



SC Department of Employment and Workforce

NEWS RELEASE

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Immediate Release

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S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce Begins Paying PUA Extension Program

Columbia, S.C. – The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program extension is now active in South Carolina. Over the weekend, the Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) began issuing payments to claimants who have exhausted their 39 weeks provided through the CARES Act.

“After implementing the \$300 FPUC payment to South Carolinians in record time, we are now pleased to announce we have begun the PUA extension program less than a week later. This will provide benefits to people who are self-employed or those who were found ineligible for state unemployment insurance benefits,” said DEW Executive Director Dan Ellzey. “Knowing that the holidays and expiration of the CARES Act funds have put a strain on people throughout our state, our agency continues to work extremely hard to initiate the new programs.”

The extension made available through the *Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act* will provide an additional 11 weeks of benefits to those on the PUA program. This raises the maximum number of weeks of PUA benefits from 39 weeks to 50 weeks total, and individuals receiving benefits as part of this extension will also get the \$300 FPUC in addition to their weekly benefit amount.

Claimants were notified of the extension via communication through the MyBenefits portal, along with their next steps of the process.

Under the PUA extension of the *Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act*, states are authorized to pay the additional 11 weeks of PUA with claim week ending January 2, 2021. Eligible claimants were backdated appropriately to ensure they received benefits for both the January 2nd and the January 9th claim weeks. Claimants may need to certify any weeks available in their MyBenefits portal in order to determine eligibility and receive back pay of benefits.

Included in this extension is something called the “Phase-out Period.” This is for claimants who may still have available weeks left when PUA ends on March 13, 2021. If an individual is eligible to receive PUA benefits for the week ending March 13, 2021, and has not exhausted the maximum number of 50 weeks on their PUA claim, they may continue to receive benefits, as eligible, until they either exhaust the full 50 weeks or until claim week ending April 10, 2021 – whichever comes first.

DEW is continuing to work through the guidance as it is issued from USDOL and will implement the two remaining programs, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) and Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation (MEUC) in phases as quickly as possible.



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As DEW is able to build and apply the programs of the *Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act*, the agency will post updates to the website, through social media, send information and instructions to claimants, and share information with our media partners.

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About the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce

The S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce is putting South Carolinians to work. The agency has four missions: (1) workforce development; (2) free job match employment services; (3) unemployment insurance; and (4) labor market information. All four missions contribute to workforce development. The agency is dedicated to advancing South Carolina through services and programs that meet the needs of our businesses, jobseekers and those looking to advance their careers.