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Users began to see changes in JobLink February 20 and will in ReEmployME February 25.

AUGUSTA - As part of its ongoing initiative to improve the experience and usability of its services, the Maine Department of Labor is rolling out updates to the ReEmployME unemployment system and the Maine JobLink this week.

"Over the past few months, the Maine Department of Labor has been asking for feedback from hundreds of Mainers, as part of an initiative to improve the experience people have when using our services," Commissioner Laura Fortman said. While this is an ongoing initiative, we are excited about the updates made so far and think that they will make a difference in how individuals access and use our services.

Beginning in January, unemployment claimants began seeing confirmation pages in ReEmployME and receiving confirmation emails after successfully filing an initial or weekly claim. The confirmation emails let individuals know that the Department has received their claim and explains the review process and next steps. The Department has also reviewed and re-written multiple correspondence that are sent to unemployment claimants and employers, making the language simpler and the format more straightforward.

Beginning on Thursday, February 25, MDOL is introducing a more intuitive and user-friendly weekly claim form and a weekly claim status dashboard to help claimants keep track of their weekly unemployment claims. Claimants must submit weekly claims in order to receive unemployment benefits.

The weekly claim process still has three steps: reporting work search activities, completing a weekly certification, and submitting the weekly claim. This update makes the overall process easier the forms are easier to read, file, review, and submit.

Improvements to weekly claim filing and display of status information for submitted claims include:

- New weekly claims screen Claimants will be able to see all of the weeks available to file on one screen and where they are in the three-step process for each week.
- Easy step by step work search reporting Claimants will now be guided through the work search reporting and only see questions relevant to their situation. This should help eliminate the need to guess the correct response to questions that are not relevant to them, reduce errors, and make the overall process easier and, for some, faster.
- "What does this mean?" helper text The helper text for questions has been improved to give clearer definitions around terms like self-employed, odd job, and medical quarantine. Where applicable, concrete examples have been added to explain, for example, correct reporting, work search activities, and wages. Simply click on the What does this mean? link next to a question for more information.
- Improved usability especially on mobile devices Claimants will notice changes in how the weekly claim looks. The pages' layout and structure have been optimized for both web and mobile so it will be easier to file from any device.

The new status dashboard will make tracking weekly claims and understanding unemployment benefits easier. The new status page will include:

- Weekly claim dashboard Claimants will be able to view the statuses and amount paid for each submitted weekly claim on one screen. At a glance, claimants will be able to see which weeks were paid and which weeks are still processing or need futher attention.
- Clear status language and detailed explanations Claimants will be able to expand each weekly claim and see a detailed explanation of the status on their claim. We have eliminated statuses like issue on file and provided statuses that are more specific and easier to understand.
- What MDOL is doing and your next steps, if necessary,to ensure you receive your eligible benefits in a timely manner If necessary, statuses will describe clear next steps on how to resolve the issue and tell you what actions MDOL is taking to resolve the issue as well.

Walk-through guides of the changes for claimants will be posted on our website in the next couple of days: https://www.maine.gov/unemployment/weeklyclaims/
(https://www.maine.gov/unemployment/weeklyclaims/)

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