

State of Vermont
Department of Labor
Office of the Commissioner

5 Green Mountain Drive
P.O. Box 488
Montpelier, VT 05601
labor.vermont.gov

[telephone]

802-828-4301

[fax]

802-828-4181

To: Vermont General Assembly
From: Commissioner's Office, Department of Labor
Date: February 17, 2021
Subject: Unemployment Insurance Weekly Update

GENERAL

- **1099 Processing Incident:**
 - The Department has created a 1099-G incident webpage summarizing the incident, as well as an FAQ document for claimants to reference. This information can be found at <https://labor.vermont.gov/1099-incident-updates>.
 - **Recapture Update:** Last week, we mailed out recall notices to individuals who received a 1099-G document. This notice gives a summary of the incident and includes instructions on how to return the initial 1099 document to the Department utilizing the self-addressed and pre-stamped envelope that is included. All recapture notices are expected to be mailed by the end of this week. We are aware that the prepaid envelopes are slightly smaller than the 1099 documents, requiring claimants to fold the document in order for it to fit in the envelope. While this was not ideal, the decision to use smaller envelopes was based on the need to expedite the mailing process through automation, which was not possible with a larger envelope.
 - **Identity Protection Update:** Identity protection services have been finalized and will be available to all claimants who filed a claim in 2020 (regardless of whether their information was compromised). The State has contracted with Identity Theft Guard Solutions, Inc (IDX) to provide identity protection service to claimants. This protection will cover claimants for a minimum of 12-months and instructions will be mailed directly to claimants this week. We are continuing to work to stand up the IDX call center which is expected to be operational by next week so claimants can begin to enroll in protection services.
 - **Reissuing Correct 1099-Gs Update:** We are continuing to work through quality validation checks to be sure the corrected 1099-Gs include accurate information. Claimants will be notified when these documents are mailed out, which will occur in the next two weeks.

- Since the passage of the CARES Act Extension legislation, we have seen an uptick in fraudulent claims being filed. Especially, claims involving stolen identities. Vermonters should remain vigilant and if they believe they have been the victim of identity theft resulting in a fraudulent claim being filed using their personal information, they should either contact our UI Fraud Tip Line at 802-828-4104 or submit an online fraud report at <https://labor.vermont.gov/form/report-ui-fraud>. It is important to note that our fraud unit handles thousands of claims each week making impossible for them to contact every individual who files a report. Individuals should expect to hear back from the Department only if more information is needed. After submitting a report to the Department, our team will review the report and stop any illegitimate claims. Victims of UI fraud are not held liable for any benefits that are paid to the fraudulent filer, nor will the fraudulent claim impact their credit score/report. For individuals who have fallen victim to identity theft, more information can be found at the Federal Trade Commission’s website (<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/>). Additionally, individuals can file an identity theft report online with the FTC at <https://www.identitytheft.gov/>.

Standard Unemployment Insurance Series

(Covered Employees)



Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Series

(Independent Contractors, Sole Proprietors, Self-employed, and Other)



Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation

(Additional \$300 Benefit to Claimants in All Programs)



- Claimants who are able to do so, should be actively looking for work while collecting UI benefits. Vermont’s official work search is currently suspended, it is likely to be reinstated in the coming weeks. Employers across the state are reporting job availability in a number of sectors and industries and are actively hiring for a variety of positions. Prior to the Pandemic, UI claimants were required to conduct three official work inquiries each week in order to be eligible for benefits.
- Our Workforce Development team is actively providing outreach and services to unemployed Vermonters to assist with re-employment. More information about the Department’s employment and re-employment efforts can be found online at www.labor.vermont.gov/jobs.

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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.

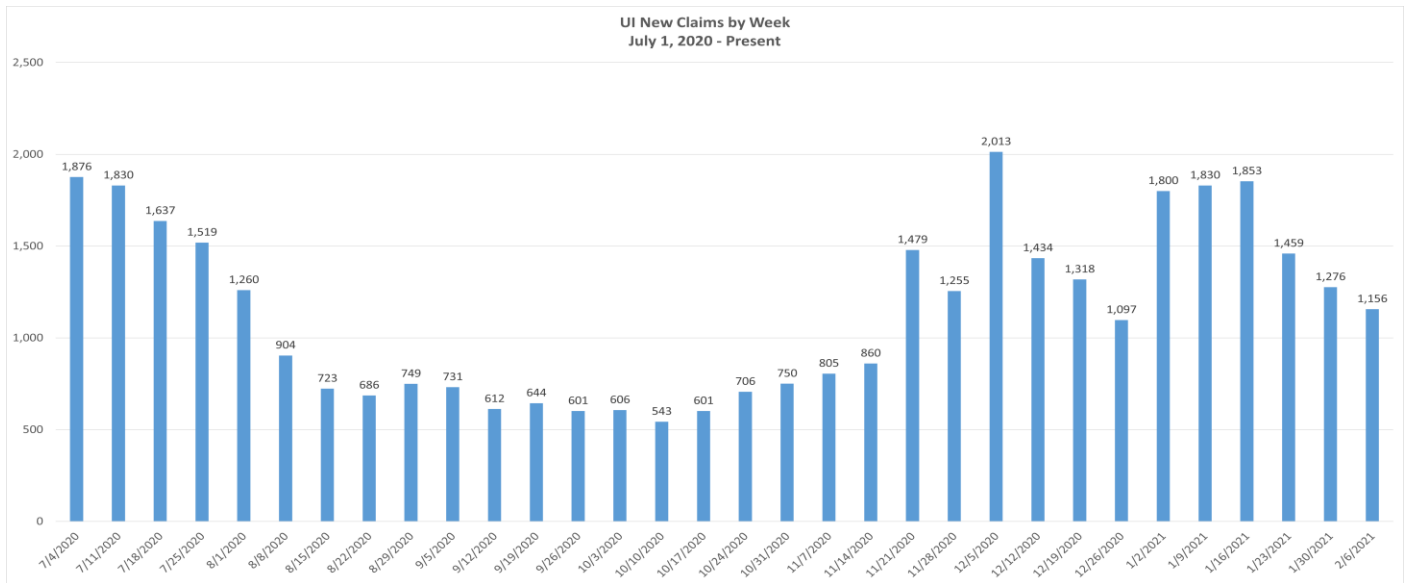


Figure 1

Continued Claims Filed							
Week Ending	12/26	1/2	1/9	1/16	1/23	1/30	2/6
Regular UI	10,088	12,194	12,506	13,257	12,908	13,241	13,150
PEUC (Tier I)	8,589	8,055	10,310	12,742	12,409	12,706	13,232
EB	909	473	98	94	62	64	52
PUA	8,390	3,338	8,429	8,610	8,607	8,713	8,739
Total	27,976	24,087	31,343	34,703	33,986	34,391	35,173

Figure 2

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Continued Claims - All Programs

Regular UI, PEUC, EB, PUA
Total and Partial Unemployed

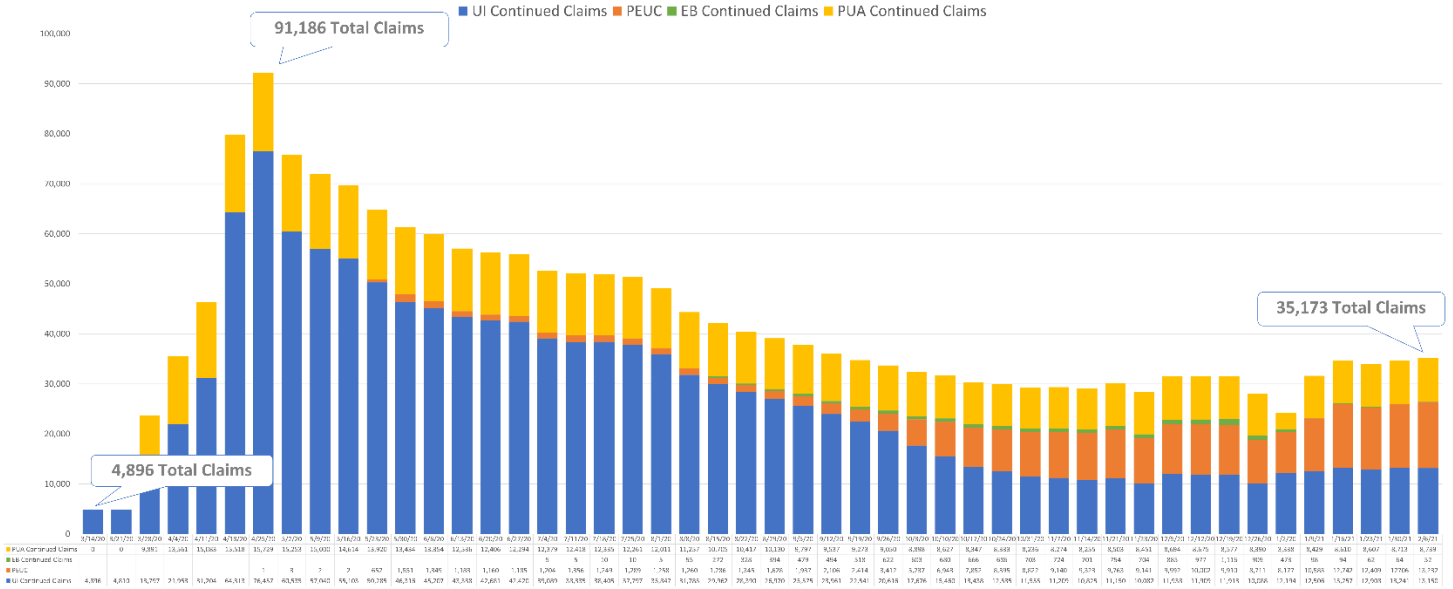


Figure 3

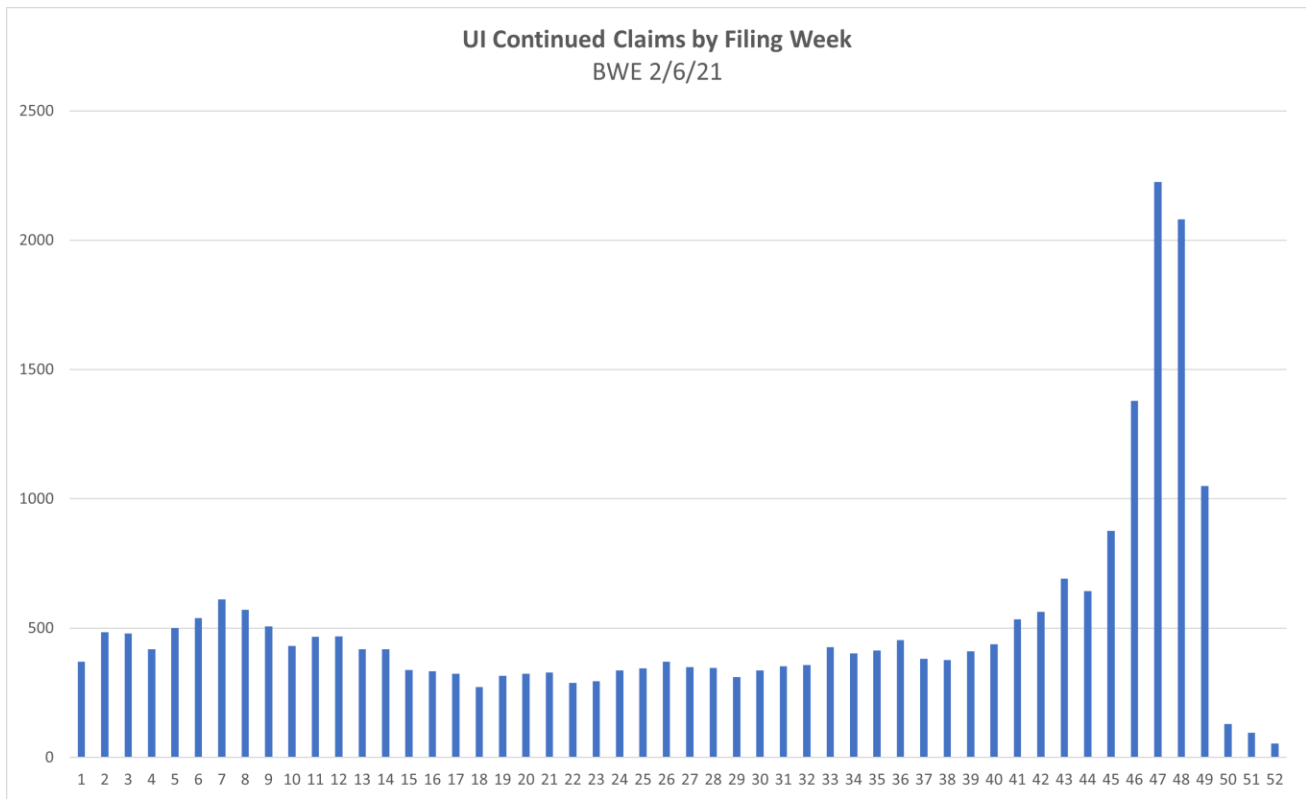


Figure 4

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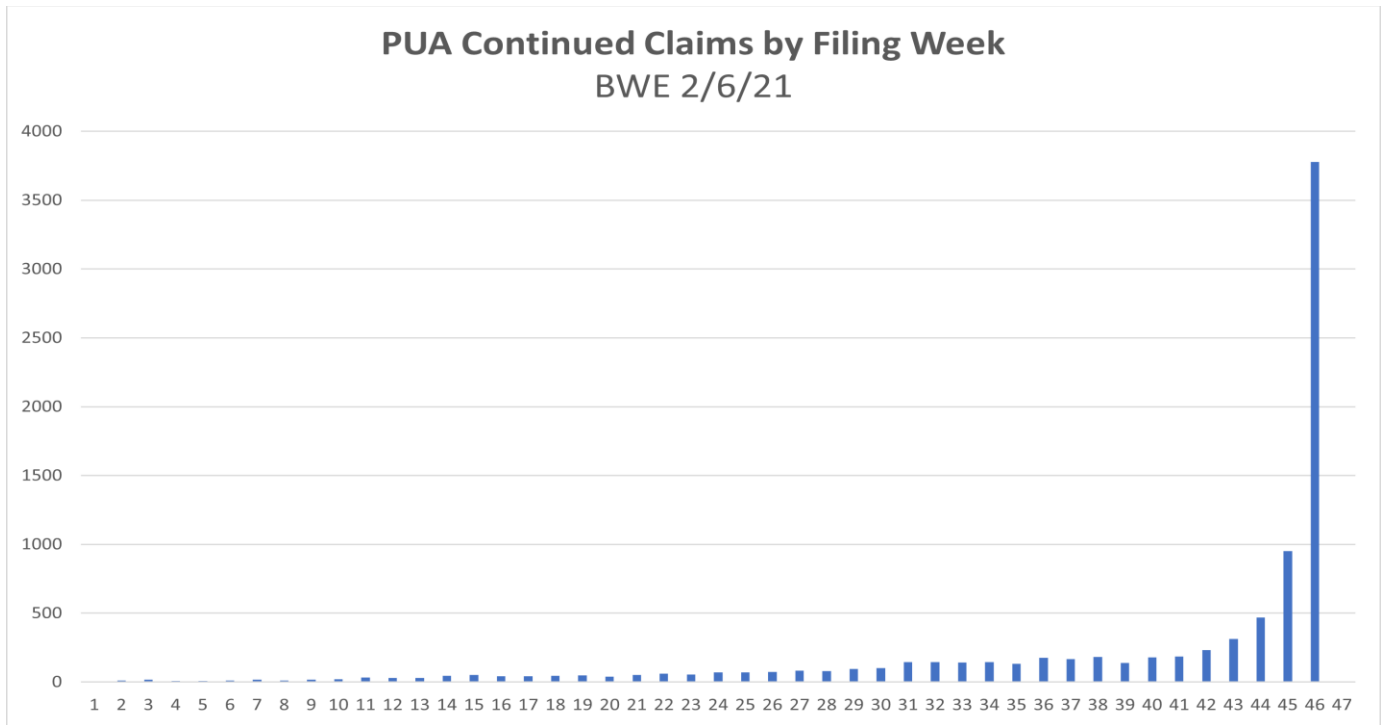


Figure 5

PAYMENTS

- In total, the Vermont Short Term Supplemental (VSTS) benefit program paid out more than \$14.6MM to more than 33,500 claimants.
- In total, the Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program paid out over \$56MM to more than 35,000 claimants.

Claims Payment Processing						
Week Ending	All UI Claims Paid	All UI Payments	PUA Claims Paid*	PUA Payments	Total Payments Issued	Trust Fund Balance
December 19	21,019	\$7,072,397	8,264	\$2,691,133	\$9,763,530	\$245,080,698
December 26	18,837	\$6,112,174	5,273	\$2,571,462	\$8,683,636	\$243,202,289
January 2	18,797	\$6,459,827	1,258	\$1,017,026	\$7,476,853	\$242,681,331
January 9	21,615	\$7,393,515	13,641	\$7,511,281	\$14,904,796	\$239,890,508
January 16	23,338	\$7,954,465	9,206	\$5,715,889	\$13,670,354	\$237,021,103
January 23	23,195	\$7,827,257	7,736	\$4,762,209	\$12,589,466	\$233,645,327
January 30	23,499	\$7,911,766	8,595	\$5,296,654	\$13,208,420	\$231,866,628
February 6	24,476	\$8,389,274	8,564	\$5,273,597	\$13,662,871	\$230,211,298

**Only identifies payments issued and may include multiple benefit weeks being paid to one claimant.*

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Figure 6

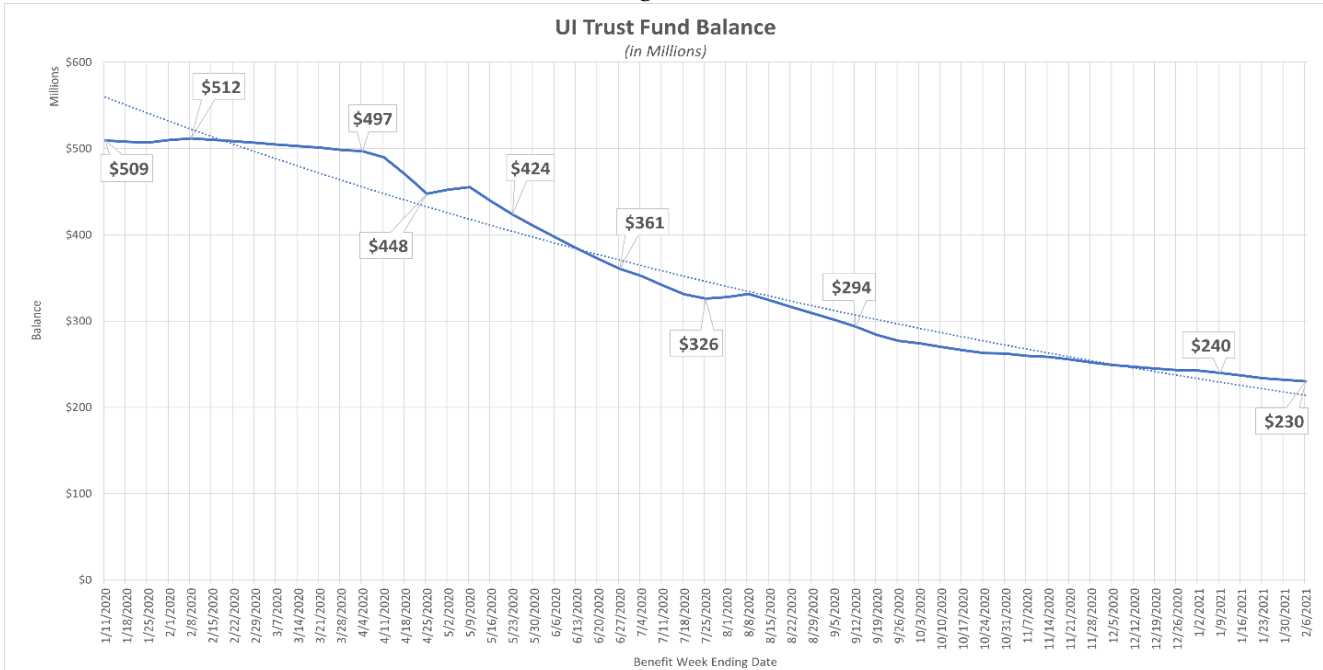


Figure 7

CLAIMANT ASSISTANCE CENTER

Call Volume Summary			
Average Agents	Average Calls Per Day	Average Length of Call	Average Hold Time
146	3,046	10:04	5:03

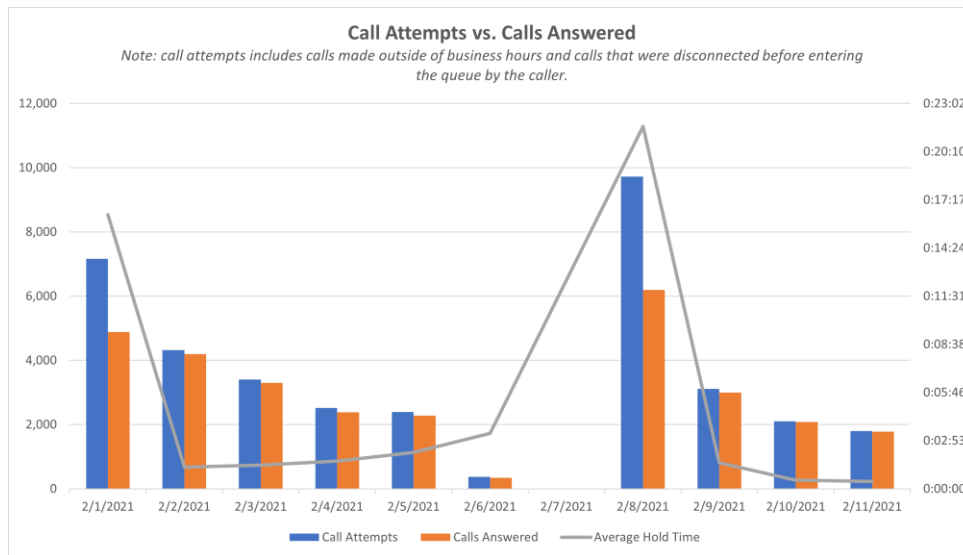


Figure 8

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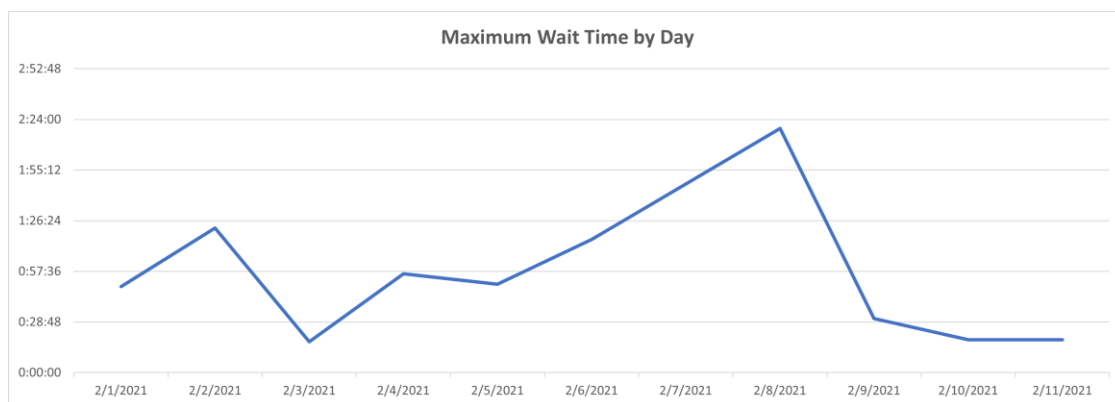


Figure 9

OTHER RESOURCES

- [UI “How-To” video library \(applying for benefits, reopening a claim, submitting weekly claims\)](#)
- [Workforce Development services \(online job board, workshops, events, and local staff\)](#)
- [Vermont Job Link](#)
- [CARES Act UI Extension FAQ](#)
- [UI Updates Page \[Newsfeed\]](#)
- [Appealing UI Claim Determinations](#)
- [UI Adjudications Process](#)
- [1099-G Incident Page](#)
- [1099-G Incident FAQs](#)

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