New Unemployment System Now Online
Changeover from archaic mainframe to modern system complete
Unemployment Compensation claimants can now file at benefits.uc.pa.gov

Harrisburg, PA – Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) Acting Secretary Jennifer Berrier today announced that the new unemployment benefits system is now online and accepting claims at benefits.uc.pa.gov.

"Today, Pennsylvania's Unemployment Compensation system took a giant leap forward not just in terms of technology, but in the quality of service we are able to provide," said Acting Secretary Berrier. "L&I staff have been working hard to make the transition to this new system seamless for users. As we see users logging on and successfully filing their claims in this faster and easier-to-use system, we are thrilled to see our vision of a modern, intuitive unemployment system has finally come to fruition."

The new unemployment compensation (UC) system replaces a 40-year-old outdated mainframe that made filing for unemployment benefits complicated for users and processing benefits cumbersome for staff. The new system makes filing for benefits easier and faster for users. Staff will need less time to process claims, which is expected to help reduce the number of users waiting for their claim to be processed.

A soft launch of the new UC system took place just after 3 a.m. this morning, with more than 41,000 individuals filing claims by 10:40 a.m.

A phone issued independent of the new system launch that affected multiple state agencies temporarily caused L&I's unemployment hotlines to become unavailable. The phone system came back online at around 11 a.m. and individuals with questions about the new system can call the Unemployment Compensation Service Center at 888-313-7284 or email uchelp@pa.gov.

L&I is actively reviewing feedback from individuals using the new system and has identified two areas where several users have had questions. The first is that multiple users who receive payments by direct deposit have reported seeing their payment type listed as "debit card." Because payment data is stored primarily by the Pennsylvania Treasury and not the UC system, this is just a display issue and is not a problem with payment type. After a person's payment is made, the correct payment method will be displayed. Users do not need to take any action to correct this should they see "debit card" listed instead of direct deposit.

L&I is also aware that a small percentage of users are experiencing an issue logging in with their Keystone ID or when they attempt to change their payment type. This issue has been identified as being related to server connectivity, and a fix is already underway.

As a reminder, L&I is notifying affected users of status updates and system upgrades through social media, direct messaging, and on the UC System Check Enhancements Tracker.

"While we have seen success with the system so far, we are continuing to monitor it and have staff ready to identify and resolve any issues that might arise," said Acting Secretary Berrier. "We will continue to update the public regularly as adjustments and improvements are made to our new unemployment system."

Waiting Room

Because of the shortened filing week as well as interest in using the new system, L&I has anticipated higher than normal usage today. When the number of users on the new system exceeds a set capacity, the system automatically instates a "waiting room" page to prevent slowness or crashing for all users. The waiting room page places users into a queue in order of their arrival on the page, then admits them as other users leave the site.

Users who encounter the waiting room page are reminded to avoid reloading, exiting and reentering the page, and using an unstable connection (such as a cell phone) if possible as they will be placed at the end of the queue when they return to the page.

Additionally, users are reminded that fewer individuals file for their weekly benefits later in the week and during non-business hours, so they are least likely to encounter the waiting room during these times.

Resources

L&I has provided a library of resources to assist users with familiarizing themselves with the new system.

Claimant User Guides:

- How to login (Spanish)
- File weekly certifications (Spanish)
- Open a new claim (Spanish)
- Overpayment management (Spanish)
- Appeal process (Spanish)
- Fact-finding (Spanish)
- Dashboard - Quick Start Guide

Employer User Guides:

- Request relief from charges
- Granting access to Third-Party Administrators

Claimant and Employer User Guides:

- Appeal process
- Fact-finding

L&I is also offering topic-specific instructional videos, including:

- Login – Create a New Keystone ID
- Login with an Existing Keystone ID
- Reset a Forgotten Password
- How to File an Appeal
- Waiting Room 101
- How to Change Communication Preferences

L&I is offering a series of workshops and other easy-to-use tools and helpful resources for users, including the legislative, advocate, and employer communities, to guide them through the transition to the new system.

Upcoming Workshop Dates and Links:

- Wednesday, June 9 at 2:00 PM for Claimants (English)
- Thursday, June 10 at 6:00 PM for Claimants (English)
- Thursday, June 10 at 7:30 PM for Claimants (Spanish)

A full list of scheduled workshops and links to connect to them are here. Recordings of each workshop will be uploaded to this page on www.uc.pa.gov.

Programs on the new system are Unemployment Compensation and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation. Historic information for individuals who have filed on the Extended Benefits program will also be on the new system.

The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program is not affected by the change to the new system.

For more information and updates on unemployment benefits programs, visit www.uc.pa.gov or follow L&I on Facebook or Twitter.

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