Press Releases

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

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Governor Lamont: Expansion of Lost Wages Assistance Program Delivered an Additional $35 Million in Federal Benefits To Nearly 23,000 Connecticut Workers Impacted by COVID-19

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Ned Lamont today announced that an executive order he **signed last month (/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2020/2020/Governor-Lamont-Announces-Executive-Order-Expanding-Federal-Lost-Wages-Assistance)** expanding eligibility in the federal Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) Prog has resulted in 22,837 unemployed Connecticut residents receiving an additional $35 million in federal payments over the last several weeks.

The LWA program offered an additional $300 in weekly benefits for six weeks late last summer to claimants who were unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, to be eligible for the program, the Trump administration required that all claimants must be receiving more than $100 per week in unemployment benefits, leaving thousands in the state unable to participate.

To address this situation, Governor Lamont signed **Executive Order No. 9P** , which went into effect on December 4, 2020, and retroactively and temporarily increased weekly unemployment benefits to $100 for many Connecticut residents, enabling them to qualify for the program and receive the additional benefits. The $7.35 million investment by the state unlocked the five-to-one match from the federal government and provided the average participating claimant with more than $1,700 in assistance.

Altogether, the program is expected to have generated more than $80 million in economic activity and provide small businesses across the state with a much-needed boost in consumer spending.

“What a difference this program made to those most in need of some good news this holiday season,” **Governor Lamont said**. “Thanks to the hard work of our Connecticut Department of Labor, we were able to expand access to federal funding so thousands of Connecticut residents could better support themselves, their families, and the local economy. And thanks to the hard work of Connecticut’s Congressional delegation, enhanced unemployment benefits are once again available to residents facing financial hardship because of the pandemic.”

The recent CARES Act II extends the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, which now provides an additional $300 per week to everyone receiving unemployment benefits, as well as the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program and the Pandemic Extended Unemployment Compensation Program, through mid-March. Connecticut residents are already benefitting from those programs.

“Expanding this program was the right thing to do, as thousands of filers were left out of the original program and many of these were low-wage earners,” **Connecticut Labor Commissioner Kurt Westby said**. “I applaud Governor Lamont and his team for working so hard to find a way to level the playing field for claimants and bring tens of millions of federal dollars into the state for our residents.”

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