ANDY BESHEAR
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Secretary of State
Frankfort
Kentucky

2020-235
March 16, 2020

STATE OF EMERGENCY RELATING TO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMS AND BENEFITS

WHEREAS, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease causing illness that can range from very mild to severe, including illness resulting in death; and

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2020, a case of COVID-19 was confirmed in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, since that time, twenty (20) more cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in the Commonwealth, with cases appearing in multiple counties, including cases that indicate the virus is community spread; and

WHEREAS, this condition continues to endanger public health and safety and, if not contained, threatens to overwhelm the Commonwealth's healthcare resources; and

WHEREAS, the economic impact of COVID-19 may be severe, including loss of jobs; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) issued Unemployment Insurance Program Letter No. 10-20, on March 12, 2020, providing guidance to the states regarding eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits to individuals suffering temporary job loss as a result of exposure to COVID-19 or its spread; and

WHEREAS, current state law requires a claimant for unemployment insurance benefits to serve a waiting period of one (1) week, during which he or she has not received benefits, before being eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits; and

WHEREAS, I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and by KRS 39A, did hereby declare by Executive Order 2020-215 on March 6, 2020, that a State of Emergency exists in the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and

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WHEREAS, under such circumstances, I am further empowered by KRS Chapter 39A to exercise all other powers deemed necessary to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population:

NOW THEREFORE, I Andy Beshear, by virtue of authority vested in me pursuant to the Constitution of Kentucky and by KRS Chapter 39A, do hereby Order and Direct as follows:

1. During the state of the emergency herein referenced, KRS 341.350 and KAR Title 787 shall be liberally construed in accordance with USDOL guidance to enable the Secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet discretion on how to apply the standards for ability to work, availability to work, work-search activities, and suitable work in the context of COVID-19;

2. Notwithstanding KRS 341.350(2), unemployed workers are not required to serve a waiting period of seven (7) days, otherwise known as the "waiting week period," prior to becoming eligible for unemployment insurance benefits.

This Order shall be in effect for the duration of the State of Emergency herein referenced, or until this Executive Order is rescinded by further order or by operation of law.

ANDY BESHEAR, Governor
Commonwealth of Kentucky

MICHAEL G. ADAMS
Secretary of State