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Pennsylvania Approved for Extra \$300 Per Week to Eligible Unemployed Workers

Harrisburg, PA – Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) Secretary Jerry Oleksiak today announced Pennsylvania will get nearly \$1.5 billion to provide an extra \$300 per week to eligible unemployed workers through the temporary federal Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program, administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

“The recently ended \$600 weekly federal benefit was a true lifeline to many Pennsylvanians and I know you are anxious for these new payments to begin,” said Secretary Oleksiak. “L&I is working as quickly as possible to evaluate what it will take to implement this program and begin paying the \$300 weekly supplement in Pennsylvania, while awaiting final program guidance from the federal government. We will get this money into the pockets of the eligible Pennsylvanians who need it and will be sure to keep everyone updated throughout this complex process.”

To qualify for the extra \$300, the program requires that eligible individuals must receive at least \$100 per week in benefits from:

- Regular Unemployment Compensation (UC);
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC);
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA);
- Extended Benefits (EB);
- Short-Time Compensation (STC) or Shared Work; and
- Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA).

Individuals must also self-certify that they are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Payments will be made to eligible claimants retroactively from August 1, 2020.

Pennsylvania applied to the temporary program on Friday. The grant will provide the extra \$300 weekly payment until the FEMA funding is exhausted, the federal government enacts a new law, or extends the recently ended Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program. LWA will run for a minimum of three weeks and will end no later than December 27, 2020.

The LWA program is not a true unemployment insurance program and is funded by \$44 billion from FEMA that is intended for storm disaster relief. For this reason, payments to eligible workers will be delayed as states, including Pennsylvania, create new systems or processes.

The Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program, funded entirely by the federal government, ended on July 25. Although the U.S. House of Representatives voted to continue the benefit, Senate Republicans have yet to approve its extension. On August 8, President Trump authorized the Lost Wages Assistance plan.

MEDIA CONTACT: Penny Ickes, dliipress@pa.gov