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Office of the Commissioner

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To: Vermont General Assembly
From: Commissioner's Office, Department of Labor
Date: December 15, 2020
Subject: Unemployment Insurance Weekly Update

GENERAL

- On Friday, December 11th, the Department was notified that Vermont has officially triggered off the Extended Benefits program. The final week claimants can file in the EB program is the benefit week ending December 19th. We continue to notify impacted claimants of this change, while also reminding them about the various methods they can connect with Workforce Development for reemployment services and assistance. Additionally, we will be providing claimants with information about additional resources available (e.g., food, fuel, housing).
 - [Press Release: U.S. Department of Labor Ends Extended Unemployment Benefit Program for Vermont](#)
- With CARES Act programs (PEUC and PUA) coming to a close on December 26, 2020 and the anticipated end of the Extended Benefits program sometime in mid-December, roughly 70-75% of the unemployment filing population will lose their benefits by the end of the year. The Department continues to send out weekly reminders about the program ending as well as newsletters to claimants with highlighted jobs across the state. We are also working closely with other state agencies to help educate claimants on other State funded assistance they may qualify for. We have created a page on our website that highlights these programs: <https://labor.vermont.gov/external-resources-covid-19>.
- The Department will still be able to issue payments for these programs for any weeks that were filed while the programs were active. This includes eligible claimants whose claims are under review by the Department or are part of an active appeal that is made eligible after the program end date.
- At the start of the pandemic, work search requirements were waived for all claimants. It is important for claimants to remember that if they are unemployed, and detached from their employer, they are strongly encouraged to actively search for work. It is likely at some point in the near future, work search requirements will be reinstated, and claimants will be required to complete weekly job contacts. Claimants may also reach out to the Workforce Development

Division through the [Job Seeker Inquiry Form](#) for assistance in finding job opportunities as well as participate in our weekly [Virtual Job Fairs](#).

CLAIMS

- Our weekly numbers continue to show an increase in the number of initial claims be filed. This is believed to be part of the seasonal shift in employment. Traditionally, the week of Thanksgiving is the Department’s busiest week of the year for the UI Division.
- Claimants filing for unemployment continue to receive a weekly jobs newsletter with highlighted job opportunities available across Vermont. **December 14th Jobs Newsletter:** <https://conta.cc/2IP9yOX>.

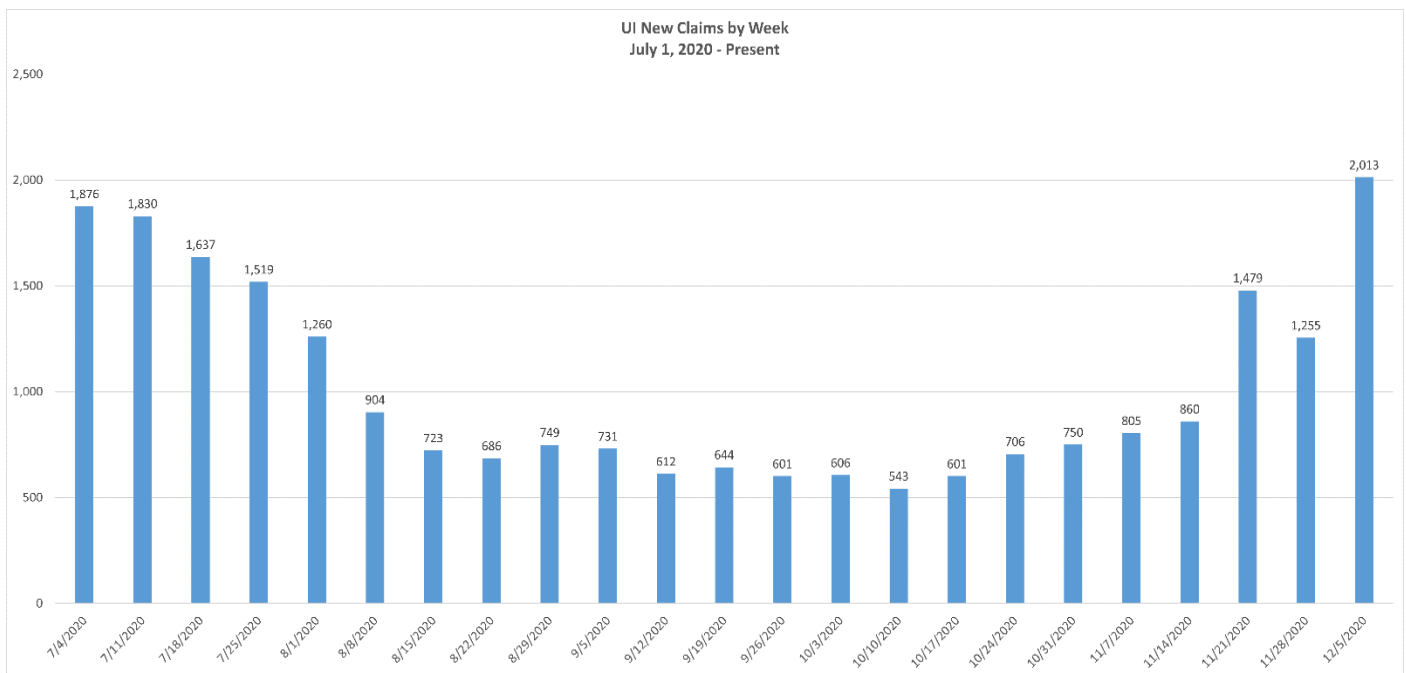


Figure 1

Continued Claims Filed						
Week Ending	10/31	11/7	11/14	11/21	11/28	12/5
Regular UI	11,555	11,209	10,825	11,150	10,082	11,983
PEUC	8,674	8,995	9,158	9,598	8,963	9,825
EB	703	724	701	754	704	885
PUA	8,236	8,274	8,255	8,503	8,451	8,694
Total	29,168	29,202	28,939	30,005	28,200	31,342

Figure 2

The data presented in this publication represents unofficial information collected from a variety of sources, and is being provided in order to ensure transparency, the freedom of information, and a well-informed public. While it is accurate to the extent ascertainable by the Department at the time of publication, it has not been subject to inspection or validation, and does not constitute verified employment data for the purposes of required reporting and formal release. This data is for the sole purpose of informing the public and shall not be recreated or reposted in any way, without this disclaimer. The information provided herein is not related in any way to the certified data provided to the U.S. Department of Labor.

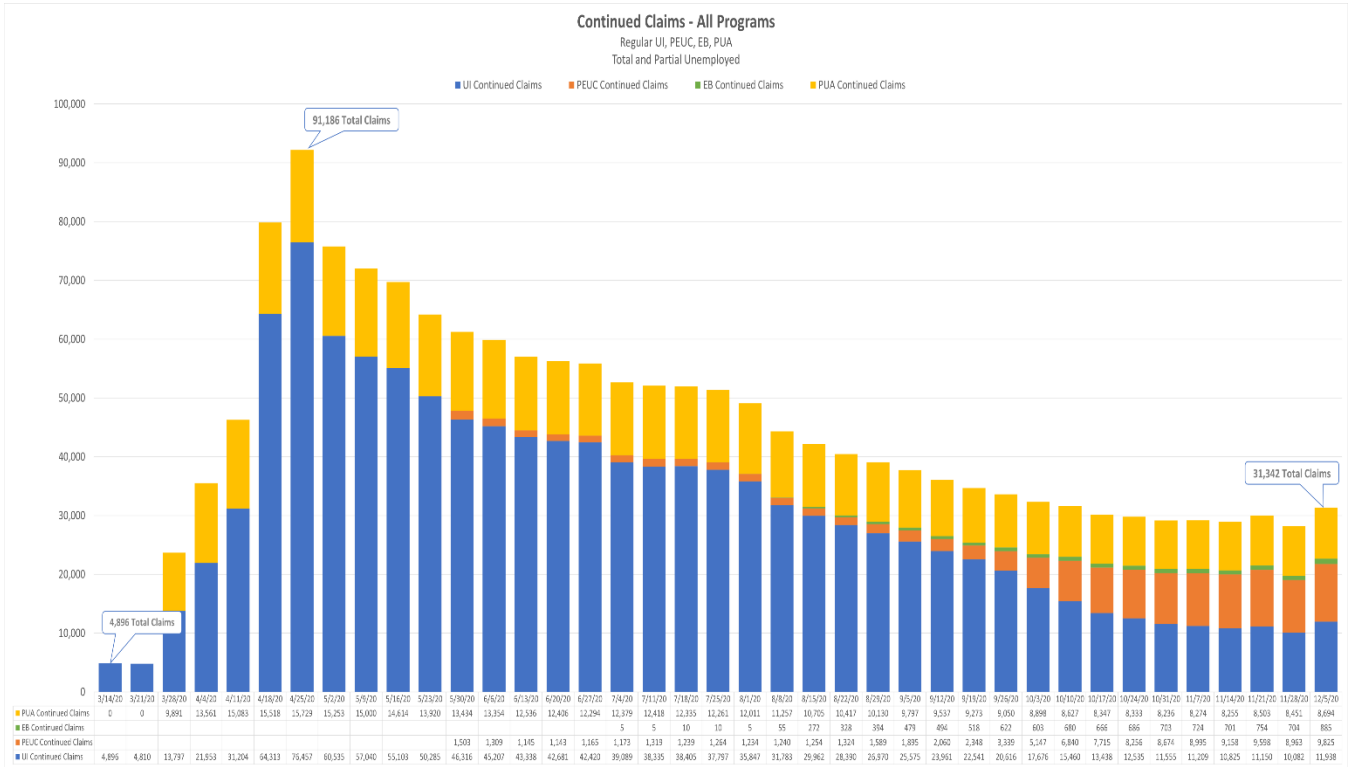
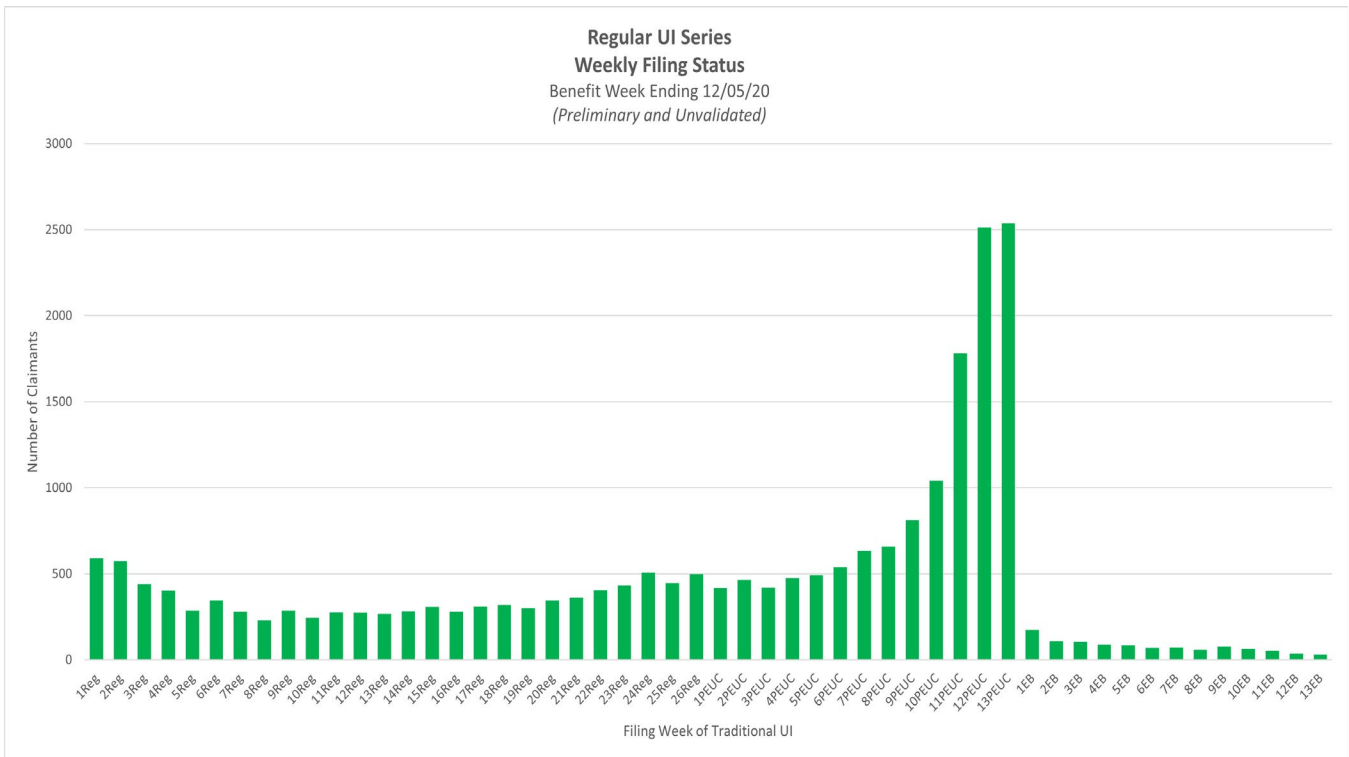


Figure 3



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Figure 4

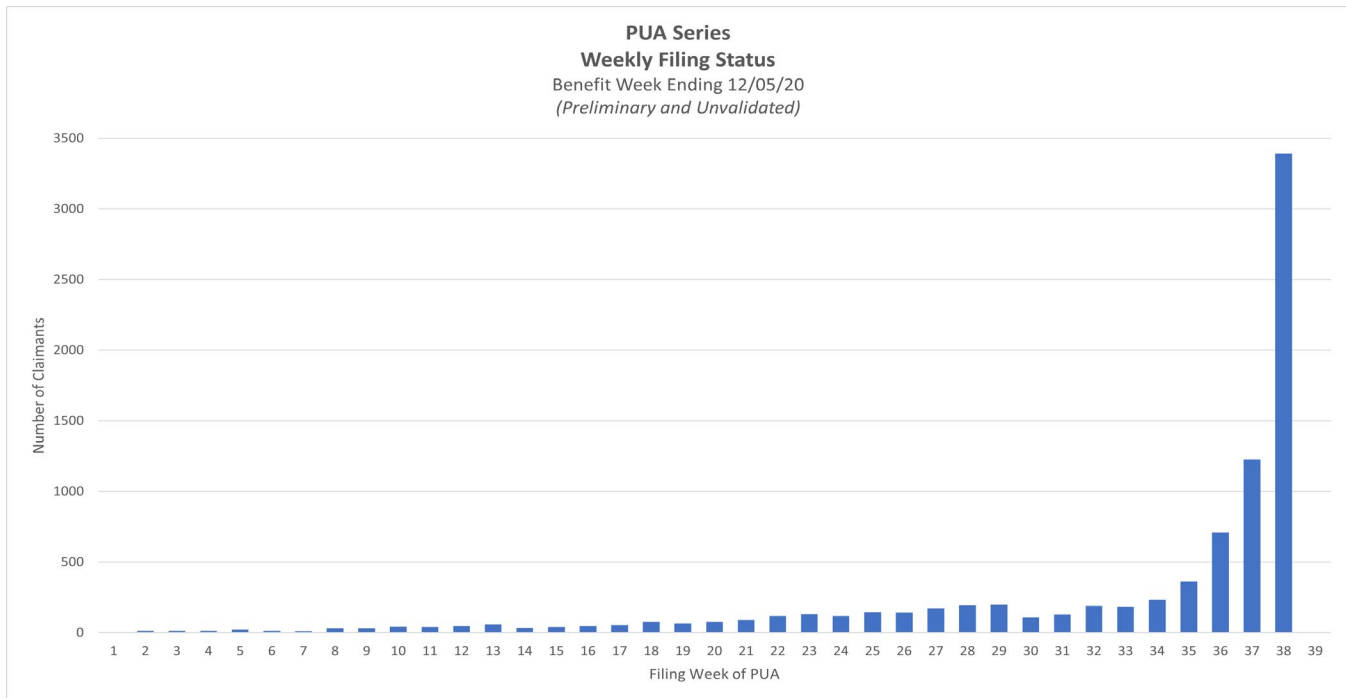


Figure 5

PAYMENTS

- The Vermont Short Term Supplemental (VSTS) benefit was paid out to all eligible claimants. In total, there were 33,509 claimants receiving the benefit for a total payment amount of \$14,606,500.
- We continue to process LWA payments as claimants certify and/or become eligible on a regular basis. Claimants who have not completed their certification or need to recertify may do so by contacting our UI Claimant Assistance Center. **As of December 14, the LWA program has paid out \$55,574,800 with approximately \$13.5 million remaining.**
- Regular UI is funded by state trust fund dollars, PEUC is fully-federally funded, and EB is currently fully-federally funded. Normally, EB is a 50/50 split between the trust fund and federal dollars. Additionally, the PUA program is fully-federally funded. The UI trust fund is funded through employer contributions.

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Claims Payment Processing						
Week Ending	All UI Claims Paid	All UI Payments	PUA Claims Paid	PUA Payments	Total Payments Issued	Trust Fund Balance
October 31	20,329	\$6,605,977	7,812	\$2,342,051	\$8,948,028	\$262,290,343
November 7	20,305	\$6,624,336	7,750	\$2,318,413	\$8,942,749	\$259,867,537
November 14	19,933	\$6,436,674	8,023	\$2,506,616	\$8,943,290	\$258,433,413
November 21	20,441	\$6,803,665	8,005	\$2,537,754	\$9,341,419	\$255,487,068
November 28	18,745	\$6,138,744	8,387	\$2,782,380	\$8,921,124	\$252,170,953
December 5	21,870	\$7,451,856	8,211	\$2,638,931	\$10,295,096	\$249,016,877

Figure 6

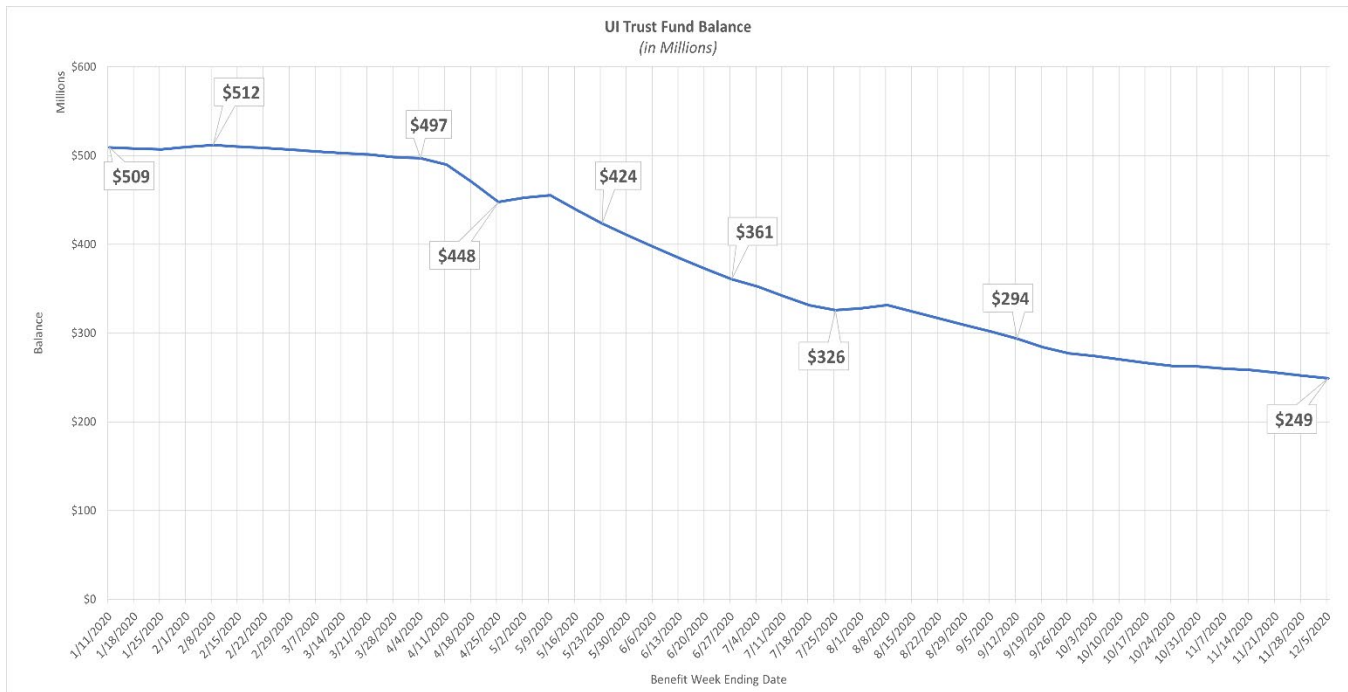


Figure 7

CLAIMANT ASSISTANCE CENTER

- We continue to see high call volume and wait times on Mondays. Claimants are encouraged to call later in the day on Monday or later in the week whenever possible.

Call Volume Summary			
Average Agents	Average Calls Per Day	Average Length of Call	Average Hold Time
126	2,692	12:34	8:31

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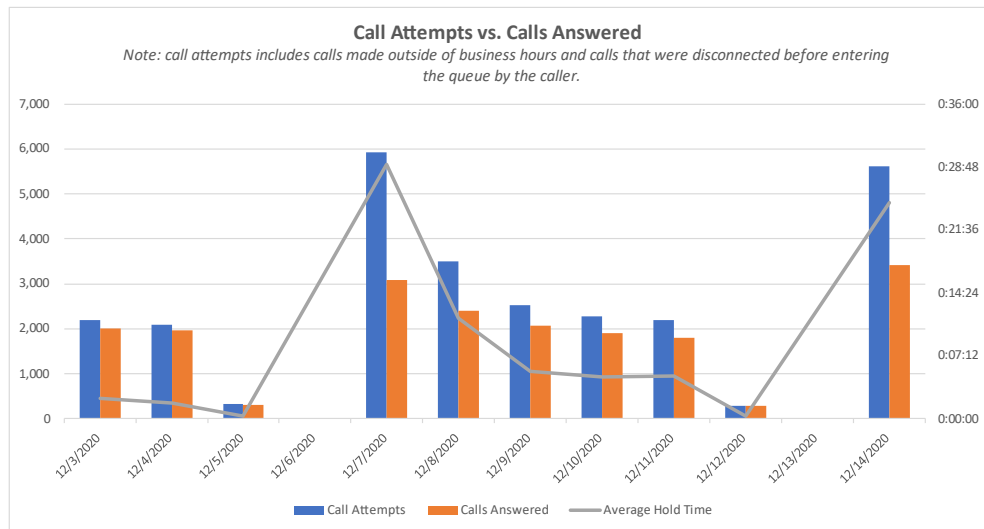


Figure 8

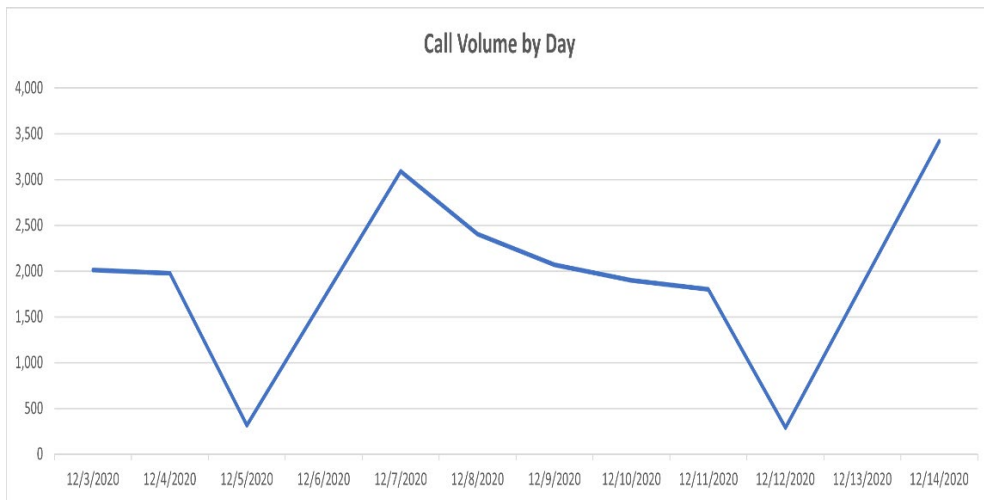


Figure 9

OTHER RESOURCES

- [UI “How-To” video library](#)
- [Live Chat with UI Claimant Assistance Center](#)
- [Weekly Virtual Town Hall events for employers](#)
- [Job seeker inquiry form for individuals seeking re-employment services](#)
- [Seasonal layoff information for employers and claimants](#)
- [External resources for individuals who have exhausted benefits](#)

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