



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* ATLANTA



CENTER FOR

WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

ASK US ANYTHING



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* ATLANTA



CENTER FOR

WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

ASK US ANYTHING SERIES

Unemployment Trends and Effective Unemployment Insurance
Approaches

May 20th, 2020

~WELCOME TO THE CONVERSATION~



ASK US ANYTHING

Mission: Focus on employment policies and labor market issues that affect low- and moderate-income populations.

Function: Bridge between research and practice *across the entire Federal Reserve System*. Connect research, business and policymakers with innovative approaches to create economic opportunity through education and employment.

Launched on October 2017



Stuart Andreason
Director

Stuart.Andreason@atl.frb.org



Sarah Miller
Senior Adviser

Sarah.Miller@atl.frb.org



Pearse Haley
Analyst

Pearse.Haley@atl.frb.org



Katherine Townsend
Analyst

Katherine.Townsend@atl.frb.org



Ask Us Anything - Conversational Series:



Regular sessions covering various topics focused on workforce supports, economic mobility and resilience.



Aim to be conversational. Light presentation, heavy discussion.



Bring your thoughts. Bring your insights. Bring your voice.



Shed light on challenges you're facing and solutions you're implementing.



We might not have all the answers. We are listening and responding through research, data and discussion. We will keep the conversation going.






Today's Conversation




Welcome,
Alex
Camardelle



National Trends

-  Data Download
-  Understanding the Numbers
-  Claims Dashboard Utility

Georgia On My Mind

-  Pre-COVID-19 State of the State
-  Demand and Policy Responses
-  Looking to the Future

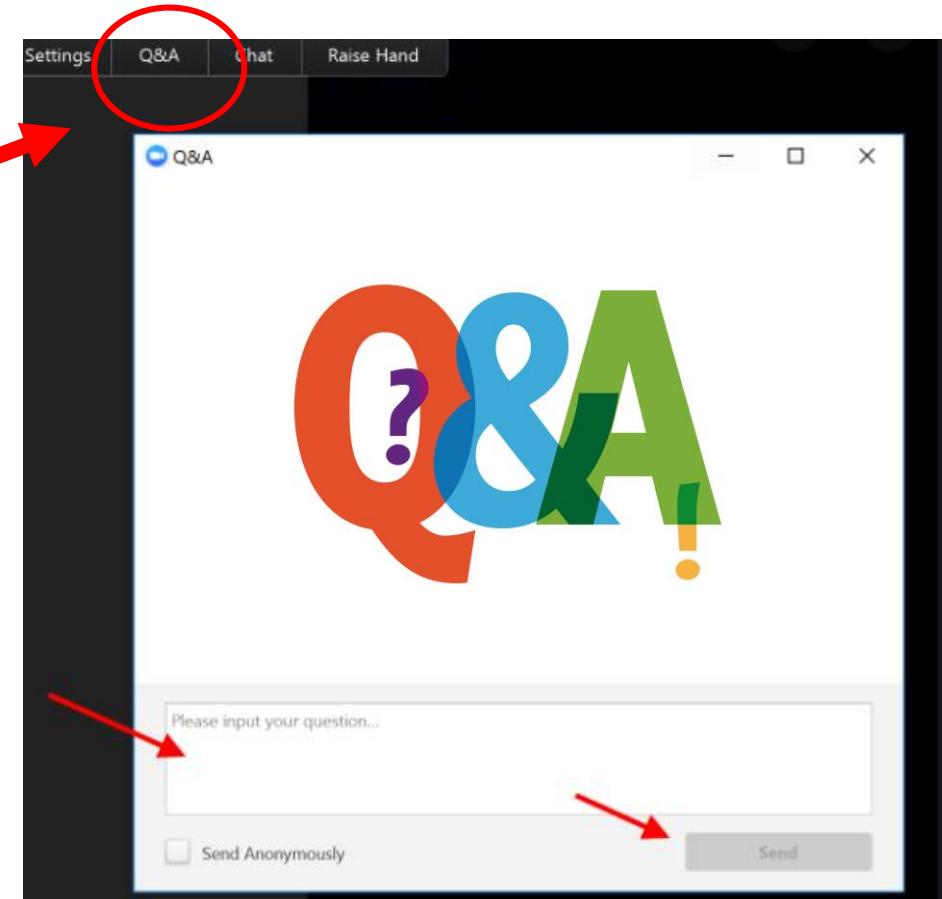


Quick Reminder

Share comments, ideas, questions. Use the Q&A button at the top of your screen

We will do our best to get to all of your questions live.

Full recording with the slide deck and a digest of Q&A will be sent out.





ASK US ANYTHING

On the Next Ask Us Anything...

**SAVE THE
DATE**

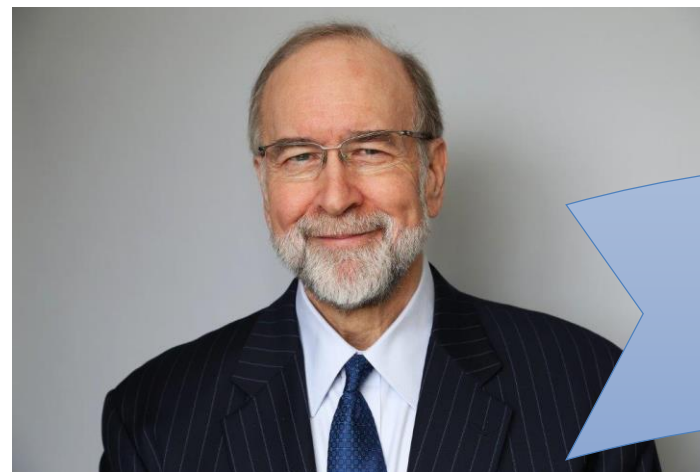
Lessons from the Great Recession

Fireside chat with Jane Oates and Carl Van Horn

President,
WorkingNation,
Former ETA Asst.
Secretary



Director, Heldrich
Center for Workforce
Development at
Rutgers University



Wednesday, June 17th 2 p.m. (ET)

**REGISTER
NOW!**

Register for this (and future) sessions here:

<https://www.frbatlanta.org/cweo/events>



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* ATLANTA



CENTER FOR
WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

National Unemployment Trends

Current State of Affairs

Expanded Unemployment Insurance:

- [FPUC - Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation](#)
- [PUA - Pandemic Unemployment Assistance](#)
- [Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation](#)

Other Forms of Assistance:

- ✓ Support for Short Time Compensation (Work-Share Programs)
- ✓ Training Waivers for Unemployment Insurance Claimants

Introduced Legislation:

- ❖ [HEROES Act](#) – including 2.75B in workforce funding
- ❖ [Relaunching America's Workforce Act](#) – 15B in workforce investments

Tracking Initial and Continued UI Claims

Unemployment Claims Monitor



Latest Weekly Claims Data

Initial Claims (5/9/2020)

Seasonally Adjusted: 2,981,000

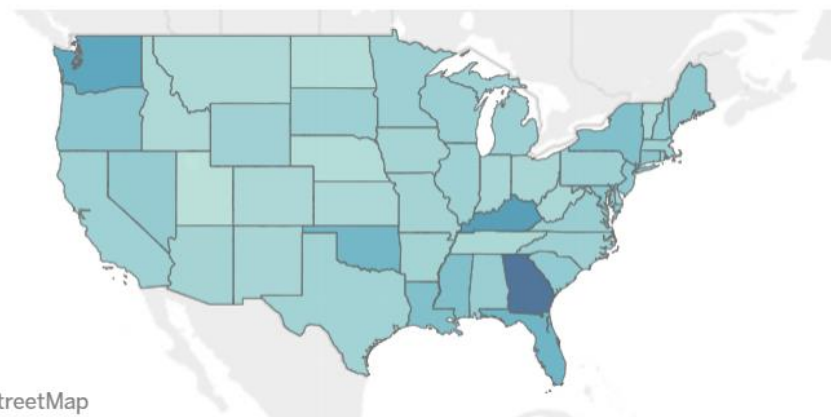
Non-Seasonally Adjusted: 2,344,896

Insured Unemployed (5/2/2020)

Seasonally Adjusted: 22,833,000

Non-Seasonally Adjusted: 20,823,141

Select One or Multiple States to Display Greater Detail on Unemployment Insurance Claims and Claimants:



© OpenStreetMap

Share of covered employed who filed an initial claim



Select A Date Range for All Charts Below:

1/9/2020

5/9/2020



Tracking Initial and Continued UI Claims

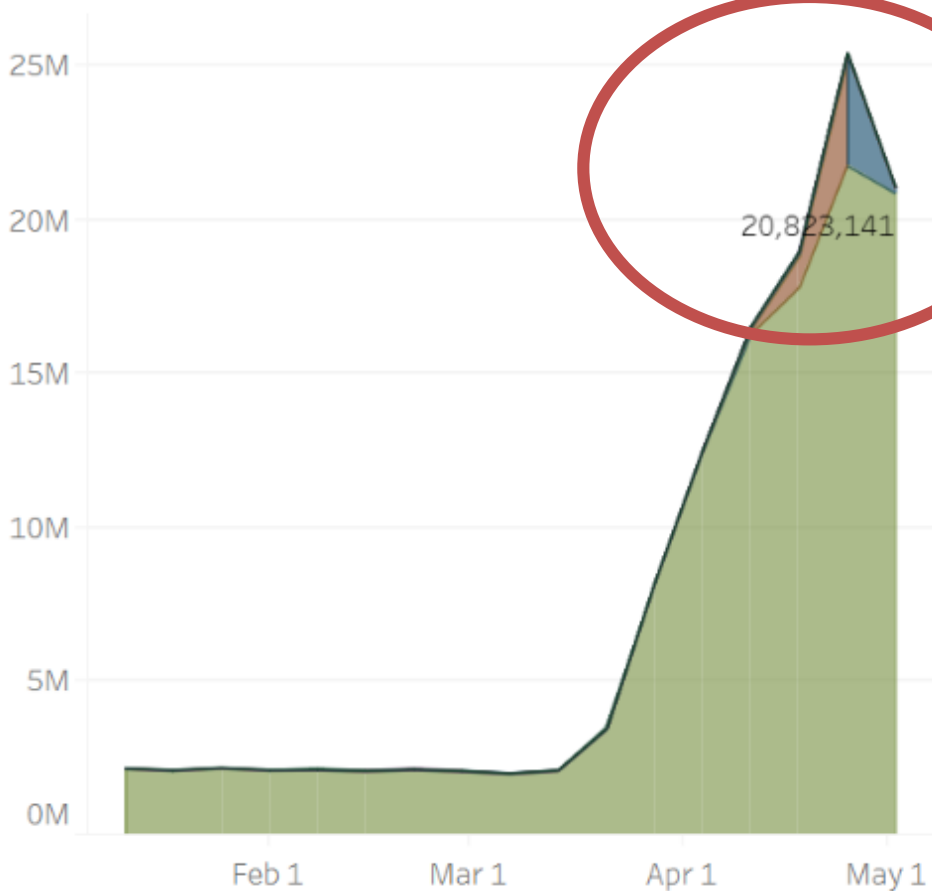
All Insured Unemployed (Weekly)

- ☐ (All)
- ☐ Count of Migrated Data
- ☒ Ex-Service Member
- ☒ Extended Benefits
- ☒ Federal Employee
- ☒ Pandemic Emergency UC
- ☒ Pandemic Unemployment Assistance
- ☒ Regular State
- ☒ Short-Time Compensation
- ☒ State Additional Benefits

Cancel Apply

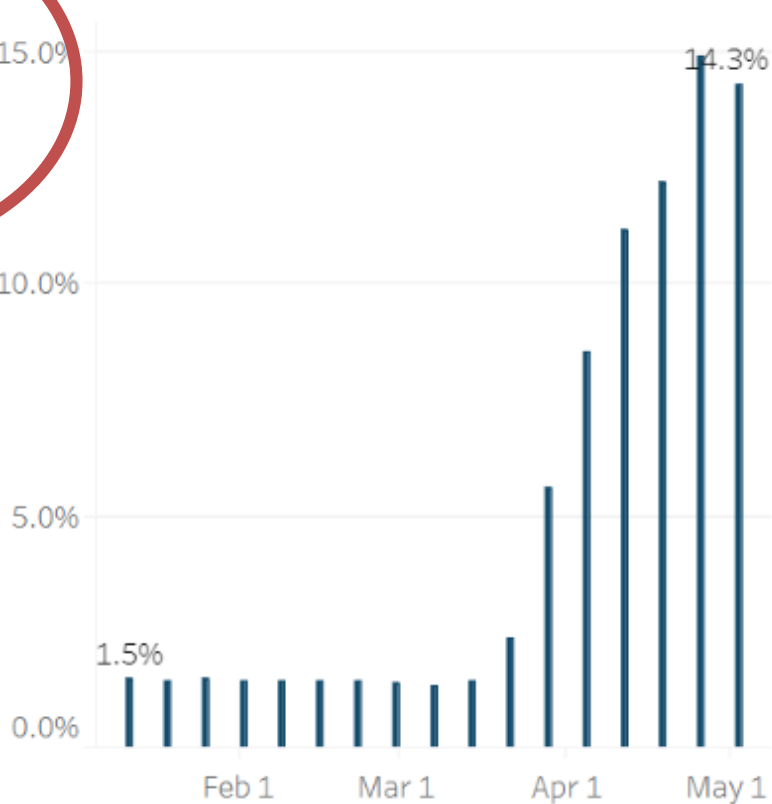
- State Additional Benefits
- Federal Employee
- Ex-Service Member
- Extended Benefits
- Short-Time Compensation
- Pandemic Emergency UC
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance
- Regular State

Insured Unemployed, by Program



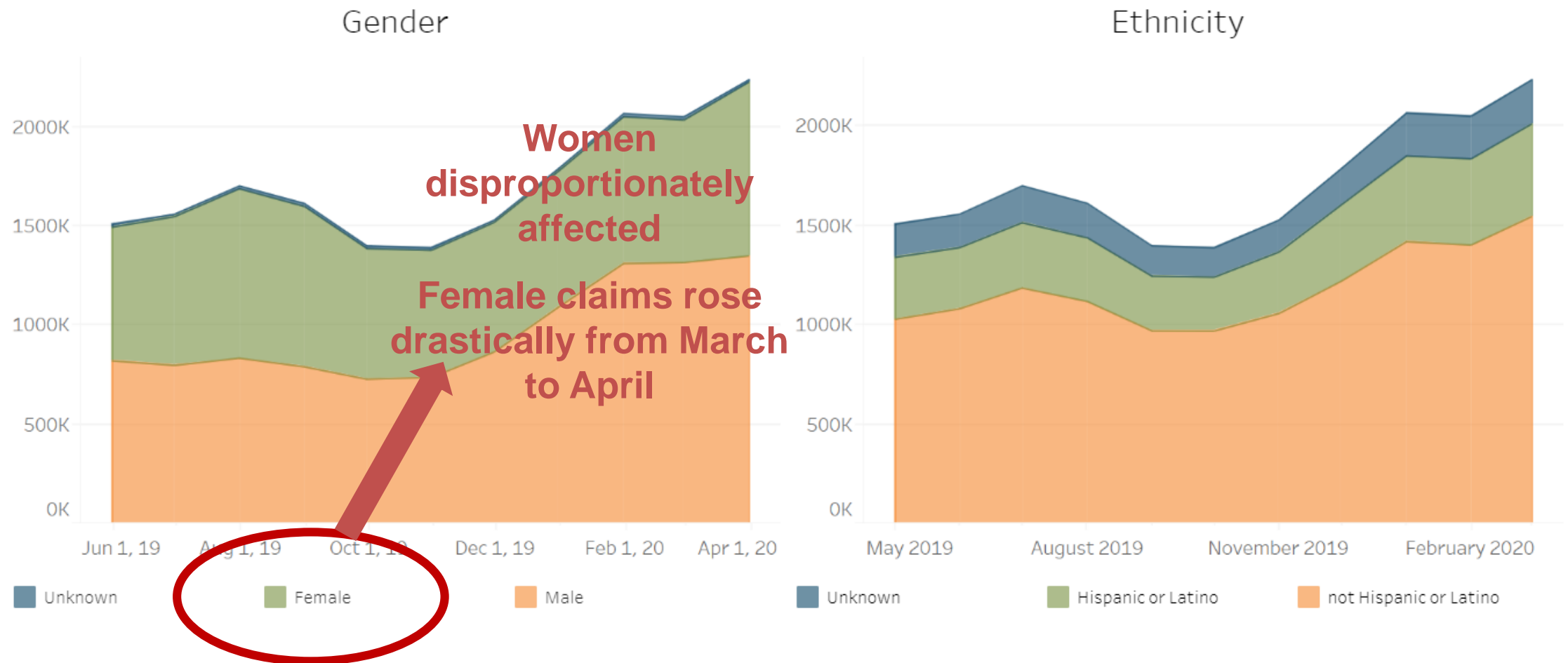
Share of Covered Employed Filing a Continued Claim

Regular State Program only, Non-Seasonally Adjusted



Monthly Demographic Data

All Claimant Demographics (Monthly)





Monthly Demographic Data

Select Age:

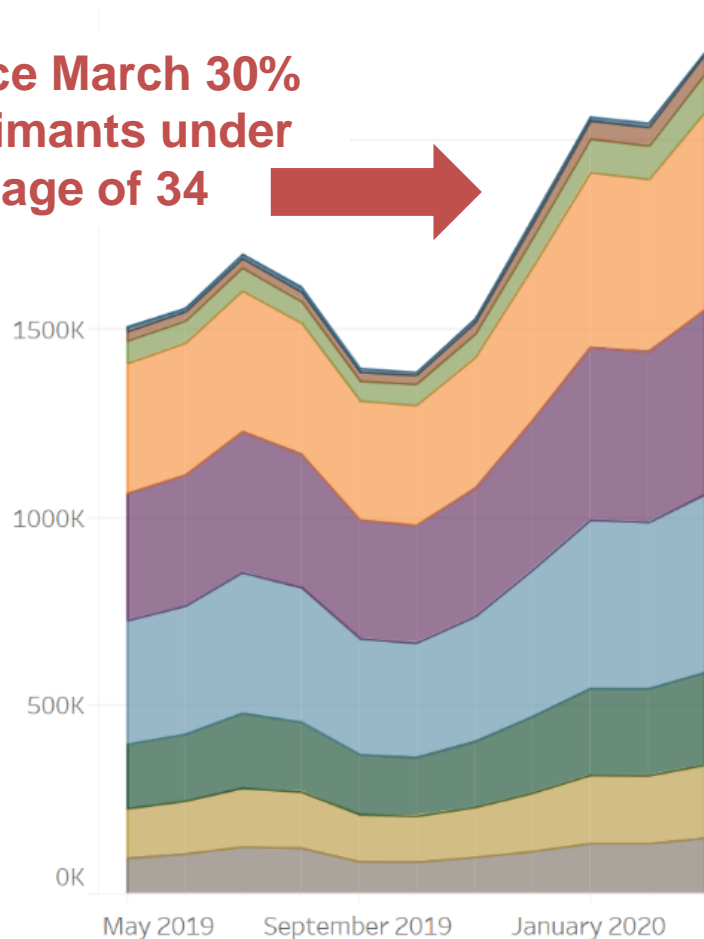
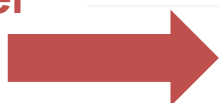
- ☒ (All)
- ☒ 22-24
- ☒ 25-34
- ☒ 35-44
- ☒ 45-54
- ☒ 55-59
- ☒ 60-64
- ☒ <22
- ☒ >=65
- ☒ Unknown

Cancel Apply

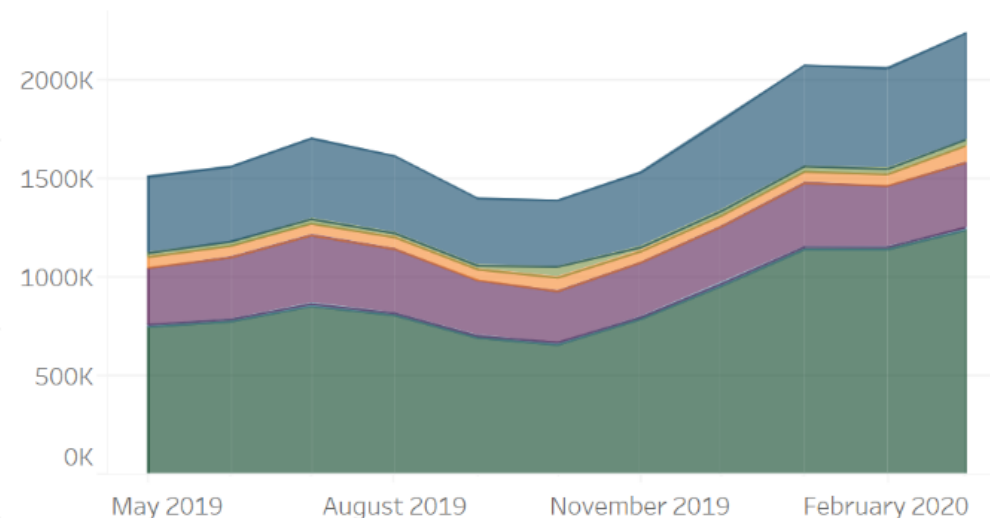
- Unknown
- <22
- 22-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-59
- 60-64
- >=65

Age

Since March 30%
Claimants under
age of 34



Race



Select Race Categories to Display:

- ☒ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☒ Asian
- ☒ Black or African American
- ☒ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☒ Unknown
- ☒ White

- Unknown
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White

Cancel

Apply



Monthly Demographic Data

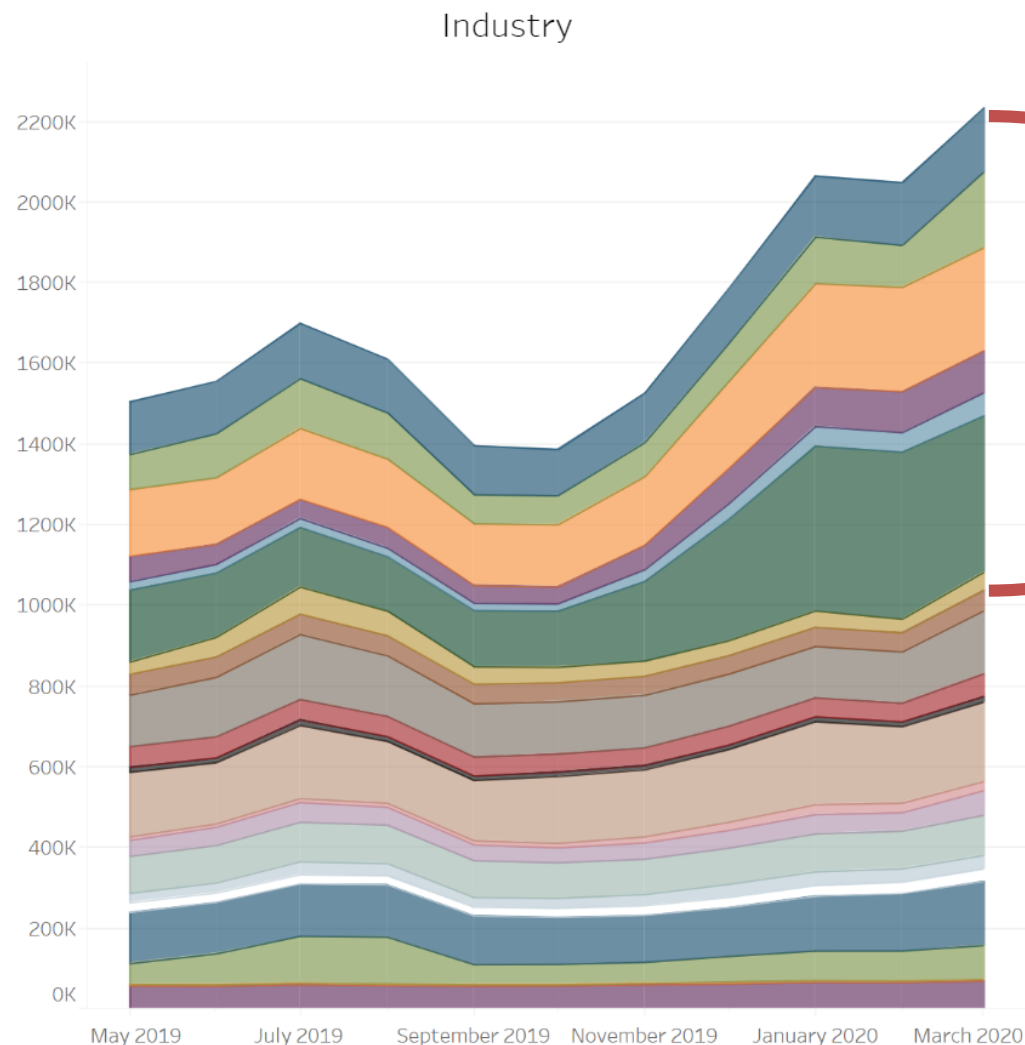
Select Industries to Display:

- ☒ (All)
- ☒ Accommodation and Food Services
- ☒ Administrative & Support/Waste Management/Reme...
- ☒ Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting
- ☒ Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
- ☒ Construction
- ☒ Educational Services
- ☒ Finance & Insurance
- ☒ Health Care & Social Assistance
- ☒ Industry Information Not Available
- ☒ Information
- ☒ Management of Companies & Enterprises
- ☒ Manufacturing
- ☒ Mining
- ☒ Other Services (except Public Administration)
- ☒ Professional/Scientific/Technical Services
- ☒ Public Administration
- ☒ Real Estate, Rental & Leasing

Cancel

Apply

- Industry Information ...
- Accommodation and F...
- Administrative & Supp...
- Agriculture/Forestry/...
- Arts, Entertainment & ...
- Construction
- Educational Services
- Finance & Insurance
- Health Care & Social A...
- Information
- Management of Comp...
- Manufacturing
- Mining
- Other Services (excep...
- Professional/Scientifi...
- Public Administration
- Real Estate, Rental & L...
- Retail Trade
- Transportation & War...
- Utilities
- Wholesale Trade



40% of claims:

- Accommodation / Food Serv.
- Waste Mgmt.
- Agriculture
- Arts & Ent.
- Construction



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* ATLANTA



CENTER FOR

WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

State of Georgia Insights



Georgia Budget & Policy Institute

COVID-19 & Unemployment Insurance in Georgia

Alex Camardelle
acamardelle@gbpi.org



BEFORE COVID-19

Just before the virus struck, Georgia's UI system was incredibly weakened by policy choices made before, during, and after the Great Recession.

AJC

Atlanta. News. Now.

Support Local Journalism.
Subscribe today for 99¢.

Payroll Tax Cut Deal



Journalism in the public interest.

Home

Our Investigations

Tools & Data

MuckReads

About Us

Unemployment Insurance Tracker

Georgia's Troubled Trust Fund

by [Olga Pierce](#) and [Jeff Larson](#), ProPublica

A state's claims at the end of 2008 depleted the state's resources and it started borrowing in mid-2009.

Show apps

AJC

Atlanta. News. Now.

Georgia jobless benefits among briefest in nation

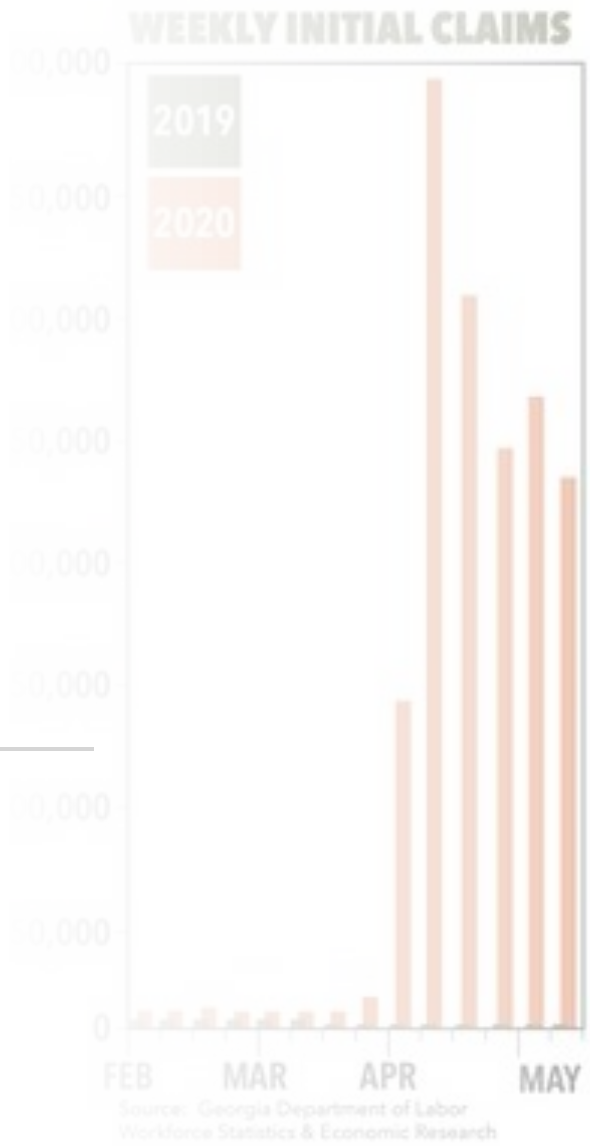
NEWS | April 06, 2012

By [Dan Chapman](#), The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

NONE — Georgia's payout period for unemployment benefits will soon be among the two shortest in the nation.

GEORGIA'S CURRENT STATUS

UNPRECEDENTED DEMAND
AND STATE POLICY
RESPONSES



REGULAR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE INITIAL CLAIMS
Week Ending 3/21 • Week Ending 5/02

- **1,597,593**
Regular Unemployment Insurance Claims Processed
- **778,330**
Valid Claims
- **518,000**
Received First Payment
- **576,382**
Partial Claims
- **201,948**
Individual Claims

PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (PUA) INITIAL CLAIMS
As Of Week Ending 5/02

- 83,583 PUA Claims Processed**
(82% of all PUA claims received)
- 34,250**
have been processed, but have not requested payments
- 89%**
of the processed claims have either been paid or have not requested payment

REGULAR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS PAID

| Week Ending Date | Benefits Paid |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 3/21 | \$5.9 million |
| 3/28 | \$14.6 million |
| 4/4 | \$41.7 million |
| 4/11 | \$69.0 million |
| 4/18 | \$101.4 million |
| 4/25 | \$155.2 million |
| 5/2 | \$176 million |

PUA PAYMENTS
\$4.7 million

FPUC PAYMENTS
\$1.1 billion

TRUST FUND
* As of 5/02/2020, the trust fund balance was \$2,126,662,421 million, or 17 percent, from the 3/24/2020 balance of \$2,547,476,454. The trust fund balance actually ticked up as tax revenue collections outpaced benefit payments (\$1.4 billion revenue was deposited on April 30).

| Date (as of each Tuesday) | Trust Fund Balance |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 3/24 | \$2.547 billion |
| 3/31 | \$2.535 billion |
| 4/7 | \$2.521 billion |
| 4/14 | \$2.455 billion |
| 4/21 | \$2.297 billion |
| 4/28 | \$2.092 billion |
| 5/2 | \$2.126 billion |

ON / TRANSPORTATION / ENVIRONMENT / EQU



The Clermont Hotel's marquee displays "Be Safe Atlanta." Georgia Governor Brian Kemp has promised to reopen many businesses, despite warnings from public health experts. // Paras Griffin/Getty Images

What Reopening Georgia Might Really Be About

KRISTON CAPPS APRIL 23, 2020

Why is Governor Brian Kemp so eager to reopen hair salons and restaurants? The state's million-plus jobless claims make the move a controversial move.

BIGGER CHALLENGES AHEAD

- Uncertainty with "reopening"
- Rapidly depleting Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund
- Temporary vs. permanent rule changes
- Reemployment/retraining services and opportunities
- Staff capacity constraints and state budget cuts



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* ATLANTA



CENTER FOR
WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Let's Chat



Resource Center

[Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta COVID-19 Resources](#)

- Includes all Atlanta Fed Publications
- Resources from other Agencies
- Overview of Monetary Policy Actions

Other Atlanta Fed Resources

[Community and Econ Dev Publications and Partners Update](#)

[Human Capital Labor Insights](#)

[EconomyNOW App](#)

[Policy Hub](#)

Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity

[Workforce Currents](#)

[Opportunity Occupations Monitor](#)

[Investing in America's Workforce](#)

[Ask Us Anything Registration](#)

NEXT SESSION

June 17th 2 p.m. ET

***Lessons from the Great
Recession***

***A conversation with Jane Oates
and Carl Van Horn***

REGISTER NOW





FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* ATLANTA



CENTER FOR
WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Thank You!

**Email Stuart
or Sarah**

**Register For
Next Session**



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* ATLANTA



CENTER FOR

WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Q&A Digest



Unemployment Trends and Effective Unemployment Insurance Approaches Webinar on May 20, 2020, Q&A Digest

The comments included are made by Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity staff Sarah Miller and Stuart Andreason, along with our panelist, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta or the Federal Reserve System.

Overview

Our Question and Answer Digest derives from the Ask Us Anything session on Unemployment Trends held on May 20, 2020. In addition to these responses, there are a number of data tools and publications from the Atlanta Fed's Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity and Center for Human Capital Studies you can use to help track unemployment, reemployment, and other potential policy and practice suggestions while you manage recovery from the pandemic. For quick reference, here are links to the resources:

[Unemployment Claims Monitor](#) The tool provides data on initial and continued claims for unemployment insurance as well as claimants' demographic data.

[Workforce Currents](#) The center's articles on various workforce topics addressing research, policy, and practice.

[Opportunity Occupations Monitor](#) The tool tracks trends in opportunity employment—the share of workers who earn at least the U.S. annual median wage (adjusted for local cost of living differences) in occupations for which employers do not require a bachelor's degree—in states and metro areas.

[Labor Report First Outlook](#) This dashboard provides a concise view of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' [Employment Situation Summary](#). It offers a quick look at current and historical data along with data constructed from the summary.

[Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity Events](#) is a calendar of upcoming events and registration links for the next Ask Us Anything webinar session.

Q&A Digest

Claiming processes and analysis

Historically, there's been a lag of up to 74 percent of those who become unemployed and delay their unemployment insurance filing for a number of weeks. What is the approximate lag and delay in filing unemployment claims in response to COVID-19 dislocations?

We know that Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), specifically, has had significant delays, but as of late May, it's estimated that roughly 80 percent of states are processing and paying the PUA claims.

It is difficult to assess the number of traditional unemployment insurance (UI) claimants who have delayed filing or been delayed in having their claim processed. Some number of workers who are eligible for UI will never receive a benefit or file a claim.

What is the mechanism for gig workers to apply?

Each state administers the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program on behalf of the federal government. Each state has built a system to do this, and each is a little different. The first place to look for guidance on applications for the PUA program should be your state Department of Labor.

Has the issue of people who are hybrids (they get both W2 and 1099 income) been addressed?

Our panelist Alex Camardelle reached out to Michele Evermore with the National Employment Law Project to address this question. Here is her response:

“Unfortunately, a person has to not qualify for UI to get PUA, so the benefit will always be based on the W2 unless the person does not qualify with their W2 earnings for any UI benefit. This is a huge problem for artists and actors whose side gig is a W2 and make most of their money as a 1099. SAG-AFTRA [Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists] and all of the performer unions are really pushing for a fix on this. I wish I had a better answer for you right now, but a fix may be on the way so either both incomes or the 1099 if it is higher can count.”

Do you have information on differential rates of UI and PUA uptake in the states?

The [Unemployment Claims Monitor](#) has some of this data—more will be included in the dashboard as more states report. States only started reporting on PUA the first week of May (looking back to mid-April). We are tracking that week over week and have about 30 states included in our April data. We'll update the Unemployment Claims Monitor to show some of these differences as more data come in.

Several local school systems are finding a good portion of their students have no internet connectivity or devices, which affects the ability to apply for unemployment insurance. Which organizations help with connectivity to apply for benefits?

There is a mobile-enabled app called DoNotPay. See its [Unemployment Insurance Checklist](#), which processes paper claims on behalf of folks with limited to no internet access, but who have mobile phones. The app can capture all unemployment detail per the applicant's state of residence to process claims by mail to work around overloaded online UI systems, which could not handle the initial increased strain on their platforms.

In Tennessee, an employer can file a single, mass UI claim on behalf of all its furloughed employees to increase efficiency for the state to process these claims. Do other states offer this option, and will the experience in Tennessee cause other states to adopt a mass claim procedure?

Some states do offer this option. Georgia, for example, also allows for partial claim filing from an employer on behalf of their employees. Tennessee had this program in place prior to the pandemic. It's been a highly effective model to take the burden off of the furloughed employees and reduce the points of contact with the unemployment claiming process. We hope that as best practices arise from this crisis, that approach is seen as an effective model to replicate for ease of payment distribution and mitigates system capacity constraints.

[Unemployment Claims Monitor](#)

Have you requested occupational data from states? This would be helpful to track issues and the recovery.

We are interested in adding a number of features to the [Unemployment Claims Monitor](#) in the near term, one of which is occupational data. Other additions include county-level data so that programs and policymakers can have a clear view into locally focused detail on claims and ongoing effects on industries/occupations. Not every state has this data publicly available, but we are working on a way to collect and share this data.

Does the Unemployment Claims Monitor track what percentage of people are receiving a benefit? Is there an estimate of those who are unemployed but have not yet filed a claim?

Our objective is to continue to update the details and analysis in the Unemployment Claims Monitor, including assessing percentage allocations to see breadth and depth effects on industries, demographics, and so forth. Prior estimates from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that roughly 74 percent of workers who are unemployed do not file a claim, particularly because they think they are not eligible for the financial support. During this pandemic, given the massive

business closures and temporary layoffs, there is reasonable evidence to suggest far more people are, in fact, filing for unemployment. Data on what percentage of those who *could* file but *didn't* will not be clear for some time, as the job loss and UI data continue to be collected through the economic recovery.

Does the Unemployment Claims Monitor include historical data to review economic trends? If so, how far back does it go?

Yes, the tool has claim data back to 1984.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

Who qualifies for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance?

Under the new program, states are permitted to provide Pandemic Unemployment Assistance to individuals who are self-employed, who are seeking part-time employment, or who otherwise would not qualify for regular unemployment compensation. This includes independent contractors and gig workers, those without sufficient work history or who generally do not have enough wages reported as an employee during the last 18 months, or those who have exhausted unemployment benefits but remain unemployed or partially unemployed as a direct result of COVID-19.

Would a person whose compensation was reduced from 40 hours per week to 32 hours per week apply for the PUA? If not, where would an individual apply?

Depending on the state, such an individual would be treated differently—the PUA program is likely not where they would look. They would look to short-time compensation or workshare programs. Some states, including Georgia, are also running Partial Unemployment Claims programs through the traditional unemployment system. Check with the state Department of Labor guidance about where to apply.

Extended Unemployment Benefits

Is there a concern about the impact of exhaustion for extended unemployment benefits (\$600 weekly increase) and what effect it is having on incentivizing, or disincentivizing, claimants to return to work?

For most people who have lost a significant share of income during this time, the additional income is very effective economic relief and supports continued consumer activity. In most cases, traditional unemployment is not sufficient on its own to provide enough spending power for the affected individuals. There is a concern when this aid runs out, considering that many states will be in a position to make tough budgetary decisions, which could change the availability of other social support programs, that workers will be even more underserved in a phased economic recovery plan. We are tracking national and state policies that could offer a bridge to economic security so workers can avoid the benefit and fiscal cliff as they seek safe employment. See additional research and policy recommendations associated with bridging benefits cliffs conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta through the [Advancing Careers for Low-Income Families](#) project.

As an important note, the \$600 weekly increase ends—along with other unemployment benefits—should an employee refuse to return to his or her job for an unjust cause, the definition of *unjust* being determined on a state by state basis. It's considered fraud to claim unemployment benefits when a job offer has been declined. This does present an opportunity to have a larger conversation on what a quality job really means and how to have access to a dignified job with livable wages. It is our hope that this economic recovery will result in a much more robust policy response around quality jobs and high-road employment opportunities. Further detail on job quality insights can be found in the [Investing in Work](#) volume of the three-part [Investing in America's Workforce book](#).

Has the additional \$600 in extended benefits for unemployment insurance been extended, and if so how long?

That benefit has not been extended yet, though we are actively watching new discussions on expansion for this payment and other systemic workforce investments. In addition, two recent bills have been introduced that include workforce system support: the [HEROES Act](#), which includes \$2.75 billion in workforce funding, and the [Relaunching America's Workforce Act \(RAWA\)](#), with \$15 billion in workforce investments.

Recovery, reemployment and upskilling

What information are you seeing regarding how the workforce will be changed as a result of the pandemic? What are the changes in the types of jobs employers are seeking that might indicate what jobs might not be coming back?

We are hoping to gain this very insight from the Unemployment Claims Monitor. As the economy starts to reopen and we see drops in continued unemployment claims for various industries, we can then start to track state and regional employment demand and examine what is different in terms of skill requirements, daily job tasks, and expected credentials. Tracking your local labor market needs will be critical for policymakers and practitioners as we move into recovery. Upskilling will likely be necessary, as will investments in incumbent worker training to move the workforce through a career pathway that could be transformed as a result of the pandemic.

Has Georgia, or any other state, considered replacing work search requirements with a requirement to upskill or reskill for those collecting UI benefits during the pandemic?

Yes, however, it depends from state to state whether a waiver program is in place. We don't believe that any state will permanently remove the work search requirement, but many are allowing training and upskilling activities as an alternative to a work search. Georgia, for example, has a Claimant Trainee Program, which allows continued payments of UI benefits while a recipient is attending an approved school or training program. Marketing these programs and alternatives to focus on upskilling and reskilling is an important strategy, especially during this period.

Are people seeing employers/industries "trading" or shifting workforce? For example, are laid off hospitality workers being hired into hospitals and long-term-care facilities in environmental services jobs?

We are seeing this. One great example is the Tennessee Talent Exchange. Find some detail on the program [here](#) and below.

The Tennessee Talent Exchange, powered by [Jobs4TN](#), is a new initiative to help you find work in the grocery, retail, and logistics industries now.

Tennessee Grocers & Convenient Store Association, the Retail Association, and Hospitality TN partnered with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development to quickly connect job seekers to hiring companies in the grocery, retail, and logistics industry.

Our previous Ask Us Anything session highlighted this program. [View](#) the recording of that session.

What is happening with cuts to Georgia's state budget and will that affect WIOA funding? When will funding be available for workforce programs in Georgia, and how quickly can these programs expand and get to scale?

There is a 14 percent state budget cut in Georgia. However, this is not a cut to WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) funding itself, which is federal funding, this is just a cut to the agency's staffing capacity. Unless there is a federal authorization in workforce funding through the HEROES or RAWA congressional proposals (see above), there will likely be no expansion of WIOA. WIOA dollars are formula driven (in response to poverty and unemployment rates) and based on the prior program year, which represents the "historically low" pre-COVID-19 unemployment rates, so the funding allocation will be lower than in previous years.

Alex Camardelle provided this chart to show the decrease in WIOA spending in Georgia since 2016. Additional program funding in Georgia has been authorized through Dislocated Worker Reserve Grants under the CARES Act in the amount of \$12 million ([details here](#)). Those funds are now available and services provided with them can be accessed at local workforce development agencies or through [WorkSource Georgia](#).

