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FW: News Release: NMDWS prepares to provide Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

1 message

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***For Immediate Release****March 28, 2020***NMDWS prepares to provide Pandemic Unemployment Assistance***Notice of implementation of new filing system to go into effect Monday*

(Albuquerque, NM) – On March 27, federal lawmakers passed a COVID-19 stimulus bill that will expand Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits, referred to as Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). This will open eligibility for independent contractors, the self-employed, and gig economy workers who will soon be able to apply for PUA benefits.

Under the guidelines of this bill, an estimated 62,000 self-employed workers in New Mexico who were previously not eligible for traditional UI benefits, would be allowed to file a new claim.

In anticipation of the surge of claims that will be filed once PUA is in place, the department will be implementing a new more efficient call-in filing system that will start this Monday, March 30, 2020, however the most efficient method for filing an initial claim continues to be online at www.jobs.state.nm.us.

Individuals who call the Unemployment Insurance Operations Center (1-877-664-6984) will have a designated day to call based on the last number of the applicant's Social Security Number (SSN).

The guide for calling using the last number of SSN is as follows:

0 - 3 : Monday

4 - 6 : Tuesday

7 - 9 : Wednesday

Missed your day: Thursday and Friday

Filing later in the week will not delay payments or affect the date of an individual's claim, since all claims are effective on the Sunday of the week in which they are filed. The Operations Center is available Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

"Governor Lujan Grisham wants all New Mexicans to get through this challenging time safely and Workforce Solutions staff have been working extremely hard to make sure everyone gets the help they need to stay home," said Bill McCamley, Department Secretary. "If you need to apply for benefits, please help us help you by using the website if you can, only calling on the day of your number, and if self-employed waiting until our system is up and running before applying."

The stimulus bill extends unemployment insurance up to 13 weeks and provides temporary additional compensation of \$600 per week, which is in addition to regular UI Benefits.

Once the department receives the funds and guidance for administering the benefits from the Federal Government, **the department anticipates benefits will become available in a few weeks.**

At this time, there is no need for potentially eligible individuals impacted by this bill to call the Unemployment Insurance Operations Center. Notifications and updates will be made available to announce when the additional benefits will be offered and assist with filing a claim.

The press conference announcing preparations for PUA can be found on the department's official YouTube channel at www.YouTube.com/NMDWS, after 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 28, 2020.

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