Federal Pandemic Unemployment Programs Extended

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December 28, 2020

LINCOLN – The Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) is currently reviewing the CARES Act Unemployment Extension (H.R. 133), the federal legislation that extends unemployment benefit programs established under the CARES Act. NDOL will provide claimants additional information and instructions regarding the modified federal unemployment benefits once it has the program rules from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL).

NDOL must wait on program guidance from the USDOL before it can begin the implementation of these benefit programs. Some of these programs will include new eligibility requirements. Once guidance is received, NDOL will work to implement the changes as quickly as possible to provide benefits to eligible claimants. Pending USDOL guidance, it estimated that implementation of these programs may take at least four to six weeks. Updates regarding the timeline for payments will be provided as guidance is received.

Claimants should check for updates regarding benefit programs in NEworks.nebraska.gov. Program dates and other details will be released pending guidance from USDOL. The unemployment call center has no further information at this time.

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)

- Will provide up to 11 weeks of an additional $300 weekly benefit to eligible claimants.
- A claimant must be eligible through a separate unemployment program to receive FPUC.
- Once implemented, FPUC will be available to cover weeks of unemployment between Dec. 27, 2020 and week ending March 13, 2021.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)

Will provide up to an additional 11 weeks of benefits, to a maximum of 50 weeks. No benefits can be paid for weeks beginning on or after April 4, 2021, regardless of the number of weeks previously paid.

- Weekly certification will be required.
- Claimants will be required to provide documentation of eligibility to qualify for PUA beginning Jan. 31, 2021.
- PUA will be available until week ending March 13, 2021 (no new applications after that date), with allowance for three additional weeks of benefits for those who have not reached the maximum number of weeks through week ending April 3, 2021.

Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)

Will provide up to an additional 11 weeks of benefits, to a maximum of 24 weeks. No benefits can be paid for weeks beginning on or after April 4, 2021 regardless of the number of weeks previously paid.

- PEUC will be available until week ending March 13, 2021 (no new applications after that date), with allowance for three additional weeks of benefits for those who have not reached the maximum number of weeks through week ending April 3, 2021.

Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation (MEUC)

- Individuals who receive at least $5,000 a year in self-employment income will receive an additional $100 weekly benefit, in addition to the benefit amounts they otherwise would be eligible for from traditional employment under state law.
- The new federally funded “mixed earner” benefit is in addition to the $300 supplemental weekly benefit under FPUC.
- More details will be released pending guidance from USDOL.

Return to Work Requirements

- States must have methods in place to address claimants who refuse to return to work or refuse to accept an offer of suitable work without good cause.

NDOL news releases are available online at dol.nebraska.gov (https://dol.nebraska.gov/home/index)

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