



For Immediate Release
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Iowa Workforce Development reports initial unemployment insurance claims filed for week of December 13-19, 2020

DES MOINES - The number of initial unemployment claims in Iowa, filed between Sunday, Dec. 13, and Saturday, Dec. 19, was 7,645, an increase of 1,119 from last week's adjusted numbers. There were 7,013 initial claims by individuals who work and live in Iowa, and 632 claims by individuals who work in Iowa and live in another state. The number of continuing weekly unemployment claims was 38,318, an increase of 200 from the previous week. November through February are typically the months IWD sees the most unemployment claims, driven by increased claims in construction, agriculture, landscaping and manufacturing due to seasonal layoffs. For the week ending Dec. 19, 2020, nearly 68.9% of claimants indicated their claims were not COVID-19 related, which is an increase from 58.3% the previous week.

The U.S. Department of Labor adjusted last week's initial claim number to 6,526 (a decrease of 423) and continuing claims to 38,118 (a decrease of 630 for a total decrease of 1,053 overall). Iowa Workforce Development relies upon the weekly data released by the U.S. Department of Labor to report its numbers and as such, adopts the revisions to the previously published data.

IowaWORKS Centers are not providing in-person services. Customers are encouraged to log onto IowaWORKS.gov or the mobile application to continue their work search activities. Further assistance can also be received by visiting the website or calling customer service.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) are scheduled to end December 26th in Iowa and this will be the last week payments will be made for those programs. On December 21, 2020, Congress passed extensions for PUA and PEUC, however the legislation has not been signed and it is unclear when that will happen. Additionally, once it is signed, USDOL will have to issue guidance before changes can be made and the programs can be restarted. We therefore expect a gap in payments for these programs of an unknown period of time. We will work diligently to implement the necessary changes as soon as we possibly can. IWD will provide updates on our website and social media pages as they become available. We will have limited resources available to answer customer service calls over the holiday season. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

For the week ending Dec. 19, 2020, unemployment insurance benefit payments totaled \$12,191,938.58. The following industries had the most claims:

- Construction (2,045)
- Manufacturing (1,005)
- Industry Not Available - Self-employed, Independent Contractors, etc (753)
- Administrative, Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services (710)
- Accommodation & Food Services (436)

A total of \$1,042,200 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) benefits was paid, which were retroactive payments as the program ended July 25, 2020. Since April 4, 2020, a total of \$1,627,274,233 in FPUC benefits has been paid.

A total of \$4,317,186 was paid in PUA benefits. Since April 13, 2020, a total of \$166,674,306.54 in PUA benefits has been paid.

A total of \$7,426,839.79 in benefits has been paid in PEUC benefits. Since May 27, 2020, a total of \$172,816,001.64 in PEUC benefits have been paid.

A total of \$35,275.34 was paid in State Extended Benefits (EB). Since July 21, 2020, a total of \$17,702,333.85 in State EB has been paid. The United States Department of Labor notified Iowa that due to our economic recovery, the State EB program ended the week ending October 31, 2020. EB cannot be paid to any claimant for weeks of unemployment after October 31, 2020, even if they have not yet received 13 weeks of EB. Those claimants who lose EB may be eligible for the PUA benefit program if they have remaining benefit weeks available in their current benefit year. Claimants may apply for PUA at www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information.

Claimants receiving unemployment are required to perform weekly work searches. Those who will be required to begin work searches will be notified by IWD. We have also posted updates on our website regarding this requirement. There are currently almost 65,000 job openings at <https://www.iowaworks.gov>. Not all claimants will be required to begin work searches, including for example, those who are receiving PUA benefits due to a medical condition or lack of childcare.

Employers are required to notify their employees about Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code Section 871-22.19. The requirement ensures that workers are aware of the benefits they may be eligible for if they become unemployed or experience a reduction in hours.

Employees and employers who have questions regarding returning to work should review the Frequently Asked Questions for each group on our website. Assistance for employers can be found here:
<https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/content-files/FAQs%20Employers%2009.3.20.pdf>

Employees can find assistance here:
<https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/sites/search.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/files/content-files/FAQs%20Workers%2009.10.20.pdf>

For more information on the total data for this week's unemployment claims, please visit <https://www.iowalmi.gov/unemployment-insurance-statistics>

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