The Delaware Department of Labor applies for Lost Wage Assistance Program

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(Wilmington, DE) – Today, the Delaware Department of Labor (DEDOL) announced that Delaware will apply for the Lost Wages Assistance Program through the United States Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

As outlined by FEMA and the United States Department of Labor, this funding will provide an additional $300 per week to claimants who are unemployed due to COVID-related reasons and are receiving at least $100 in unemployment benefits from the state.

The Lost Wage Assistance Program was established through a memorandum issued by President Trump after Congress failed to reauthorize the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program, which provided an extra $600 payment to eligible Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants.

To qualify for this new program, claimants must self-certify that they are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Upon approval, the DEDOL would provide retroactive payments to eligible claimants from the date of August 1, 2020, forward. The duration of this payment is dependent on the terms of the President's memorandum. This funding could end in a matter of weeks or sooner unless Congress passes a new law. This additional benefit is scheduled to end no later than December 27, 2020.

" While Delaware will be applying for these funds to support workers unemployed due to no fault of their own, I need to be perfectly clear; President Trump's plan is a Hail Mary that is unnecessarily complicated and will be a nightmare to

implement quickly.

One of the challenges with this new program is that states are being directed to pay these benefits through FEMA rather than the traditional unemployment sources which we have been using since this crisis began. These funds cannot intermingle. Therefore, states will have to establish new systems which must interface with our existing unemployment rolls to determine eligibility. This could take weeks to get operational. While communication with our federal partners continues as we apply for this assistance, our various requests for greater flexibility have been rejected. Furthermore, with the stability of the funding source and overall legality of the President's memorandum in question; it is unclear if or when the additional benefits will be available.

We are committed to continuing to work with our federal partners so that we can begin planning and implementing the distribution of these funds to Delawareans who need it.

Until then, while there is an incredible public need for this assistance, there is no need for claimants to contact DEDOL regarding this program. We will provide more information once it becomes available, ” said Cerron Cade, Delaware Secretary of Labor.

DEDOL continues to encourage anyone who believes they may be eligible for Unemployment Insurance, or for those that fall under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance eligibility guidelines, to file a claim online at ui.delawareworks.com and continue to certify your claim weekly.

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