



March 23, 2020

**RE: CUPP NOTICE TO EMPLOYER PARTICIPANTS – POLICY CLARIFICATIONS  
RELATED TO THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC**

Dear CUPP Employer Participant,

In this time of uncertainty, the Church Unemployment Pay Program, Inc. (CUPP) and its leadership join with the faithful in prayer for the healing of those affected by illness, health care workers, and for the safety and protection of all others. We remain committed to serving you as a member of CUPP.

This correspondence provides updates and clarification on CUPP policies and process.

**EMPLOYER-FUNDED**

CUPP unemployment benefit payments are drawn from a savings pool of contributions from participating employers, which must be continually reimbursed by employers involved in specific claims. The ability to provide former employees' benefits is limited to what an employer is able to maintain as their CUPP reserve fund balance.

Unlike a state-administered program, funded in large part by state and federal payroll taxes levied against employers, there is no external funding mechanism for CUPP. CUPP operations and benefits depend entirely on the ability of employer participants to meet Program funding obligations.

**EMPLOYER RESERVE BALANCES & REIMBURSEMENT SCHEDULE**

CUPP will not disburse benefits to eligible claimants if the employer participant does not have sufficient funds in their CUPP reserve balance to cover the disbursement of benefits. To sustain Program operations, employer reimbursement to CUPP for benefits provided must be made in a timely fashion. Therefore, employers will be billed on a month-to-month basis for benefits paid going forward.

**BENEFITS NOT GUARANTEED**

All claimants will be notified that benefits paid are dependent upon the status of their former employers' reserve fund and the ability to sufficiently fund benefits payments.

Benefits are not guaranteed and will cease if a former employer's CUPP fund is exhausted. Claims are paid out on a first come, first serve basis.

## ELIGIBLE FORMER EMPLOYEES

CUPP provides eligible former employees with unemployment benefits during a limited period while they seek new employment. All employees of participating employers (except priests, members of religious communities/orders, and seasonal/temporary workers) are covered if, when they file a claim, they have had at least 20 weeks of work with the employer during the prior 52 weeks, averaging at least 20 hours of work per week.

## PERMANENT TERMINATION REQUIRED

Former employees are not eligible for CUPP benefits when there is a temporary reduction in hours/wages, including temporary layoffs. Temporary is defined as any term of employment or condition of employment that is one year or less.

A participant employer must provide complete payroll and employment status information to the CUPP Claims Adjudicator in a timely fashion when contacted by the Adjudicator investigating a former employee's claim. Going forward, employers are required to certify with the Claims Adjudicator that the employer will not rehire or raise a claimant's wages more than 15 percent for the upcoming year. Also, the employer must affirm that they do not contest the provision of benefits to the requesting claimant and will reimburse CUPP for benefits paid, as required by Program policy.

As eligibility is tied to termination, the employer is also asked to affirm that the employee is only eligible to receive benefits triggered by termination based on COBRA or local policies in existence, and will not be offered benefits limited to employment, such as health, dental, disability, worker's compensation, etc.

## CLAIMS SUBMISSION VIA EMAIL

During the public health emergency, applications may be submitted via email to [info@cuppwi.org](mailto:info@cuppwi.org). Claimants should not include social security numbers on forms submitted by email. This information will be later acquired by the Claims Adjudicator (Murphy Desmond, S.C.) Please make certain claimants are provided with the most recent application form, available on the [CUPP website](#), and fully complete the application form.

## UPDATES AND FURTHER PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

CUPP policies are approved by the interdiocesan CUPP Board of Directors. Should they change, all employer participants will be notified and updates will be posted on the [CUPP website](#).

Inquiries regarding this notice may be directed to your diocesan finance office or 608-467-8047, [info@cuppwi.org](mailto:info@cuppwi.org). The program is separately incorporated, but housed under the umbrella of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC), whose staff is teleworking, but still responding to CUPP inquiries.

Please know that beyond utilizing CUPP to serve permanently terminated employees, Catholic employers are encouraged to contact diocesan finance offices to learn about workforce reduction options and their impact to employees. Finance offices, with the help of the WCC and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, are tracking legislative efforts to provide financial relief to both religious employers and their employees during this difficult time.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this request. Please know you that we join you in prayer for the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Americas, and Saint Joseph, on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his designation as Patron of the Universal Church.

Respectfully,

Kim Vercauteren  
CUPP Director & Chair

James Reider  
CUPP Director

John Philipp  
CUPP Director & Secretary/Treasurer

Larry French  
CUPP Director

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