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KDOL announces processing of \$107,145,399 in unemployment benefits, including PUA payments

TOPEKA – Kansas Secretary of Labor Delía García announced the processing of payments for regular unemployment, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) overnight totaling an unprecedented \$107,145,399. The additional \$600 FPUC payments will add to the PUA weekly benefit. Payments should hit bank accounts by Thursday or Friday. Claimants issued new debit cards should see them next week as issuance of debit cards takes seven to 10 days.

KDOL continues to review less than 24,000 PUA applications in order to determine eligibility for the program. Fraud related to the PUA program is rampant throughout the nation, and KDOL must ensure benefits are not paid erroneously. Many states rushed to issue payments and are now grappling with recovering overpayments and responding to data breaches. Kansas is not in that difficult position.

PUA is a broad program that expands access to unemployment, in addition to what state and federal law already pays. PUA includes those who are impacted directly by COVID-19 and traditionally cannot access unemployment such as self-employed, independent contractors, gig workers (such as Uber and Lyft drivers), employees of religious organizations, and those who lack sufficient work history or have been disqualified for state benefits. FPUC is the additional \$600 weekly payment added to an eligible claimant's weekly benefit amount that is available for weeks from March 29, 2020 to July 25, 2020.

“This is good news for Kansas workers and business owners who have been impacted by this pandemic,” García said. “I look forward to more good news in the very near future as more PUA claims pay out and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) goes live. To date, we have paid out more than \$642,010,822 through the different unemployment benefits programs, providing relief for Kansas workers and business owners who are struggling to feed their families, pay their bills and keep their businesses viable during this crisis.”

For more information or to apply for unemployment benefits, go to www.GetKansasBenefits.gov or www.PUA.GetKansasBenefits.gov.

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