



Lockhart Taylor, Assistant Secretary

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DES to Triple Staff to Meet Unprecedented Surge in Unemployment Claims

RALEIGH — In the last month, more than 630,000 people have filed for unemployment insurance benefits in North Carolina, mostly due to the impacts of COVID-19. By the end of the next week, the Division of Employment Security plans to have more than three times its original staffing in place to respond to the surge in claims and ensure payments go out as quickly as possible.

DES expects to have more than 1,600 people working to process claims and issue payments.

- Prior to COVID-19, DES had a staff of approximately 500.
- The division has since added 403 people to the current efforts.
 - 95 time-limited and temporary staff
 - 100 N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions staff
 - 200 private call center agents
 - 6 N.C. Department of Information Technology staff
 - 2 N.C. Department of Agriculture print operators
- By the end of next week, DES will have engaged an additional 600 private call center agents and 100 Division of Workforce Solutions staff.

“This will be the largest number of people working to provide unemployment benefits in North Carolina’s history,” said Lockhart Taylor, assistant secretary of the Division of Employment Security. “We are prepared to take whatever steps we need to take to deliver the help North Carolinians need during these difficult times.”

In addition to providing state unemployment benefits, DES will issue payments for three different federal programs. This week, DES completed implementation of the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program, which pays an additional \$600 in weekly unemployment insurance to eligible claimants. Eligible North Carolinians are now receiving these payments.

DES estimates its online filing system will be ready to accept claims around April 25 for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, the program for individuals not eligible for regular unemployment insurance. The division is also continuing to work on a timeline to provide Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation, the federal program that allows for up to 13 additional weeks of benefits.


Updates about eligibility and how to apply for these benefits can be found on des.nc.gov


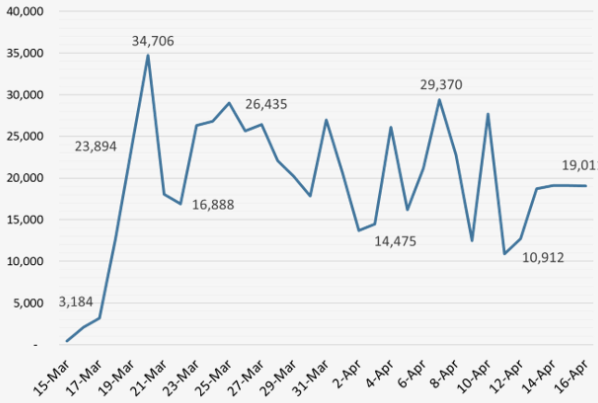
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DES has now paid out a total of more than \$350 million to more than 210,000 people for unemployment claims effective as of March 15.

 PAYMENTS For Claims Effective as of March 15, 2020	\$358,099,922 Total Paid	State Unemployment Insurance \$129,628,400
	211,672 Claimants Paid	Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation \$228,471,522

 FILINGS	636,894* Claims Filed March 15 – April 16		Initial Claims Filed 
	Online 633,056	By Phone 3,838	
	*551,261 Related to COVID-19		
	19,011 Claims Filed April 16		

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