# DOL Releases Guidance for Independent Contractors and Self-employed Seeking Unemployment Through the CARES Act

**[WILMINGTON, DE] THURSDAY APRIL 16, 2020 –** The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act recently passed by the United States Congress and signed into law on March 27th provides unemployment assistance to independent contractors and those self-employed who have been affected by the Coronavirus.

Most state's unemployment systems determine eligibility and process payments for workers whose wages are reported by their employers and verified through the Division of Unemployment Insurance (DUI). In order to begin processing claims for this new category of eligible individuals and prevent fraud, abuse and identity theft, the Federal US Department of Labor requires that states design new systems to pay benefits to independent contractors/self-employed and ensure the validity of their claims.

Delaware Department of Labor (DOL) is currently working with a vendor to design and test new technologies that will integrate with our existing benefits claims system. This technology will allow the Division of Unemployment Insurance (DUI) to verify earnings reported to the IRS and determine the eligibility of independent contractors and the self-employed to apply for benefits under the (CARES) Act.

**We anticipate that these workers will be able to apply through this new system within 3-6 weeks. We will provide more details regarding implementation and how to apply on our website next week.**

*"The hardship that the coronavirus pandemic has placed on Delaware workers is unprecedented. These workers will receive the much-needed assistance provided to them under the CARES Act. We are working around the clock to make that happen; Hopefully, ahead of schedule" said Cerron Cade, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Labor.*

Once the system is ready to receive applications from those who are self-employed or are independent contractors, DOL will require specific documentation available at the time you submit your application online. The documents you will need are as follows:

- Driver license or State issued Identification
- Your last year's income tax statement or quarterly earnings statement
- State of Delaware Business License number
- Current bank account number and routing number

To date, DOL has processed and paid 70% of initial claims for benefits submitted to their offices since March 1st and is currently paying more than $30 million in benefits to affected workers each week. The agency has received more than 60,000 claims in 4 weeks; nearly double the total number of claims received in 2019.

To view our most updated frequently asked questions (FAQ's) regarding unemployment insurance, and to be notified when the application for benefits is available for self-employed individuals and independent contractors in Delaware, text uifacts to 555888.

Additional resources are available on our websites at dol.delaware.gov or ui.delawareworks.com. You can also call our offices at 302-761-8446. Call hold time is longer than usual. For a quicker response please email uiclaims@delaware.gov. Include your full name, including middle initial, contact information and claim number.

To process an initial claim for unemployment benefits please visit ui.delawareworks.com

Delawareans with questions about coronavirus [COVID-19] or their exposure risk can call the Division of Public Health's Coronavirus Call Center at 1-866-408-1899 or 711 for people who are hearing impaired from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, or email DPHCall@delaware.gov. For the latest on Delaware's response, go to de.gov/coronavirus.