NJDOL Offers Extended Unemployment Benefits

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 19, 2020

TRENTON – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) has begun notifying workers who have exhausted their state unemployment benefits of a 13-week extension they may be eligible for under the federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) program.

These workers are being notified via email and text message that, if eligible, they will be able to certify for weekly benefits according to a schedule based on their Social Security number. The first group will be able to certify starting Sunday. This process will continue for several weeks.

Once approved, claimants will be able to certify for any back weeks they are eligible for up to the week that ends March 28, and will be able to claim the additional $600 supplement known as Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (PUC) starting with the week ending April 4.

Payments generally arrive in two business days after certifying. The supplemental payment arrives separately, several days later.

“We have completed the modifications to allow our unemployment insurance systems to process these applications,” said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo. “Many of these workers were unemployed before the pandemic began, and the current health crisis has obviously made their job search exponentially more difficult. We are pleased to able to now offer both extended benefits and the $600 weekly supplemental payment through the week of July 25, to help these workers through this difficult time.”

New Jersey joins all other states in having to design new systems and processes to distribute this new federal assistance. The state already has implemented other provisions of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, including PUC and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), for independent contractors, self-employed workers and those without sufficient income to qualify for regular unemployment.

The announcement that tens of thousands of New Jersey workers will soon begin receiving extended unemployment benefits comes on the heels of the Department’s report that it made nearly 140,000 additional claimants newly eligible for PUA. That includes a significant group of workers who had inadvertently suspended their benefits because of how they responded to the federally mandated weekly certification questions.

NJDOL continues to see tens of thousands of customers per week responding to one or more certification questions in a way that makes their claim ineligible for benefits under federal law. These errors cause claimants see a sudden halt in their benefit payments. A claims agent must amend these claims to make benefits payable again.

With a record number of customers now certifying for benefits, it is imperative that claimants review the helpful guides found here before certifying for weekly benefits, to avoid payment delays.

It is estimated that by mid-June, the Department will be processing more than 1 million unemployment claims per week, or approximately 180,000 payments per day due to the mass layoffs and temporary furloughs that accompanied the global public health emergency, Covid-19.

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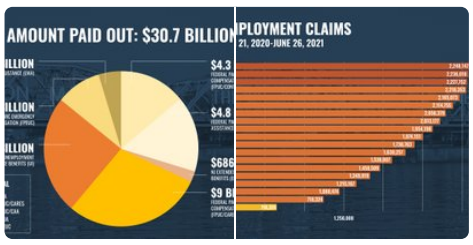
As of week ending June 26, $30.7 billion in benefits have been delivered to Garden State workers who sought assistance during the pandemic, helping to prop up our economy and providing vital income. myunemployment.nj.gov



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More information about eligibility and the benefits offered through the CARES Act may be found on the NJ Unemployment web site.

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