

**To:** Vermont Legislature  
**From:** Michael Harrington, Interim Labor Commissioner  
**Date:** May 19, 2020  
**Subject:** Unemployment Insurance Daily Update

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This report includes both new and continuing efforts. New information is in **RED**.

#### **Current Week Priorities**

1. Finalize last round of PUA system updates related to correct payment methodology
2. Implement Pandemic Extended Unemployment Compensation Program
3. Implementation of a single constituent management solution to reduce duplication
4. Resolve outstanding PUA claimant issues

#### **On-going Priorities**

- Continue to resolve claimant issues and get them paid
- Continue to increase training for call-center staff
- Close the gap between calls made and calls answered

#### **Accomplishments and Milestones**

- 9,000 PUA claimant payments were successfully processed yesterday in the amount of \$15M.

#### **Ongoing Activities**

- Automating transactions for claimants with overpayments receiving FPUC. Currently, this is a manual process.
- Creating additional technical assistance and training materials for Maximus Call Center agents and improving call escalation process with Maximus Call Center agents.

#### **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)**

- VDOL Staff continue to work and clear adjudication issues on initial claims and any associated issues, so far, the staff are able to resolve PUA issues within 36-48 hours.
- **Created an automated email that PUA claimants will receive when each weekly claim is being processed for payment with a rough timeline for receiving the payment.**

#### **Extended Benefits**

- Per federal guidance, individuals who have exhausted their benefits must first utilize Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) before being placed on Extended Benefits (EB). PEUC provides an additional 13 weeks of benefits to claimants who have exhausted their regular UI benefits.
- A red emergency banner will be displayed on the Labor website for claimants to click to find more information on PEUC and what they need to do to receive benefits. PEUC eligible claimants will also receive instructions by mail.
- **PEUC will go into production tonight. We expect ≈1500 claimants to automatically be enrolled. They will be mailed a notification and the website will be updated to display additional information on how to file for past benefit weeks. Similar to before, because this a mainframe program, claimants will be able to file**

one back week per day. The system will process the filed week overnight and open the next back week the following day.

#### **Communications**

- Updating FAQs for PUA and regular UI
- More than 10,000 PUA claimants were emailed yesterday to remind them they can finish the PUA application. More than 25,000 are in the PUA system but only 15,000 have completed the application. This was the second email they received from VDOL.

#### **Call Center Functions Update**

- Maximus call center is recording each claimant interaction for quality assurance. Load balancing will occur across Maximus call queues and across the entire system, including supplemental line.
- The recording and monitoring of the Maximus Call Center for call quality has already resulted in corrective action being taken by the vendor.
- Call-center volume is decreasing, and call-center staffing is increasing. Friday there were 5,400 call attempts. With an answer rate of 75%.
- **Mondays continue to be the highest call volume day, with call attempts at 8,700. That number tends to decrease over the week. (Monday was considered the high call volume day even prior to COVID-19)**

#### **Unresolved/Unique Populations**

- Regular unemployment claimants serving penalty weeks because of a fraudulent determination from a past claim.
- Regular unemployment claimants with overpayment balances whose benefit amount is currently being used to offset their balance. This is currently being corrected by VDOL staff manually because there is no way to mass clear the stop payment.
- Claims under review and pending adjudication

#### **Top Claimant Issues**

- Regular unemployment claimants unable to file weekly claims because their claim is still being adjudicated.
- Regular unemployment claimants unable to receive weekly benefits because they have a fraudulent code on their UI claim and are serving penalty weeks.
- PUA claimants deemed ineligible because they answered questions incorrectly and would like to update their response. VDOL is assisting these cases and updating as necessary.
- Claimants unable to complete application (PUA or regular UI) because they do not have an email address. VDOL is working with state agency partners to address this issue.

## APPENDIX

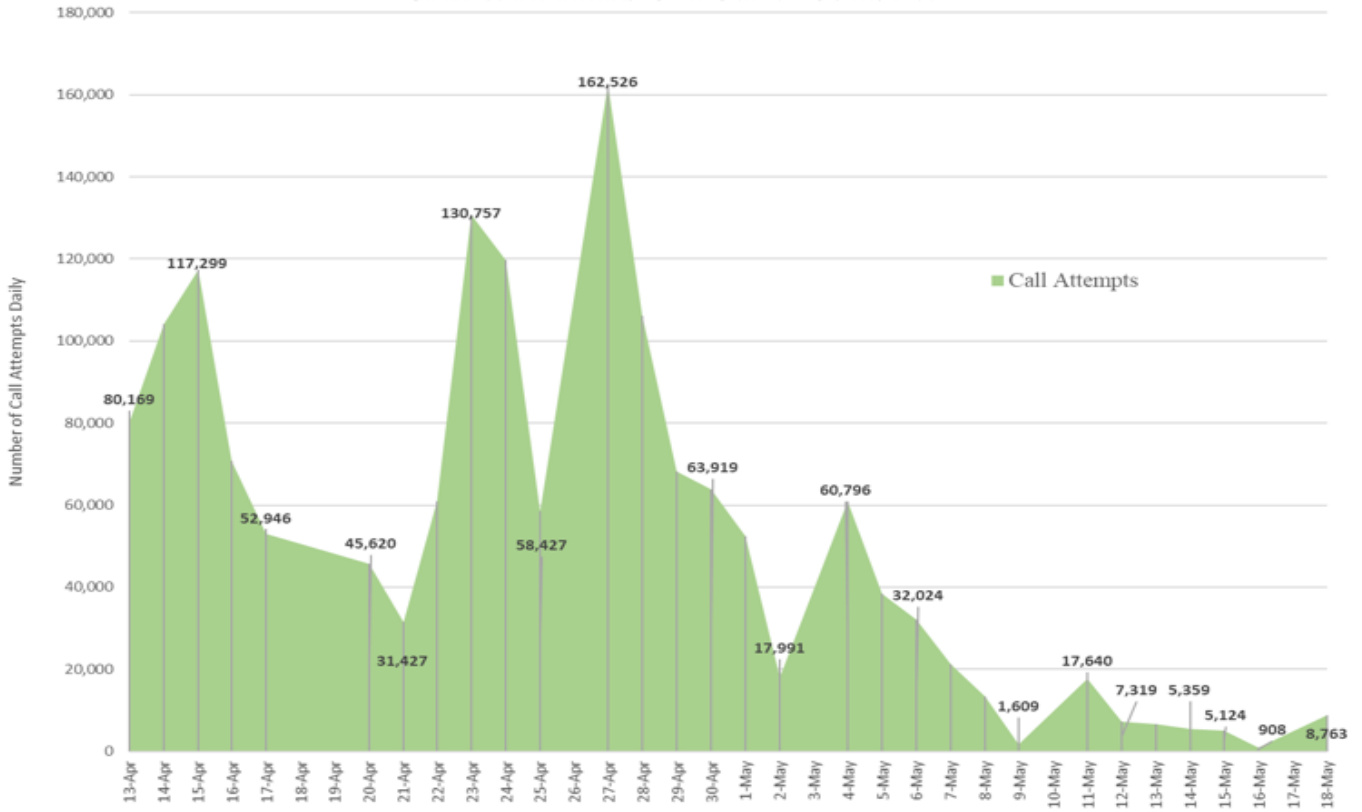
**Popular Links:**

- [Click here for PUA general information](#)
- [Click here for PUA FAQs](#)
- [Click here for PUA application video demonstration](#)
- [Click here for unemployment general information](#)
- [Click here for frequently asked questions](#)
- [Click here for Return to Work Frequently Asked Questions](#)

<b>Total Initial Claims</b>	<b>91,252</b>	Total number of initial claims since 3/1/2020.
Initial Claims with no Eligibility Determination	<b>1,518</b>	Initial claims without eligibility determination for UI or PUA. A subset of this population does not, and will not, qualify for UI or PUA.
<b>Unemployment Insurance</b>		
Initial Claimants Eligible for UI	<b>64,055</b>	Number of claimants eligible for UI
Initial Claimants Eligible for UI - Paid	<b>57,652</b>	Number of claimants who are receiving UI benefits
Initial Claimants Eligible for UI - Not Paid	<b>6,403</b>	Number of claimants who meet basic eligibility thresholds but have significant issues that require review and resolution prior to payment. This also includes individuals who have since returned to work and are no longer filing. Roughly 4,500 of these individuals have never filed a weekly claim.
UI Trust Fund Balance (as of 5/11)	<b>\$388,262,986</b>	Trust Fund balance can fluctuate due to benefit payments, earned interest, employer contributions, and federal reimbursements. (Note: Balance as of 3/1/2020 <b>\$506,157,247</b> )
<b>Pandemic Unemployment Assistance</b>		
Initial Claimants Eligible for PUA	<b>25,679</b>	Total number of claimants that could complete the PUA application and are in the system
Initial Claimants Eligible for PUA - Filed	<b>15,869</b>	# of eligible claimants who have completed PUA application
Initial Claimants Eligible for PUA - Filed and Paid	<b>13,085</b>	Number of eligible claimants receiving PUA benefit.
Initial Claimants Eligible for PUA - Filed and Not Paid	<b>2,784*</b>	Number of claimants that have a payment pending, issue on weekly claim to resolve, or have returned to work and are not filing. (Note: On 5/18 a transcription error incorrectly listed 3702 in this category instead of 3072.)
Total PUA Benefits Dispersed	<b>\$67,128,986</b>	Total amount of PUA benefits paid

*\*Includes pending payments due to PUA system update*

### Daily Incoming Call Attempts GMP & Maximus Call Center Combined



Daily Counts from Monday April 13th to Date \*  
 \*Counts include both answered and unanswered calls  
 \*Counts include multiple attempts from the same phone number

### GMP & Maximus Call Center Combined Data Agents Counts & Call Percentages Answered vs Unanswered 4/13/2020 to Date

