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Labor Secretary Brownlee discusses success at Unemployment Insurance Contact Center

TOPEKA — Kansas Department of Labor Secretary Karin Brownlee today announced successful improvements made at the Unemployment Insurance Contact Center, and how claimants needing assistance from KDOL are now better served. Just three months into the new administration, Secretary Brownlee's emphasis on creating a new culture within the agency, and making customer service a top priority has made a significant impact. Data analysis of the Contact Center has shown dramatic improvements in all areas.

"I'm very proud of the hard work everyone is doing. We have so many great people working at the Kansas Department of Labor, and they all recognize how truly important our services are to the people of Kansas. These improvements demonstrate a complete team effort."

The Unemployment Insurance Contact Center handles thousands of calls a week from Kansans seeking assistance with their unemployment claims. Since Secretary Brownlee took the helm at the Department of Labor in early January, the UI Contact Center has seen dramatic improvements in virtually every statistical category. Customer Service Representatives are answering more calls every day, on hold wait time for customers is a fraction of what it used to be, and forced-disconnected calls have been virtually eliminated.

Improvements in the Contact Center are demonstrated by the following data:

- On average, KDOL completes 2,247 calls per day. A completed call is counted as from the time a claimant's call is answered, to when the caller's issue is resolved. This equals a 579 percent increase in calls completed.
- The average wait time for a caller to be on hold is only three minutes. This means calls are being answered nearly 10 times faster than were previously. When a Customer Service Representative answers a call, 60 percent of calls are answered in less than two minutes, and 76 percent are answered in less than four minutes.
- There have been zero force-disconnected calls for the last three weeks, compared to the up to 25,000 force-disconnected calls a day experienced at the beginning of January. Force-disconnected calls are caused by an overloaded system unable to handle the number of claimants waiting on hold—both increased completed calls and decreased wait time have eliminated this problem.
- There have been zero customers waiting in the call queue at the end of the day for the last 24 working days. Previously, many customers on hold were disconnected at the end of the day.

“We have great leadership at the Contact Center. Our supervisors are now able to react and make decisions based on what they feel is best—they know what works and what hasn’t worked in the past. The proof is right in front of us,” Brownlee stated.

Brownlee was appointed Secretary of Labor by Governor Sam Brownback in January. She served as a Kansas State Senator from Olathe for the past 14 years, during which she served as chair of the Commerce Committee, often working on Workers Compensation and Unemployment Insurance issues.

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