

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, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2021

Contact: Jerry Grasso
Communications Director
KDOL.Communications@ks.gov



KDOL Announces Update to PUA Backlog Numbers

Topeka: Today, the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) announced changes in its reporting of the federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claimant backlog.

Due to Congress' lack of action at the end of 2020, a gap period was created in federal benefit payments between the CARES Act and the Continued Assistance Act. This gap caused a confusing situation for claimants who had exhausted regular state unemployment benefits and the existing extension of benefits through the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) program.

Without the extension at the federal level, claimants were instructed to file for PUA, which is intended to be the *benefit of last resort* for unemployment benefits. When the Continued Assistance Act was signed Dec. 27, 2020, those claimants became eligible for further PEUC benefits, but development and deployment took time in KDOL's archaic, legacy IT system. KDOL began paying out Continued Assistance Act extension benefits in February. At that time, the agency reviewed the outstanding PUA filings and determined that many claimants were eligible for one of the other unemployment programs, such as PEUC or regular unemployment insurance, and in many cases were paid benefits for the weeks in which they had filed PUA claims. In fact, of the originally reported PUA backlog, 66 percent, or 10,100 claimants, fell in this category.

An additional 25 percent, or 3,770 claimant applications, were deemed to be likely fraudulent. KDOL's Fraud Team is further reviewing these claims now.

As of May 12, 2021 of the approximately 15,300 total PUA claimants:

- There are **approximately 1,500 PUA claimants** with PUA issues that need to be adjudicated. This is the backlog of individuals awaiting PUA adjudication and our team is working to reduce this number.
- There are **approximately 10,100** claimants who have been moved from PUA to another unemployment program where they are able to receive benefits.

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, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

- There are **approximately 3,770** claims that are likely to be fraudulent

Moving forward, KDOL will regularly report the claimants with PUA issues that need to be adjudicated - similar to the way this is reported within Regular UI.

Since March 15, 2020 KDOL has paid out over 4.3 million weekly claims totaling over \$2.9 billion between regular unemployment and the federal pandemic programs. For more information, or to apply for unemployment benefits, go to www.GetKansasBenefits.gov.

###

Follow the Kansas Department of Labor:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)