



DEPARTMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
UI POLICY & PERFORMANCE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: June 30, 2023

Rescission(s): None

Reference Number: UIPP 2023.03

To: All DUA Managers and Staff

From: Emmy Patronick, Director of UI Policy and Performance

Subject: Maximum Allowable Benefit Weeks for New/Initial Unemployment Claims

1. **Purpose:**

To inform the agency of a change in the maximum allowable benefit weeks for new/initial Unemployment claims

2. **Attachments:**

None

3. **Background:**

Massachusetts General Laws 151A, Section 30, provides guidance on how to calculate the potential duration of weeks on an unemployment insurance (UI) claim. In 2016, the Commonwealth amended this law to reduce the potential duration of a claim from 30 weeks to 26, when the twelve-month average unemployment rate in the metropolitan areas is equal to or less than 5.1%. As you may be aware, the criteria in this section of the law has occurred.

4. **Action:**

UI initial claims filed on or after July 2, 2023, will have a maximum allowable period of 26 weeks to receive benefits. When the twelve-month average unemployment rate is greater than 5.1%, it will revert to a potential maximum number of 30 weeks. Since we rely on an automated monetary review process, this change will seem part of the normal business process without effecting the claimant's due process rights.

As a reminder, a claimant who requests a predate because they would like to have the previous duration calculation used on their claim **will not** have a valid “good cause” reason for backdating the claim.

This link [FAQ's - Change in Maximum Allowable UI Benefit Weeks](#) contains useful information to learn more about this change.

5. **Questions:**

Please contact the UI Policy and Performance Department with any questions regarding this subject.