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KDOL Begins Paying Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation Today

Topeka – The Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) today announced that Phase 1 of the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) program extension has begun paying out to approximately 4,800 claimants. Approximately 370 Phase Two and Three claimants will begin receiving payments beginning the week of March 1.

Due to U.S. DOL guidance and requirements, KDOL has had to write new code to update its antiquated mainframe technology and test the solutions to be able to execute PEUC payments for Phase Two and Three claimants.

KDOL and the Kelly Administration had previously urged congress to pass relief legislation in the fall of 2020 to avoid a pause in federal program payouts – PUA and PEUC – that were set expire on December 26, 2020. But former President Trump did not sign the relief package until December 27.

PEUC is a temporary federal extension of Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits established under the CARES Act that provided 13 additional weeks of benefits to claimants who exhausted their regular UI benefits. The Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act of 2020 (Continued Assistance Act), increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PEUC program from 13 weeks to 24 weeks.

Important information for PEUC claimants:

For all claimants eligible for PEUC payment, **please continue** to file for weekly claims at www.GetKansasBenefits.gov.

Without further federal action, the PEUC program will expire on March 14, 2021, meaning the last payable week for PEUC is the week ending March 13, 2021. If you receive a PEUC payment for the week ending March 13, 2021 and have remaining entitlement on your claim, you may be eligible to participate in a phase-out period and may continue to collect PEUC through week ending April 10, 2021.

Claimants who establish PEUC eligibility with respect to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after Dec. 27, 2020 are potentially eligible for 24 weeks of PEUC benefits.

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Any claimant who established eligibility for PEUC before Dec. 27, 2020 (including those who have exhausted PEUC and current PEUC recipients), and who continue to meet all eligibility requirements, will have 11 weeks of benefits added to their PEUC accounts (i.e. the difference between the new amount of 24 weeks and the previously-established amount of 13 weeks). The additional amounts of PEUC are only payable for weeks of unemployment beginning on or after Dec. 27, 2020.

Claimants currently receiving benefits under the PEUC program should continue to file weekly claims if they remain unemployed. Claimants who are unemployed after Dec. 27, 2020 with a previous PEUC claim, but are no longer filing for benefits under any UI benefit program, may reopen their PEUC claims. Claimants currently filing a claim under the PUA program who previously exhausted PEUC, and who continue to be unemployed, will need to reopen their PEUC claim because of the additional PEUC benefits available. Claimants may only collect PUA if they have exhausted all entitlement to PEUC.

Since March 15, 2020, KDOL has paid out over 4 million weekly claims totaling over \$2.7 billion between regular unemployment and the federal pandemic programs. For more information, or to apply for unemployment benefits, go to www.GetKansasBenefits.gov. Since installing the department's new security patch last week, KDOL has blocked nearly five million fraudulent login attempts.

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