index rose to 81.0 for the week ending September 27. The index has risen steadily since hitting a low of 59.6 for the week ending April 26. The index continued to track above the record low levels that spanned much of the latter half of 2009.

The year-over-year change in this index was -16.5 for the week ending September 27. The year-over-year change has slowly narrowed since late June (at -26.6), after rebounding more quickly from a low of about -36.5 in late April through early May. The year-over-year change in this index was -8.0 points for the week ending March 15.

Sources:
The ASA Staffing Index tracks weekly changes in temporary and contract employment and is typically released on Tuesday mornings. The index is generated from a survey of U.S. staffing firms by the American Staffing Association. 

americanstaffing.net/staffing-index
americanstaffing.net/index