

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:

Pandemic Unemployment Debt Forgiveness in NM

updated July 2026

Everyone who received unemployment benefits in New Mexico during the COVID-19 pandemic should check their unemployment account to make sure they do not have an outstanding debt.

Tens of thousands of New Mexican workers were unfairly told they owed money back after receiving pandemic unemployment benefits, not because of anything they did wrong but due to administrative errors by the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS).

Thanks to a settlement in the *Duran v. New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions* (DWS) class action lawsuit, **an estimated 60,000 workers may qualify to have that debt forgiven or get refunds** for money they have already repaid. In fact, thousands of workers have gotten refunds and/or forgiveness from DWS already, but many more are still eligible to apply!

Important Things to Know

- **Many people who are eligible for relief never received information from DWS** about the lawsuit or the waivers. Even if you never received notice, you might have a debt on your account that could be forgiven.
- **If you are currently receiving debt collection notices from DWS, you still might be eligible** for forgiveness, and you should apply.
- **Anyone who believes they have been wrongfully denied forgiveness should contact us** at the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty. Call us at 505-255-2840.

You may qualify for relief if:

- You received federal pandemic unemployment benefits (like PUA, PEUC, FPUC) between 2020–2021, and
- You were told you had an overpayment, and
- You did not commit fraud

Applying is easy

You can apply over the phone, online through your Unemployment Insurance (UI) portal, or in person.

You have until February 21, 2027 to apply.

If you do not apply by the deadline, the debt will remain on your account and it could be taken out of your future unemployment benefits or tax returns.

Questions

For questions about your individual case, contact DWS directly:

-  Call 1-877-664-6984
-  M–F, 8am–4:30pm
-  Visit a local DWS or America's Job Center New Mexico office