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NEWS RELEASE

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IDES Instructs 1099 Workers to Apply for Regular Unemployment Benefits Before PUA Program Goes Live *PUA Portal to Launch on May 11*

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) today released new instructions for 1099 workers who have lost work due to COVID-19. Workers who believe they may be eligible for new federal benefits under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program, must *first* apply for regular unemployment insurance *before* applying for benefits under PUA when a new application portal opens on May 11, 2020 via the IDES website.

If claimants receive an eligibility determination of \$0, they can then appeal that decision by providing verification of wages earned, or they can submit a claim for PUA benefits. Claimants who have already applied for and been denied regular unemployment benefits can submit a claim through the new PUA portal when it opens. Receiving a denial for regular unemployment benefits is a mandatory first step in determining eligibility for PUA.

Filing for regular unemployment also provides claimants the opportunity to select how they want to receive benefits. Eligible claimants can choose between direct deposit or a debit card onto which their benefits will be loaded. Debit cards can take up to one to two weeks to receive in the mail while direct deposit payments take two to three days once a claimant completes their weekly certification for benefits.

PUA provides 100% federally-funded unemployment benefits for individuals who are unemployed for specified COVID-19-related reasons and are not eligible for the state's regular unemployment insurance program, the extended benefit (EB) program under Illinois law, or the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation program (PEUC), including independent contractors and sole-proprietors. Up to 39 weeks' worth of benefits are potentially available under the program for COVID-19-related unemployment claims.

IDES is contracting with Deloitte to implement and maintain the web-based PUA program. While a program of this magnitude would normally take up to a year to design and implement, the department expects the program to launch on Monday, May 11, 2020.

PUA claims will be backdated to the individuals' first week of unemployment, but no earlier than February 2, 2020, and will continue for as long as the individual remains unemployed as a result of COVID-19, but no later than the week ending December 26, 2020. The program is similar to the federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance program which provides unemployment benefits in response to local disasters.

Those with questions or in need of assistance with unemployment benefits at this time are encouraged to visit IDES.Illinois.gov.

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