



June 19, 2020

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR UPDATE

More Than 635,000 Unemployment Applications Received, Agency Reduces Processing Times

(WETHERSFIELD, CT) – Today, Connecticut Department of Labor Commissioner (CTDOL) Kurt Westby provided an update on Connecticut unemployment insurance claims numbers and the agency’s progress to establish the new consumer contact center which is on target to launch in mid-July.

The consumer contact center, supported by \$4.0 million in federal funding, is a new project that will increase the number of customer service representatives available and improve capacity at CTDOL by putting more communications platforms in use for customers. Currently, CTDOL has about 100 customer service representatives that are shifted between state and federal programs and about 40 staff answering phone calls. The consumer contact center will add 60 new customer service representatives that can continue to work with applicants via phone and email, but it also adds text, chat, call back, and virtual assistant features. Federal funding for the consumer contact center is available through the end of the year.

Commissioner Westby said, “We are still seeing an unprecedented number of claims applications. The consumer contact center will help us more quickly get benefits out to people while still protecting the system from fraud and criminal activity. Of the applications that we hold, more than 50% contain claimant errors. Starting mid-July, we will have more customer service representatives available to help people make corrections and handle the applications that are in verification for other reasons.”

Of the 635,772 applications received, the Department has processed 617,296 of them. Claims processing time is now down to 1-2 weeks from about six weeks during the height of the pandemic. Customers with out-of-state wages, foreign worker status, or earnings from a federal partner (like the Social Security Administration or the Dept. of Veterans Affairs) require CTDOL to wait for verification before completing the claim.

Since March 13, 2020, CTDOL has disbursed:

- \$900M in state unemployment benefits (UI);
- \$75M in Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA);
- \$38M Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) for individuals who have exhausted regular UI benefits; and
- \$1.76B in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC), the \$600 additional weekly benefit that expires July 25, 2020.

The Department has also released some tips for filers and encourages claimants to read the [FAQs](#) on the website and check the [Quick Clicks](#) section on the filing pages. CTDOL recently launched a social media campaign to answer common questions and address issues. Follow @CTDOL on Twitter and look for #DOLDaily for video shorts that explain common issues and how to solve them.

Tips for filers:

- Double check your application. To prevent fraud and theft, names must match those on file with the Social Security Administration.
- Ensure your bank account and routing information is accurate. When this information is wrong, deposits bounce back to CTDOL and applications are put on hold until information is corrected.
- Avoid bookmarking pages; if you bypass the login screens the account is locked to protect against fraud.
- Avoid autofill; it contributes to errors.
- Verify your email address. If you get locked out of your account, you will be able to reset your password without having to talk to an agent. This is another fraud protection mechanism; without a verified email, CTDOL cannot send reset instructions.
- Use direct deposit into savings or checking accounts to speed up the process. Debit cards take 10 days to 3 weeks longer to process.

***CTDOL offices and American Jobs Centers remain closed to the public. Customers may reach us by [phone and email](#).*

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For Immediate Release

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