Maine Dept. of Labor Distributes One-Time $600 Relief Payment to 40,000 Mainers Unemployed due to COVID-19 SHARE (http://www.addthis.com/bookmark.php?v=250&pub=mainelabor)

December 22, 2020

For Immediate Release: December 22, 2020

Maine Dept. of Labor Distributes One-Time $600 Relief Payment to 40,000 Mainers Unemployed due to COVID-19

AUGUSTA - Last night, the Maine Department of Labor distributed a one-time $600 emergency relief payment to about 40,000 Maine people unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Governor Janet Mills authorized the payment under a newly created Pandemic Relief Program (PRP) to assist unemployed Maine people facing substantial economic hardship as a result of COVID-19.

"We are pleased to announce the distribution of this one-time emergency relief payment to families across Maine," **said Laura Fortman, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Labor.** While this payment is a start, we are also pleased by the passage of bipartisan COVID-relief legislation, to ensure Maine people can provide for the basic necessities for themselves and their families. The Department will work to implement any federal changes to unemployment programs as quickly as possible after they are passed into law.

When a qualified individual receives the one-time direct relief payment depends on their individual financial institution's deposit schedule. The payment, which is not an unemployment benefit, was made to the individuals account or debit card on file with the unemployment program.

This one-time payment is intended for individuals who were likely to exhaust or lose their benefits with the federally established expiration of expanded unemployment programs. Eligibility for this one-time payment was determined using existing, previously filed unemployment claim information and was not a separate application.

To qualify, an individual must have been unemployed due to COVID-19, and had either: - Exhausted federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) or Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) benefits on or after week ending November 14 or - Had

an established COVID-19 benefit claim in active pay status, and had filed an eligible weekly claim for the weeks ending December 5, 12, or 19

Individuals who were newly unemployed and filed their first benefit claim application or reopened a prior claim on or after December 13, did not qualify.

Governor Mills authorized the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL) to distribute the payment using $25.2 million in CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF).

For more information on the PRP, visit https://www.maine.gov/unemployment/ (https://www.maine.gov/unemployment/) .

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