For the latest updates and information related to COVID-19, visit the Kansas COVID-19 Response and Recovery website. covid.ks.gov.

Governor Laura Kelly Announces Kansas to Begin Processing Payments for the Lost Wages Assistance Program

Sep 30, 2020

Governor Laura Kelly announced that Friday, October 2, the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) will begin accepting self-certification and processing payments to eligible unemployed workers under the federal Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program.

"Short term, the Lost Wages Assistance program will help provide critical support to unemployed Kansans due to the coronavirus pandemic," **said Governor Laura Kelly**. "I urge the Senate to pass legislation to extend federal benefits to those still in need."

On August 8, President Donald Trump issued an executive memorandum authorizing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to expend up to $44 billion from its Disaster Relief Fund to provide lost wage assistance to Americans receiving unemployment benefits. FEMA approved an award total of $116 million to assist Kansans who have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For those who are eligible, payments will be retroactive to the week ending August 1, 2020. KDOL was notified by FEMA that these funds will be available through the week ending September 5, 2020.

To be eligible, a claimant must self-certify his or her unemployment or partial unemployment is due to disruptions caused by COVID-19. If KDOL confirms

eligibility, the claimant will receive the payment for each week of the LWA program, as long as the person remains eligible and funds remain available.

Claimants can self-certify by logging into their account at www.getkansasbenefits.gov or by calling one of the unemployment contact center phone numbers listed on the website.

The program will provide eligible claimants with an additional $300 per week on top of their regular unemployment benefits. Governor Kelly proposed the $400 option for LWA as a way to get additional money into the hands of unemployed Kansans. On September 2, the SPARK Taskforce agreed to the proposal and to spending $63 million in CARES Act funds to assist Kansans. On September 3, legislative leaders on the State Finance Council (SFC) rejected the proposal. In response, Kelly ordered KDOL to apply for the $300 option, which does not require SPARK or SFC approval to implement.

Since March 15, KDOL has paid out over 2.5 million weekly claims totaling over $2.0 billion between regular unemployment and the federal pandemic programs. For more information, or to apply for unemployment benefits, go to www.GetKansasBenefits.gov.

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