UIA Update: Michigan Activates Federal Extended Benefits

Allows for up to 59 weeks of unemployment benefits to those impacted by economic uncertainty created by COVID-19

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The Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) today announced that the unemployment insurance benefits period has been lengthened under the Federal Extended Benefits (EB) program. The UIA implements the EB program that pays unemployment benefits during periods of high unemployment to workers who exhausted their basic entitlement to regular state and federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) benefits. EB is a program that provides an extension of benefits to those who can establish/have established a state unemployment claim.

EB provides up to 20 weeks of additional benefits to workers who have exhausted their regular benefits (26 weeks maximum) and PEUC (13 weeks). Primarily federally funded, the EB program kicks in when the state's unemployment rate averages 8% or higher for three consecutive months.

"The Extended Benefit program will provide a much-needed safety net for Michiganders who have exhausted their current benefits and are still dealing with the long-term effects of unemployment due to COVID-19," said UIA Director Steve Gray.

Eligibility for EB will be determined in the same manner as regular unemployment benefits. Claimants must be unemployed or underemployed and be able to work and available for work. The program's weekly benefit amount is the same as the individual received for regular state unemployment insurance. Claimants can expect to be notified through their chosen communication method of the extension. They must continue to file their bi-weekly certification and will not need to complete a separate application.

Work Share
The State's Work Share program continues to support the economy and preserve the Unemployment Trust Fund by helping employers who are still experiencing decreases in customer demand supplement their payroll. Since March 15, the program has helped preserve

the state trust fund by providing $465M in federal benefits to workers. Michigan's Work Share program was first in the nation during COVID-19 with more than 2,500 Michigan employers and nearly 97,000 employees enrolled at the peak of the pandemic.

Paying Unemployment Claims
Since March 15, nearly 2.3M certifying, potentially eligible claimants have applied for state and federal benefits, with nearly $24B in benefits paid to 2.2M workers, or roughly 96% of potentially eligible, certifying claimants. There are currently around 80,000 claimants needing ID verification and around 13,000 in the adjudication process which requires a one-on-one review of their claim.

Unemployment Fraud
Recently unemployment agencies across the country have observed a significant uptick in attempted fraudulent activity coinciding with the implementation of the Lost Wages Assistances program which provided an additional $300 in weekly benefits from July 26 - September 5, 2020.

The higher supplemental benefit attracts additional criminal attention and unemployment agencies across the country remain under attack. These cases have been flagged for identity verification to prevent payment and have increased the number of claimants needing ID verification from around 28,000 to 80,000 over the last two weeks.

The UIA continues to work vigilantly to prevent criminals from stealing benefits and is also partnering with Attorney General Nessel's Task Force and state and federal partners to identify alleged fraud that can be quickly turned over to law enforcement for prosecution.

Protect Against Unemployment ID Theft
When an individual files a claim for unemployment insurance, they will receive a written Monetary Determination letter. If you receive this letter (Form UIA 1575C) and you have not applied for unemployment benefits, or the name on the form is not yours, you may be a victim of identity theft. If this happens, contact the UIA immediately online at **Michigan.gov/UIA** through the Report Identity Theft link. **More tips on how to prevent unemployment identity theft in Michigan are available online**.

UIA Data March 15 – October 1, 2020	
$23.9B	**Benefits paid**
2,769,942	Total unique claimants (State and Federal)
238,820	Claimants determined currently ineligible for benefits
239,071	Claimants who have not certified
2,292,051	**Total unique potentially eligible claims with certification**
2,199,496	Claimants paid at least once
96.0%	**Percent paid at least once**
79,592	Claimants unpaid due to ID verification
12,963	Claimants unpaid due to other non-monetary issues

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at **Michigan.gov/Coronavirus** and **CDC.gov/Coronavirus**.

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