

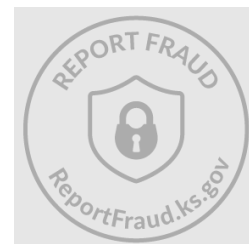
401 SW Topeka Blvd.  
Topeka, KS 66603-3182



Phone: (785) 296-0901  
Fax: (785) 296-0753  
KDOL.Communications@ks.gov  
dol.ks.gov

Amber Shultz, Acting Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor



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Contact: Jerry Grasso  
Communications Director  
[KDOL.Communications@ks.gov](mailto:KDOL.Communications@ks.gov)

## **KDOL ANNOUNCES SERVER MIGRATION, ADDITIONAL CONTACT CENTER STAFF AND EXPANDED CALL CENTER HOURS**

*Additional Server Capacity Enables KDOL to Handle More Claims*

*Expanded Staff and Availability to Help with Volume of Claimant Calls*

**Topeka** – Today, Governor Laura Kelly announced that the Kansas Department of Labor is upgrading the agency’s server capacity and adding more availability, staff and support at the contact center, which is experiencing ongoing increases in call volume from claimants who are in need of speaking with customer service agents to help with their claims.

KDOL’s planned server migration this month will expand KDOL’s capacity for customer service representatives to simultaneously engage with the software to handle claim data and information, and upload of pertinent claimant documentation.

“The goal in 2020 was to stabilize KDOL’s antiquated technology, while concurrently building out new programs for the federal CARES Act programs. While KDOL had their struggles, they were successful and claimants were paid,” said Governor Laura Kelly. “In February, the agency added a security solution to stop fraudsters, and now, it is adding more server capacity to be able to better help customer service representatives work with claimants as we move into the 2021 federal extensions.”

### **Details surrounding the increased staffing and support include:**

- The onboarding and addition of more than 500 customer service agents and surge staff, with the plan to have these agents deploying on the phones between mid-March and mid-April. The first 77 of these agents will begin supporting the contact center by the beginning of next week;
- Additional training for certain surge staff members to handle more complex unemployment insurance benefit cases, also to be fully operational by the beginning of April;
- Starting this weekend, contact center representatives will be available on Saturdays between the hours of 8:00 am until 5:00 pm, Sundays between 1:00 pm until 5:00 pm; and starting next Monday, March 8, weekday hours will be extended from 8:00 am until 9:00 pm.

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### **Details surrounding the impact of auto dialers on KDOL's contact center:**

From Feb. 22 – Feb. 27, KDOL averaged approximately 358,000 unique calls per day into the contact center. Monday, March 1, twenty phone numbers called approximately 22,000 times, and not one of those calls from an auto dialer was able to get through to a customer service agent due to technical restrictions. Over the course of the past week, KDOL has received over 1.3 million calls from auto dialers. These auto dialers keep other claimants from getting into the system to be able to speak with an operator.

“We understand the extraordinary frustration claimants are experiencing trying to get through to our customer service representatives, and we are continuing to bring on new staff to address the historic volume of callers,” said Amber Shultz, Acting Secretary of Labor. “The problem is auto dialers are not compatible with our system. Instead of speeding up call times for claimants, they clog the lines and prevent others from calling in.”

The agency's busiest times for the contact center are between the hours of 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 – 2:00 p.m., daily. If possible, claimants should avoid calling during these hours.

KDOL's highest call volume day of the week are typically Mondays, the lowest is Friday.

Amelia, KDOL's chat bot, which can be accessed through the agency's web site, can also answer many claimant questions. As of today, Amelia has served under one million total conversations and has exchanged over five million messages with claimants.

Since March 15, 2020, KDOL has paid out over 4.1 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](http://www.GetKansasBenefits.gov)

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