FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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L&I Provides Update on New Unemployment System
More than 75,000 individuals successfully file for $59 million in benefits on first day

Harrisburg, PA – Today, Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) Acting Secretary Jennifer Berrier provided an update on Pennsylvania's new Unemployment Compensation (UC) system, which went online yesterday. During the first day, more than 75,000 individuals successfully filed for more than 141,000 claim weeks totaling $59,390,550 in benefits.

"Yesterday was a historic day for Pennsylvania, and while we did have some individuals encounter issues, many individuals were able to file successfully," said Acting Secretary Berrier. "Our team was able to rapidly identify the issues that did occur and get fixes in place within 24 hours of the launch. We're continuing to resolve some smaller issues, but we're in a very good place, especially compared to other states that experienced longstanding issues after their own transition to a modernized UC system. Most importantly, we are on track to get payments into the hands of unemployed Pennsylvanians soon."

Statistics

As of 1:20 PM today, 123,258 individuals filed weekly claims through the new unemployment system. An additional 8,930 individuals filed new claims.

The waiting room was briefly in effect in the morning but as of 2:00 PM no wait times were reported.

"As anticipated, we experienced a surge of individuals visiting the new UC system immediately after its launch was announced," said Acting Secretary Berrier. "The waiting room prevented the site from becoming overloaded and allowed individuals to continue filing without any breaks, which is exactly what we wanted it to do."

Issues Identified and Statuses

L&I staff worked overnight to put fixes in place to resolve two outstanding issues that were identified yesterday.

The default payment type for all users appeared to be set to "debit" due to data about payment preference not arriving from the Pennsylvania Treasury until after the first payment is made. Users will receive their payment through their previously selected method. Users now also have the option to change their payment method for future payments.

Some individuals experienced issues with the new Keystone ID. L&I staff worked overnight to implement system updates, which resolved Keystone ID issues for many individuals. A second update is expected soon to further resolve Keystone ID issues for claimants.

In researching reports of Keystone ID issues, L&I found that some individuals are mistakenly trying to log into the new UC system using their login for the legacy system, which used a PIN. Individuals are asked to first make sure they are using their correct Keystone ID information, which is a username and password that is used across multiple Commonwealth platforms, such as PA CareerLink®. Video guides on creating and logging in with a Keystone ID can be found here.

One New System Check Enhancement Tracker Update

L&I continues to investigate questions and concerns about the new UC system. One new issue was added today to the UC System Check Enhancement Tracker, which provides the public updates on issues as they are identified and resolved.

- Some PEUC claimants with existing claims are unable to file continuing weekly claims because the system is incorrectly marking their claim status as "inactive."

Mitigation efforts are underway for this issue. The UC System Check Enhancement Tracker will continue to be updated as issues are resolved.

Filing Timeline

The new UC system allows individuals to file anytime during the claim week, which begins at 12:00 a.m. Sunday and ends at 11:59 p.m. Saturday. Unlike the legacy system, which was inaccessible during certain hours and on Saturday to allow for claims processing, the new system is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Individuals can also file for the current claim week during the next eight weeks, which provides ample time to ensure all individuals are receiving the payments they are eligible to receive.

Filing by phone, also called IVR, will come online Thursday as the next phase of the transition to the new UC system. Individuals with an existing claim do not need a Keystone ID to file using IVR and will instead be asked to provide secure information such as their PIN and Social Security number.

Resources

L&I has provided a library of resources to assist users with familiarizing themselves with the new system, including user guides for claimants and employers and topic-specific instructional videos. L&I is also offering a series of workshops, with upcoming workshops on:

- Thursday, June 10 at 6:00 PM for Claimants (English)
- Thursday, June 10 at 7:30 PM for Claimants (Spanish)

Recordings of each workshop will be uploaded to this page on www.uc.pa.gov.

Programs on the new system are Unemployment Compensation and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation. Historic information for individuals who have filed on the Extended Benefits program will also be on the new system.

The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program is not affected by the change to the new system.

For more information and updates on unemployment benefits programs, visit www.uc.pa.gov or follow L&I on Facebook or Twitter.

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