

Hello,

I am writing to the members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business in reference to the upcoming OED hearing next week. I understand that September 3 is reserved for Oregonians to share their experiences with the OED. I wish to share my experiences with you here.

On May 19 I first heard about the PUA program for self-employed Oregonians and I immediately submitted an online application for PUA. I waited and waited for weeks and weeks as I continued to fall behind with crucial bills. My car payment fell to 3 months behind and I've been close to losing my transportation for several months now. Many other bills piled up, late fees ballooned, and I couldn't afford some of the supplies I need to run my business.

On July 29, 10+ weeks after I filed my application, I finally received a voicemail telling me that they had started processing my application and asking me to call 503-360-5400 with my "Covid impact date". I wasn't even sure what this was. Wouldn't that be the date I started my claim from? What else could it be? I immediately tried calling the number. I dialed over and over and over. Hundreds of times. Thousands of times. Hour after hour, day after day I pressed the redial button over and over and over. I was unable to get through no matter how many hours I spent trying in a day.

I also submitted a contact form on July 30 at this URL (screen shot of message attached): <https://unemployment.oregon.gov/contact-us>

It has been a month since I submitted the contact form and I have received no contact from the OED by phone or email. I continue to call over and over and over. It's basically my job now to sit and press the redial button every 2 seconds. What else can I do? I've tried all the options I know and nobody seems to care.

If I don't get any disbursements in the next couple weeks my vehicle will probably be repossessed and then I'll lose the ability to even make the small amount I've been able to these last few months. If that happens it will be the fault of OED and their terrible implementation of the PUA program.

Based on the many similar posts on the Facebook group "Oregon 1099/Sole Proprietor Covid-19 Impact", it seems this is what nearly everyone is experiencing. We are caught between spending our days trying for the help we were promised from Oregon or trying to side-hustle up a bit of money some other way. The dozens of hours spent hitting redial could have been spent earning a bit of money some other way or volunteering to help those less fortunate. Instead, we have many thousands of frustrated Oregonians spending their summer being totally useless and hitting redial for hours every day.

I hope that hearing about my experience will help in some way to make the system work for so many others like myself who are sinking fast.

Sincerely,

Mark Hamilton

Copy of message I sent to OED on July 30 via their new contact form. 1 month later and I've received no response, either by phone or email.

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**Phone Number \***

**Preferred Language \***

English

**File Date \***

The earliest date you believe you are missing benefits for:  
Enter date using MM/DD/YY format.



**Issue Description**

Provide a brief explanation of your problem. (Limit 5 lines)

I filed my application on May 19 and finally received a call yesterday letting me know that my application was being processed and that they needed to know a "Covid impact date" when my business started to be impacted. That date would be April 1. If you could please let me know you received this information and what if anything else I need to do I would very much appreciate it.