



For Immediate Release
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Iowa Workforce Development reports initial unemployment insurance claims filed for week of January 31 – February 6, 2021

DES MOINES - The number of initial unemployment claims in Iowa, filed between Sunday, Jan. 31, and Saturday, Feb. 6, was 6,173, an increase of 395 from last week's adjusted numbers. There were 5,594 initial claims by individuals who work and live in Iowa, and 579 claims by individuals who work in Iowa and live in another state. The number of continuing weekly unemployment claims was 48,701, an increase of 2,898 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 Feb. 6, 2021, nearly 67.5% of claimants indicated their claims were not COVID-19 related, which is an increase from 63.5% the previous week.

The U.S. Department of Labor adjusted last week's initial claim number to 5,778 (a decrease of 160) and continuing claims to 45,803 (a decrease of 905 for a total decrease of 1,065 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.

IWD will implement the new PEUC benefit extensions program February 16, 2021. Claimants should begin receiving deposits within 5-7 business days. We expect the PUA extended benefit programs to begin paying February 17, 2021. Most claimants who were already on the PUA program previously did not see any lapse in payments. IWD will automatically enroll all Iowans who are eligible for the PEUC and PUA program extension. There is no need to call or reapply for the additional PEUC or PUA weeks and if any additional information is needed, IWD will contact claimants directly. We appreciate your patience as we worked to implement the new programs created under the second stimulus bill.

Claimants who have not yet received a U.S. Bank ReliaCard® and wish to receive payments by that method, must make a payment election on the IWD website, by email (uiclaimshelp@iwd.iowa.gov), or by telephone (1-866-239-0843), to be issued payments without further delay. IWD estimates that over 80% of those who had previously elected to

receive a debit card have either received the card or the card is in production. Cards are being mailed in an expedited manner from U.S. Bank to decrease waiting time. Claimants who have filed a weekly claim on Sunday should receive deposits on their cards each week. Claimants are encouraged to activate their cards upon receipt to determine if they have received a deposit. IWD continues to work diligently to resolve the issue and provide payments to affected customers as soon as possible.

For the week ending Feb. 6, 2021, unemployment insurance benefit payments totaled \$16,596,402.72. The following industries had the most claims:

- Construction (1,176)
- Industry Not Available - Self-employed, Independent Contractors, etc (1,095)
- Manufacturing (732)
- Retail Trade (462)
- Health Care & Social Assistance (457)

A total of \$19,193,400 in FPUC benefits was paid, which include retroactive payments and reauthorized payments that went into effect on Dec. 27, 2020. Since April 4, 2020, a total of \$1,687,716,133 in FPUC benefits has been paid.

A total of \$4,491,859 was paid in PUA benefits. Since April 13, 2020, a total of \$197,616,359.54 in PUA benefits has been paid.

A total of \$2,937,765.70 in benefits has been paid in PEUC benefits. Since May 27, 2020, a total of \$206,324,779.56 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/covid19-information-employers>

Employees can find assistance here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/covid19-information-workers>

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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