



**CTDOL NOTIFYING OVER 75,000 INDIVIDUALS POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE
FOR EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION**
Mailed Letters To Provide Application Instructions

May 21, 2020

WETHERSFIELD – The Connecticut Department of Labor is mailing instruction letters on Friday, May 22 to approximately 77,000 individuals who have been identified as potentially eligible to apply for 13 weeks of emergency extended unemployment benefits. Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), is a federal program that extends the 26 weeks of regular state unemployment insurance (UI) to 39 weeks.

According to State Labor Commissioner Kurt Westby, the 13 additional weeks are part of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). PEUC could be retroactive to March 29, 2020 and will be in effect through December 26, 2020. Weekly PEUC benefits are based on wage history using the same formula for determining state UI benefit amounts. It also includes the additional \$600 Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) benefit.

To ensure all residents eligible for the extension apply for these federal benefits, an estimated 65,000 Individuals with a benefit year that ended between July 1, 2019 and the present will be sent instructional letters. These individuals have not filed for benefits during the current benefit year and in many cases may be working. An additional 12,000 letters will be sent to claimants who recently exhausted regular state benefits and have filed in the current year. Approximately 500 letters will also be issued on a weekly basis as other claimants exhaust state unemployment benefits.

To meet federal integrity standards which requires that eligible claimants exhaust any state benefits before qualifying for an extension, the 65,000 individuals will be instructed to follow these steps:

- Use the blue button at www.filectui.com to file a new claim application so the agency can determine if there is eligibility for state benefits.

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- After successfully completing a new claim application, individuals receive a confirmation email from the agency and a Monetary Determination of Unemployment Compensation Benefits (Form UC-58) in the mail.
- If the UC-58 indicates a person does not have a weekly benefit rate, they are monetarily ineligible to apply for state unemployment benefits. They will use the green button at www.filectui.com to access the PEUC site and file a claim application. If eligibility criteria are met, claimants will be entitled to collect up to 13 weeks of extended benefits.
- If the UC-58 indicates a person has a weekly benefit rate, they are monetarily eligible to apply for state benefits. They must first exhaust all entitlement to regular unemployment benefits from Connecticut or any other state before they can file an application for the PEUC extended benefits.

The 12,000 individuals who recently exhausted their 26 weeks of state benefits will receive letters instructing them to file for PEUC benefits. This can be done by using the green button on www.filectui.com and accessing the PEUC application site. If eligibility criteria are met, claimants will be entitled to collect up to 13 weeks of extended benefits. This same letter will be provided to an estimated 500 individuals each week as they exhaust their 26 weeks of state benefits.

“The pandemic has resulted in devastating effects for our families and Connecticut’s economy,” Westby said. “This extension of benefits will help people pay their bills and support businesses in our communities. Unemployment benefits have always offered a lifeline to those who need a helping hand while looking for new employment. The agency now finds itself providing benefits to those who have jobs, but must stay home to keep people healthy and safe. These additional weeks of benefits will go a long way in helping us weather such challenging times.”

An approved state or PEUC claim will include a weekly benefit amount based on wages and the additional \$600 FPUC, with federal guidelines providing retroactive PEUC extension weeks back to March 29, 2020.

Westby also announced that as a result of an increased state unemployment rate, the USDOL has notified the agency that an Extended Benefit (EB) program will be available to individuals that exhaust regular state or federal benefits and the 13-week PEUC extension. Under federal guidelines, states must first provide PEUC benefits before providing the EB program.

A federal formula determines if a state’s unemployment rate has risen to a level high enough to warrant EB. Connecticut triggered onto EB at the end of April with a total insured unemployment rate of 5.09%.

Under Connecticut General Statute Sec. 31-232b, state unemployment insurance law provides for EB to workers exhausting any available unemployment insurance benefits during periods of high unemployment. The statute provides up to 13 weeks of EB benefits when the state is experiencing high unemployment, and an additional seven weeks (to a 20-week maximum) during periods of extremely high unemployment. Currently, the state has triggered onto the 13-week tier of EB benefits.

The work search requirement associated with the EB program can result in the denial of these benefits if a person does not accept any offer of suitable work, fails to apply for suitable work, or fails to actively engage in seeking work. However, the agency is researching this requirement due to the COVID-19 pandemic.