

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kansas Department of Labor Announces Leadership Restructuring, New Hires

Topeka – The Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) today announced that three new directors have joined the agency, while other key staff members have transitioned into new roles as part of a leadership restructuring within the agency. These moves are designed to enable the agency to work more efficiently and effectively with the ultimate goal of improving customer service and delivering benefits more quickly to the thousands of Kansans who are in need of financial support due to the pandemic.

“Governor Kelly charged me with improving operations at the agency so that we can better assist Kansans in need,” Acting Secretary Ryan Wright said. “The Department of Labor plays an integral role ensuring that Kansas rebounds as quickly as possible from the devastating impacts of COVID-19. I am certain that this leadership team is prepared to handle the many challenges in front of it, including the unprecedented demand for unemployment benefits and the remaining challenges of the agency’s legacy technology system.

“These personnel changes enable KDOL to be a strategic partner in helping to improve Kansans’ lives and our state’s economy,” Wright said.

- **Peter Brady** has been named as **Deputy Secretary** for KDOL. The position is newly created and Brady will oversee the Communications, Government Affairs, Fiscal and Unemployment Insurance Administration and Benefits teams. Prior to being named to the new position, he served as Director for the Industrial Safety and Health division and as a legislative liaison for the agency.
- **Brett Flachsbarth** continues to serve as **Deputy Secretary** for KDOL with a new portfolio overseeing the Human Resources, Industrial Safety and Health, IT, Labor Market Information Services, Legal and Workers’ Compensation teams. Flachsbarth will also oversee the agency’s modernization efforts, specifically the unemployment benefit system.
- **Jerry Grasso** was recently named KDOL’s **Communications Director**. Prior to this role, Grasso was the Vice President of Marketing and Communications for the YMCA of Central Kentucky.
- Former KDOL Communications and Legislative Director, **Julie Menghini**, has transitioned into the fulltime role as **Director of Government Affairs**.
- **Bill Periman** was named as KDOL’s **Chief Information Technology Officer**. Prior to joining the agency, Periman worked at DXC Technology as a program manager.
- **Laurel Searles** has become the **Director of Unemployment Insurance Administration**. Before stepping into this job, she was the agency’s Unemployment Insurance Director. The new role will

oversee KDOL's Unemployment Insurance Appeals, Reporting, Fraud, Tax and Contributions teams.

- **Amy Selm** is KDOL's new **Director of Unemployment Insurance Benefits**. The position was created in response to the number of new programs designed to assist those seeking unemployment benefits. Previously, she was with the Kansas Department of Commerce serving as the Assistance Team Manager for Business and Community Development.
- **Allen Vinyard** has been promoted to the role of **Director of Industrial Safety and Health**. He has recently served as the interim director, and prior to this, had been a Consultation Project Manager with KDOL since 2018.

Since March 15, KDOL has paid out more than two million weekly claims totaling over \$1.8 billion between regular unemployment and the federal pandemic programs. For more information, or to apply for unemployment benefits, go to www.GetKansasBenefits.gov.

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