



## OVERVIEW OF BENEFITS FOR CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS IN H.R. 133

*H.R. 133, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, includes many long-awaited COVID-19 stimulus and relief measures we have been working to achieve. It is the second major stimulus package to address the Pandemic. The package extends some parts of the CARES Act and adds new provisions to protect us and our industry.*

**Extends Cares Act Unemployment Programs for 11 additional weeks (or until March 14, 2021, whichever is earlier), as follows:**

### ***Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (PUC)***

- The bill reinstates the pandemic unemployment “bonus” for all workers receiving unemployment benefits, but reduces the bonus amount to \$300 a week (from \$600)
- The \$300/wk is in addition to the normal state unemployment benefits for which recipients otherwise qualify (normal benefits max out at \$450/wk in California)

### ***Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)***

- While the original PEUC extended benefits for an additional 13 weeks, with the additional 11 weeks, recipients are now eligible for 24 additional weeks *over and above* the number of weeks for which they would otherwise qualify under state law

### ***Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)***

- Extends the PUA program, which provides unemployment benefits to self-employed workers, freelancers, independent contractors, and other non-traditional workers who would not otherwise qualify for unemployment insurance benefits
- **New Requirement:** As of January 31, 2021, PUA recipients will be required provide documentation of employment or self-employment or planned employment or self-employment. Newly applying individual will have 21 days to provide documentation; individuals continuing to receive PUA will have 90 days

**PUA and PEUC Extension:** After March 14, recipients who have been approved for PEUC or PUA, but who have not exhausted all the weeks to which they are entitled, can continue to collect benefits for four more weeks, up to and including the week of April 5, 2021.

**New Mixed Income Earner Benefit:** Provides an extra benefit of \$100/wk to workers who have both wage income and at least \$5,000 in self-employment income, but whose base UI benefit calculation does not take their self-employment into account. Applicants will be required to provide documentation of self-employment income.

**Benefit Year Fix.** As people reach one year of collecting unemployment, state agencies are usually required to recalculate benefits based on prior year earnings. This usually results in a much smaller benefit. The “benefit year fix” will allow workers to keep collecting benefits based on the original year calculations.

#### **Direct Stimulus Payments/Economic Impact Payments/Rebates**

- One-time payment of \$600 per person, plus an additional \$600 for each qualifying child
- Begins to phase out after \$75,000 income for single tax filers and \$150,000 for joint filers
- Individuals claimed as dependents by others are not eligible
- Most people will receive payments via direct deposit
- Full information is available from the [IRS](#)

#### **Help for Movie Theatres/Live Theater and Music Venues (Save Our Stages Act)**

- \$15 billion for small to medium sized independent movie theatres, live entertainment venues and cultural institutions
- Applies to eligible entities with 500 employees or less and 25% loss in revenue
- Includes venue operators, promoters, producers, performing arts organizations, and museum operators
- Eligible entities can receive a grant of 45% of gross revenues from 2019, capped at \$10 million per entity
- Applicants must certify that they will not abrogate collective bargaining agreements and will adopt neutrality toward union organizing drives for the duration of the program

#### **Residual, Health and Pension Protection (Protecting Lawful Streaming Act)**

- Adds new, permanent, long-sought protections for all filmmakers, performers and entertainment industry workers who depend on the sale of legitimate content for their health and pension benefits, as well as residual payments
- Imposes felony penalties on large-scale criminal streaming services that willfully and for commercial advantage or financial gain illegally stream copyrighted materials
- By making illegal commercial streaming a felony, this law will promote better federal enforcement of copyright laws and better protect our residuals

#### **Federal Film and Television Production Tax Incentive**

- Extends Section 181, which allows production companies to deduct production expenses (up to \$15 million) of qualified U.S. film/TV productions as and when incurred through December 2025

#### **Incentives to Hire and Retain Workers (Employee Retention Tax Credit & Paycheck Protection Program)**

- Extends, expands, and significantly improves the Employee Retention Tax Credit, offering a 70 percent credit on up to \$10,000 of wages per employee per quarter to help keep employees on payroll and connected with their jobs
- Adds more \$284 billion for additional first and second round Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loans

- Improves the coordination between the Employee Retention Tax Credit and the Paycheck Protection Program by allowing access to both programs while preventing a double dip
- Clarifies that expenses paid with the proceeds of a forgiven PPP loan are tax deductible

### **Paid Sick and Family Leave**

- Extends employer tax credits to pay for the Families First Coronavirus Response Act paid sick and family leave programs through March 31, 2020, but converts the program from mandatory to voluntary

Allows self employed individuals to use their average daily self-employment income from 2019, rather than 2020, to compute these credits

### **Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs)**

- Ensures individuals can carry over any unused health and dependent care FSA benefits from 2020 into the 2021 plan year, along with other FSA plan flexibilities

### **Rental Assistance and National Eviction Moratorium**

- Nationwide eviction moratorium extended through January 31, 2021
- \$25 billion in new funds to provide emergency rental and utility assistance; interested individuals must apply through state and local grantees