UIA Extends Call Center Hours, Adds Staff to Better Serve Customers

Contact: Jason Moon 517-282-0041

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The Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) is adding staff and hours to better serve an unprecedented increase in customers filing unemployment claims as a result of COVID-19. The UIA has extended call center hours by an hour every day 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. Monday-Friday and it remains open from 7 a.m. – 2 p.m. on Saturday. Customers in the call center and online chat queues before closing time will have their calls or chats resolved that day.

The UIA continues to increase call center resources and has nearly quadrupled staffing levels over the last several weeks. Normal staffing levels are around 130 employees. By March 30, approximately 300 staff were answering calls and by the end of this week an estimated 500 employees will be dedicated to the call center. Hundreds of additional staff will be added to the call center in the coming weeks.

“Thank you to Michigan’s working families for their patience as the UIA continues to provide emergency financial assistance during this unprecedent increase in unemployment claims,” said Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity Director Jeff Donofrio. “We continue to ramp up our services to make sure every eligible Michigander receives their benefits as quickly as possible and we’re asking workers to please reserve the phone lines for those who cannot go online or are having trouble with their account."

The best way to file a claim is online at **www.Michigan.gov/UIA**, where the process takes on average 20-25 minutes.

All Eligible Workers Will Receive Benefits
The UIA assures every eligible worker in Michigan who applies for unemployment benefits will receive them. Workers have 28 days from their last day of work to apply for benefits. Additionally, claims will be back-dated to reflect the date on which the claimant was laid-off. If there are continued technical issues with a workers’ account, the UIA will allow additional time to ensure benefits are paid.

Historical Demand
The latest U.S. Dept of Labor report shows that since March 15, more than 420,000 workers filed initial unemployment claims in Michigan - March 15-21: 127,810 claims / March 22-28:

303,638 claims. The two weeks prior saw around 10,000 total initial claims filed, which equates to a more than 4,000% increase in initial unemployment claims. The highest week for initial claims during the Great Recession, was around 77,000 claims in Jan. 2009.

Online Filing Schedule at Michigan.gov/UIA: Customers are encouraged to use off-peak times 8 p.m. – 8 a.m.

- Last names beginning with letters A-L: file claims on Mondays, Wednesday, Fridays.
- Last names beginning with letters M-Z: file claims on Sundays, Tuesdays, or Thursdays.
- Saturdays will be available for anyone to accommodate those who could not file during their allotted window.

Call Center Filing Schedule for 866-500-0017:

- Last names beginning with letters A-L: call on Mondays and Wednesdays between 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Last names beginning with letters M-Z: call on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Fridays between 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Saturdays between 7 a.m. – 2 p.m. are open for anyone who could not file during their allotted days.

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