

# Opportunity Wisconsin: Trump's sham unemployment insurance executive order leaves 700,000 unemployed Wisconsinites behind

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MADISON, Wis. — This weekend, President Trump announced new executive actions his administration falsely claims will provide much-needed financial lifelines to the millions of Americans struggling to make ends meet during this pandemic. Since the Trump administration and Senate Republicans refused to extend the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program after it expired on July 31, 700,000 Wisconsinites have been forced to survive on a \$2,400 monthly pay cut.

However, the president's executive order aimed at reinstating some form of unemployment insurance is a band-aid on a bullet wound. The order, which calls for a 25% pay cut from the original \$600 per week people were receiving, is contingent on states providing unemployed residents with \$100 of the total unemployment assistance amount. The catch? If a state fails to provide an unemployed resident with the \$100, that resident won't get any unemployment from the federal government either. This program is built to fail and hurts workers already facing deflated wages, like servers who rely on tips. The truth is: Even if this program worked perfectly, it would still be a 25% pay cut for people newly unemployed during this pandemic.

Check out some of Opportunity Wisconsin's [conversations](#) with newly unemployed

Wisconsinites.

“Though President Trump claims that the coronavirus will ‘soon disappear,’ the American economy is still in a state of crisis,” said Chantia Lewis, Opportunity Wisconsin steering committee member and Milwaukee alderperson. “Wisconsin workers reeling from layoffs and the \$600 per week pandemic pay cut deserve better than stagnant job numbers, a fraction of the financial lifeline they were receiving until this point, and a president who prioritizes corporations over small businesses. Wisconsinites need real relief, support for small business, and leaders who will put them and their families first, not prioritize Wall Street wishlists and corporate handouts.”

Last Friday, the Labor Department announced that unemployment is still 6.7 points higher than it was before the pandemic, and the economy is grappling with nearly 13 million fewer jobs compared to the pre-pandemic economy. While Senate Republicans and the Trump administration continue to stonewall progress on a new pandemic relief package that would extend unemployment paychecks, overall job growth has remained stagnant, with nearly 1.2 million workers filing for unemployment last week. What’s more, unemployment remains at the highest it’s been since the Great Depression.

Not only has economic recovery faltered as COVID-19 cases spike across the country, but [new polling](#) from Navigator Research shows ratings of the economy are at their worst point in three months — 81 percent of Americans now rate the economy negatively, while 60 percent say things are getting worse.

Earlier this month, Opportunity Wisconsin released a [countdown clock](#) highlighting the impending [pandemic pay cut](#) that nearly 700,000 unemployed Wisconsin workers face starting August 1. Now, that clock is counting forward, to track the number of days Wisconsinites are going without critical financial relief during the pandemic.

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