



JB Pritzker, Governor
Thomas D. Chan, Acting Director

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Rebecca Cisco | 217.524.1219
rebecca.cisco@illinois.gov

IDES Announces Weekly Initial Unemployment Claims Data as Department Continues to Process Record-Breaking Number of Claims *More Than 650,000 Claims Filed Since March 1*

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) today released new statewide data showing the department processed over 141,000 new initial unemployment claims for the week ending April 11. As of March 1, the department has processed more than 650,000 initial unemployment claims, 12 times more than the number of claims over the corresponding time period last year, when it processed 53,000 initial unemployment claims. It is also five times greater than the amount processed during the first six weeks of the Great Recession. Statewide unemployment claims data, which reflects activity for the week prior, will be available on the [IDES website](#) every Thursday afternoon.

To meet the needs of this unprecedented level of claimants, the Pritzker administration overhauled the IDES website infrastructure, expanded web and call center capacity, and secured third party vendor partnerships to further implement and streamline new programs that enhance filing capabilities. The department also reenlisted recent retirees who have the required knowledge and experience to process unemployment claims to assist the department during this crisis.

This week, Governor Pritzker outlined efforts the administration and the department have taken to expand access and eligibility to unemployment insurance and provided an update on the implementation of programs included in the federal CARES Act. To date, IDES has suspended the employment services requirement to register with Illinois Job Link if their unemployment is due to a temporary lay-off resulting from COVID-19, and modified the “able and available to work” requirement to those who have become unemployed due to COVID-19, waived the waiting week for claimants, and implemented the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC), which provides an additional \$600 each week in federally funded benefits to eligible Illinoisans.

In the coming weeks, IDES will roll-out the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) program, which provides up to 13 weeks’ worth of federally funded benefits to individuals who have exhausted their regular state unemployment benefits. The department is also contracting with Deloitte to launch a new benefit system in May for individuals who are not typically covered by the state’s unemployment.

Those with questions or in need of assistance with unemployment benefits at this time are encouraged to visit [IDES.Illinois.gov](https://www.ides.illinois.gov).

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