



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ANNOUNCES ALPHABETIZED INTAKE STRUCTURE FOR
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMS CENTER**

Montpelier – In response to the increasing number of initial claims for unemployment insurance benefits and inquiries to its claims center, the Vermont Department of Labor will implement an alphabetized structure for the intake of weekly claims and inquiries. The structure will take effect on Sunday, April 12.

“We are asking the public for help in implementing this new call structure, as we look to help those that are in need”, said interim Commissioner Michael Harrington. “We continue to see the impact that COVID-19 has had on our community and our goal is to be able to reduce call volume so we are helping more Vermonters get benefits faster. This is a short-term solution and we will continue to monitor this program to determine the impact it is having on call volumes.”

The new process will reduce the number of claims assistance calls and traffic to the claimant portal by designating specific days of the week for individuals to contact the Department, based on the first letter of their last name. Full details of the structure can be found below:

FILING OF WEEKLY CLAIMS:

No restrictions will be placed for claimants looking to file a weekly claim over the phone through the Department’s automated phone line, 800-983-2300. The phone system is open 24-hours on Sunday, and from 5:00am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday.

For those looking to file their weekly claim online at labor.vermont.gov, claimants are encouraged to observe the following structure:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
24 hrs.	3:30am – 11:30pm	3:30am – 11:30pm	3:30am – 11:30pm	3:30am – 11:30pm	3:30am – 4:30pm	CLOSED
ALL	A-E	F-L	M-R	S-Z	ALL	CLOSED



CALLS TO CLAIMANT ASSISTANCE LINE:

Those looking to contact Claimant Assistance regarding questions about their claim or if they are experiencing problems filing their weekly claim may call 877-214-3332 on the designated days below.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
CLOSED	8:15am-4:30pm	8:15am-4:30pm	8:15am-4:30pm	8:15am-4:30pm	8:15am-4:30pm	9:00am-3:00pm
CLOSED	A-E	F-L	M-R	S-Z	ALL	ALL

Claimants are encouraged to voluntarily follow these guidelines set forth by the Department.

The Department of Labor announced on Thursday through a weekly report that for the week ending April 4, 2020, the Department processed 16,474 Initial Claims and 21,953 Continued Claims. In comparison to last year, this is an increase of 15,955 Initial Claims for the same week. The April 9, 2020 report can be found at <http://www.vtlmi.info/weeklyUi04042020.pdf>.

As a supplement to the report, the Department also provided additional data for the estimated number of initial claims it has received:

- Number of Initial Claims received between March 29 and April 4: $\approx 22,754$
- Number of Initial Claims for same week in 2019 (week ending April 6, 2019): 519
- Total number of Initial Claims received to date since March 15, 2020: $\approx 71,667$ (as of 4/7/20)

Data above provides an estimate and not an exact number of claims received by the Department during the date ranges shown.

Those looking to establish an initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits may still do so any time online at labor.vermont.gov, or by calling 1-877-214-3330 or 1-888-807-7072 from 8:15am – 4:30pm on Monday through Friday, or from 9:00am – 3:00pm on Saturday.

For further information and updates on the Vermont Department of Labor, please visit labor.vermont.gov.

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