

From the 2004 Green Book, page 4-18

EXTENDED BENEFITS

The Federal-State Extended Benefits Program is available in every State and provides one-half of a claimant's total State benefits up to 13 weeks in States with an activated program, for a combined maximum of 39 weeks of regular and extended benefits. Weekly benefit amounts are identical to the regular State UC benefits for each claimant, and Federal funds pay half the cost. The program activates in a State under one of two conditions: (1) if the State's 13-week average insured unemployment rate (IUR) in the most recent 13 weeks is at least 5.0 percent and at least 120 percent of the average of its 13-week IURs in the last 2 years for the same 13-week calendar period; or (2) at State option, if its current 13-week average IUR is at least 6.0 percent. All but 12 State programs have adopted the second, optional condition. The 13-week average IUR is calculated from the ratio of the average number of insured unemployed persons under the regular State programs in the last 13 weeks to the average covered employment in the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters.

In addition to the two automatic triggers, States have the option of electing an alternative trigger authorized by the Unemployment Compensation Amendments of 1992 (Public Law 102-318). This trigger is based on a 3-month average total unemployment rate (TUR) using seasonally adjusted data. If this TUR average exceeds 6.5 percent and is at least 110 percent of the same measure in either of the prior 2 years, a State can offer 13 weeks of EB. If the average TUR exceeds 8 percent and meets the same 110-percent test, 20 weeks of EB can be offered. Analysis of historical data shows that this TUR trigger would have made EB more widely available in the past than did the IUR trigger. As of July 5, 2003, the TUR trigger had been authorized by nine States (Alaska, Connecticut, Kansas, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington). As of July 2003, EB is active in three States.