

COVID-19: UNEMPLOYMENT UPDATE



Data and Information current as of October 26, 2020

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www.montgomerycountymd.gov/olo

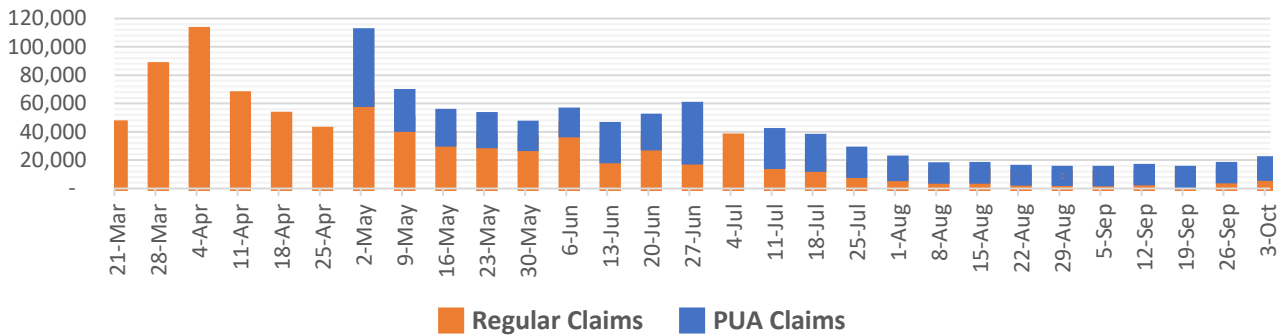
NEW WEEKLY UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS

The charts below show the number of new unemployment insurance claims (UI) filed weekly in Maryland and in Montgomery County since mid-March 2020. Data include regular state UI claims and UI claims through two federal programs adopted to augment state UI benefits during the pandemic – PUA and PEUC claims. The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program provides UI benefits to workers who previously did not qualify (e.g., self-employed, contract and gig workers). The Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) program provides unemployed workers an additional 13 weeks of UI benefits beyond normal state benefits. Maryland began accepting claims for PUA and PEUC claims beginning in May. Note – the federal data on Maryland PEUC claims is inconsistent with state data and are not included here.

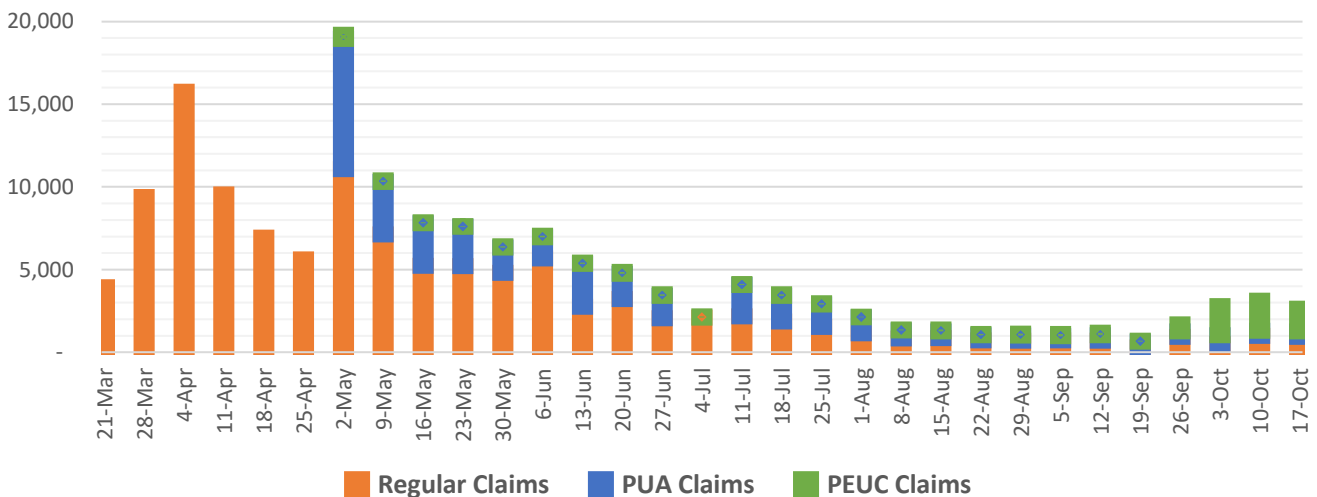
In Montgomery County, PEUC claims have increased in recent weeks because workers who first became unemployed at the beginning of the pandemic have exhausted their 26 weeks of state UI benefits and have begun collecting an additional 13 weeks of benefits under the federal PEUC program.

Sources: <https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/archive.asp>; <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/uicounty.shtml>

Maryland New Weekly Unemployment Claims



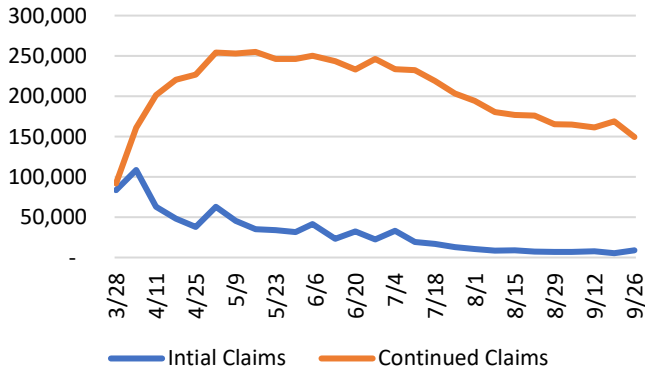
Montgomery County New Weekly Unemployment Claims



CONTINUED REGULAR UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS IN MARYLAND

“Continued unemployment claims” measure the number of people collecting regular unemployment benefits on a weekly basis. These data are released one week later than initial claims data and are available at the state level. Continued claims increased in mid-September to 169,032 before closing out the month with a decrease of 19,510 claims. As of September 26th, continued unemployment claims in Maryland totaled 149,522, a decrease of 9.7% (16,082 claims) compared to end of August.

Maryland Continued Unemployment Claims



Source: U.S. Departments of Labor, <https://www.dol.gov/ui/data.pdf>

Maryland Continued Unemployment Claims (May – Sept. 2020)

Report Period Ending	No. of Continued Claims	Decrease From Prior 4-week Period
May 30	246,535	--
July 4 th	233,850	-12,685 (-5.2%)
August 1	194,391	-39,459 (-16.9%)
August 29	165,604	-28,787 (-14.8%)
September 26	149,522	-16,082 (-9.7%)

FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS...

As of late October 2020, another federal stimulus program with enhanced unemployment benefits has not materialized. Based on a presidential memorandum signed by President Trump on August 8, 2020, Maryland was able to provide an additional \$300 in weekly unemployment benefits to workers who qualified to collect at least \$100 in weekly state unemployment benefits. The program was only available for six weeks – from the week ending August 1, 2020 through the week ending September 5, 2020. Funds were paid for through the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Disaster Relief Fund.

Many news sources indicate it is unlikely that an agreement for a new stimulus program will be reached before the November 3, 2020 election in eight days.

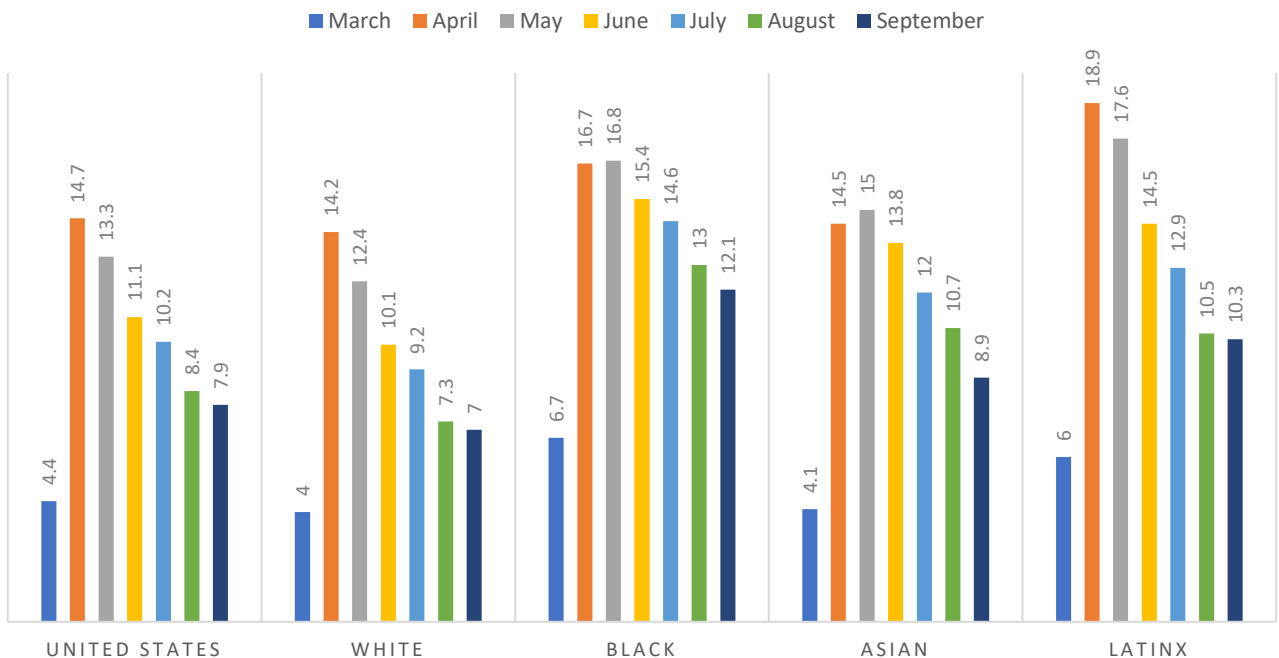
Sources: <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/claimfaq.shtml#uicovidfaq> (under Federal Lost Wages Assistance); <https://www.cnet.com/personal-finance/we-are-waiting-for-the-final-yes-stimulus-negotiators-still-optimistic-a-week-before-election/>; <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/us/politics/congress-trump-stimulus-deal.html>

THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION – August 2020

Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) show that impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the U.S. labor market in September 2020. Employment in the U.S. rose by 1.4 million in August and 661,000 in September. The national unemployment rate declined half a percent from August to September – from 8.4% to 7.9%. Compared to February 2020, however, the September 2020 unemployment rate was 3.5 percentage points higher and the number of unemployed workers was 6.8 million higher.

The pandemic recovery has impacted worker groups differently. The September 2020 unemployment rate among White workers is 3 percentage points higher than it was in March 2020 (7.0% vs. 4.0%). At the same time, while lower than the August 2020 unemployment rate, the September 2020 unemployment rate for Black workers is 5.4 percentage points higher than it was in March 2020 (12.1% vs. 6.7%) and is 5.1 percentage points higher than the September 2020 unemployment rate for White workers. The unemployment rate for Latinx workers was almost unchanged from August to September 2020 – moving from 10.5% to 10.3%. The unemployment rate for Asian workers was down almost two percentage points – moving from 10.7% to 8.9%.

U.S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, 2020 (%)



Source: <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empst.pdf>

INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION DATA FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) CLAIMANTS The Maryland Department of Labor reports total UI claims and select industry and occupation data for UI claimants by county (based on employment). In Montgomery County, MD DOL reported a total of 133,310 claims between March 1st and September 12th: **79,410** regular UI claims; **52,750** Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claims; **2,050** Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) claims; and **520** Extended Benefits (EB) claims. The MD DOL has not updated the dataset beyond September 12th. For a description of industry and occupation data, see the September 2020 Unemployment Update available at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/olo/>.