



For Immediate Release
December 31, 2020

Media Contact: communications@iwd.iowa.gov
515-725-4116

Iowa Workforce Development reports initial unemployment insurance claims filed for week of December 20-26, 2020

DES MOINES - The number of initial unemployment claims in Iowa, filed between Sunday, Dec. 20, and Saturday, Dec. 26, was 7,644, an increase of 373 from last week's adjusted numbers. There were 7,101 initial claims by individuals who work and live in Iowa, and 543 claims by individuals who work in Iowa and live in another state. The number of continuing weekly unemployment claims was 38,296, an increase of 804 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. 26, 2020, nearly 70.6% of claimants indicated their claims were not COVID-19 related, which is an increase from 68.9% the previous week.

The U.S. Department of Labor adjusted last week's initial claim number to 7,271 (a decrease of 374) and continuing claims to 37,492 (a decrease of 826 for a total decrease of 1,200 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.

On Dec. 27, 2020, the President signed into law extensions for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) programs which were set to end December 26th. IWD will therefore be able to prevent a gap in payments for either of these programs and individuals currently receiving benefits from the programs, will continue to receive them without interruption. IWD continues to await guidance from U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) before Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) benefits and new applications for PUA and PEUC benefits filed after December 27th can be paid. IWD anticipates the guidance will be issued within the next two weeks. We 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. 26, 2020, unemployment insurance benefit payments totaled \$10,653,383.50. The following industries had the most claims:

- Construction (1,884)
- Manufacturing (1,312)
- Industry Not Available - Self-employed, Independent Contractors, etc. (736)
- Administrative, Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services (564)
- Accommodation & Food Services (414)

A total of \$748,200 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 \$1,628,022,433 in FPUC benefits has been paid.

A total of \$4,013,548 was paid in PUA benefits. Since April 13, 2020, a total of \$170,687,854.54 in PUA benefits has been paid.

A total of \$6,793,708.10 in benefits has been paid in PEUC benefits. Since May 27, 2020, a total of \$179,609,709.74 in PEUC benefits have been paid.

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 68,000 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>

###