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GOVERNOR PARSON ANNOUNCES IMPLEMENTATION OF $600 FEDERAL PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM, WORKERS' COMPENSATION FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

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APRIL 7, 2020

(https://governor.mo.gov/sites/gov/files/media/image/2018/09/news-default.jpg)

JEFFERSON CITY □ In today's COVID-19 briefing, Governor Mike Parson announced that the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations' (DOLIR) Division of Employment Security (DES) has received its first operational guidance related to the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) program under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020.

The FPUC does not include any provisions or benefits for eligible self-employed workers. Late Sunday, DOLIR received federal guidance on that provision, the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program.

The FPUC provides that those eligible for at least one dollar ($1 US) of unemployment compensation benefits during the week will receive an additional $600 per week as a federal supplement. The DES expects FPUC payments to begin going out to eligible recipients as early as the week of April 12, 2020, after the technology updates and procedures are implemented.

"COVID-19 has had a serious impact not only on public health, but also our economy. Business operations have been limited, and many people have lost their jobs. Over 100,000 people have filed for unemployment this past week," **Governor Parson** said. "This federal assistance is critical to supporting unemployed Missourians and their families during this challenging time."

The $600 federal supplement for those that are unemployed will be effective the week beginning March 29, 2020, for those filing their unemployment payment request for that week.

- Payments will be made retroactively for claims filed on or after March 29, 2020.
- The last payable week for the $600 supplement will be the week ending July 25, 2020.
- During the FPUC program period, claimants who are eligible to receive regular unemployment weekly payments will receive the additional $600 FPUC payment.

Missouri's regular unemployment insurance program continues to be in effect. Under Missouri unemployment law, most people who are currently employed and quit are not eligible for unemployment benefits.

- If an employer offers sick leave and/or other leave options to address COVID-19 in lieu of layoffs, then a person who quits on his/her own volition would not qualify for unemployment benefits.
- At this point, no federal legislation changes this part of Missouri's program eligibility for unemployment.

Governor Parson also announced at today's briefing that he has directed DOLIR to implement an emergency rule that will help ensure first-responders who contract COVID-19 are covered through workers' compensation.

"Our law enforcement officers, firefighters, and EMTs are tireless public servants who compromise their own safety to ensure the safety of others," **Governor Parson** said. "They risk themselves each and every day, and because of their duties, our first responders are more likely to be exposed to COVID-19 while on the job."

This emergency rule will create a presumption that first responders who contract COVID-19 did so in the line of duty and allow them to make a claim under the Missouri Workers' Compensation law to cover the expenses incurred.

Officer Jeremy Bowman, President of Jefferson City Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 19, and International Association of Fire Fighters 2nd District Vice President Mark Woolbright attended today's briefing to discuss the importance of this action for law enforcement officers, firefighters, and EMTs across the state.

Unemployed workers are encouraged to file their unemployment claims online at **uinteract.labor.mo.gov (https://uinteract.labor.mo.gov/benefits/home.do)** as soon as they are separated from their employer. For convenience, the UInteract website is available 24/7 and mobile-friendly. Over 90 percent of initial claims are now filed online.

For questions and answers related to the coronavirus and unemployment, as well as other effects on employment, visit **labor.mo.gov/coronavirus (https://labor.mo.gov/coronavirus)** frequently for updates.

To view Governor Parson's remarks from today's briefing, please **click here (https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/MOGOV/2020/04/07/file_attachments/1421752/4-7-2020%20BRIEFING.pdf)**. Pictures from the briefing are available on Governor Parson's **Flickr page (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.flickr.com_photos_govmikeparson_albums_72157713795081981&d=DwMFaQ&c=GSntNbUav5AC0JJIyPOufmfQT3u3zI7UKdoVzPd-7og&r=ep_vY_YZvQO4gTTTzhrHgwLWzZKFmXwbuV1ci7zYS-A&m=LRaBhMXRV0ifq8tItoDv1204gbrMg84RYgQBtPkSe38&s=komS9gqh35Mue-9C-BfOoZ_RTW3jvz4Hxi4--zpoK78&e=)**.

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