



For Immediate Release

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Iowa Workforce Development reports initial unemployment insurance claims filed for week of January 24 - 30, 2021

DES MOINES - The number of initial unemployment claims in Iowa, filed between Sunday, Jan. 24, and Saturday, Jan. 30, was 5,938, an increase of 687 from last week's adjusted numbers. There were 5,344 initial claims by individuals who work and live in Iowa, and 594 claims by individuals who work in Iowa and live in another state. The number of continuing weekly unemployment claims was 46,708, an increase of 405 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 Jan. 30, 2021, nearly 63.5% of claimants indicated their claims were not COVID-19 related, which is a decrease from 64.6% the previous week.

The U.S. Department of Labor adjusted last week's initial claim number to 5,251 (a decrease of 259) and continuing claims to 46,303 (a decrease of 851 for a total decrease of 1,110 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.

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 (uicclaimshelp@iwd.iowa.gov), or by telephone (1-866-239-0843), to be issued payments without further delay. IWD estimates that approximately 70% 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.

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.

IWD has started issuing the \$300 additional per week Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) payment to all eligible individuals including retroactive payments. FPUC payments are issued in conjunction with state Unemployment Insurance (UI), Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) payments.

Extended PEUC and PUA benefits are not being paid at this time. If your claim for state UI, PEUC or PUA were exhausted on or after December 27, 2020, there will be a gap in your 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. If any information is needed, IWD will contact claimants directly. IWD is working diligently to release all eligible payments as quickly as possible, including any additional weeks of benefits a claimant could potentially be eligible for with the implementation of the additional weeks for the program extension. We appreciate your patience as we make the necessary programming changes required by the newest stimulus bill.

For the week ending Jan. 30, 2021, unemployment insurance benefit payments totaled \$15,125,849.99. The following industries had the most claims:

- Construction (1,134)
- Industry Not Available - Self-employed, Independent Contractors, etc (1,005)
- Manufacturing (736)
- Retail Trade (478)
- Health Care & Social Assistance (405)

A total of \$18,301,500 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 \$1,668,522,733 in FPUC benefits has been paid.

A total of \$4,766,435 was paid in PUA benefits. Since April 13, 2020, a total of \$193,124,500.54 in PUA benefits has been paid.

A total of \$3,442,319.39 in benefits has been paid in PEUC benefits. Since May 27, 2020, a total of \$203,387,013.86 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 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/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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