

To: Vermont Legislature
From: Michael Harrington, Interim Labor Commissioner
Date: June 4, 2020
Subject: Unemployment Insurance Daily Update

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

General Updates

- Overall, the Department is seeing a decrease in the number of weekly claims being filed. This is likely due to individuals returning to work. In addition, the UI trust fund remains in a healthy position. (see Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2)
- **Fraud Update:** There are essentially two types of fraud that the Unemployment Insurance Division deals with on a regular basis. The first is claimant fraud. This is when a claimant misrepresents material facts regarding their claim in order to become eligible for benefits. A common example of this is when a claimant files for benefits during a week in which he/she was also working full-time and earning wages. The second type of fraud is identity fraud. This involves someone, or some system, falsely using someone's personal information to file a claim for benefits. Typically, in these cases, 90% of the information being provided is correct, while the remaining information is specific to the fraudster, such as bank account routing information. This makes tracking these fraudulent claims exceedingly difficult. The latter of these two types, is what has begun to crop up across the country and even here in Vermont.
- **The Department is drafting a public information campaign pertaining to fraud and how to protect against identity theft. The guidance will be based on state and federal guidance, as well as industry best practices.**
- **The Department is drafting a bulletin to address educational wages as they relate to Unemployment Insurance eligibility. This information will be made available to staff, including call center agents, in order to better assist claimants. It will also be provided on the Department's website.**

Call Center Update

- The Department is holding daily Q&A sessions with Maximus agents, so they are able to answer more questions when claimants call rather than adding them to an escalation sheet for UI staff to follow up on.
- **There is a new chat function available for individuals who use the "Get Help" tab on the Department's homepage. If an individual cannot get their issue resolved through the 'chatbot,' they are then prompted to begin a real-time chat with an agent. The real-time chat will be more broadly promoted beginning next week.**
- **On June 3rd, the call volume was 3,708 and the average hold time was 16 seconds.**

UI Claimant Inquiry Tool (UI-CIT)

- **The new UI-CIT program will hopefully be made available to the broader public beginning June 15th.**
- **The Department has received 79 inquiries through the UI-CIT since the soft launch. Of those, staff have resolved 48 inquiries and are working through the remaining 31.**

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.

Traditional Unemployment Insurance (TUI)

| Unemployment Insurance | | |
|--|----------------------|---|
| Total Initial Claimants Filed | 101,346 | Total Number of Initial Claimants. |
| Initial Claimants Eligible for UI | 72,242 | Number of claimants eligible for UI. |
| Initial Claimants Eligible for UI - Paid | 65,712 | Number of claimants who are receiving, or have received, UI benefits. |
| Initial Claimants Eligible for UI - Not Paid | 6,530 | Number of claimants who meet basic eligibility thresholds, and who either have issues on their claim or are no longer filing . |
| UI Trust Fund Balance | \$341,217,994 | Trust Fund balance can fluctuate due to benefit payments, earned interest, employer contributions, and federal reimbursements. (Note: Balance as of 3/1/2020 \$506,157,247) |

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)

| Pandemic Unemployment Assistance | | |
|---|---------------------|--|
| Claimants Potentially PUA Eligible | 26,680 | Total number of claimants that could complete the PUA application and are in the system |
| Claimants in PUA – Filed | 17,876 | # of claimants who have completed the PUA application |
| Claimants in PUA – Filed & Eligible | 17,151 | # of eligible claimants |
| Claimants in PUA – Filed & Ineligible | 716 | # of ineligible claimants |
| Claimants Eligible for PUA - Filed and Paid | 15,415 | # of eligible claimants receiving PUA benefit. |
| Claimants in PUA -Filed and Not Paid | 1,736 | # of claimants that have a payment pending, issue on weekly claim to resolve, or have returned to work and are not filing. |
| Total PUA Benefits Dispersed | \$99,042,097 | Total amount of PUA benefits paid |

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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](#)

Figure 1.1

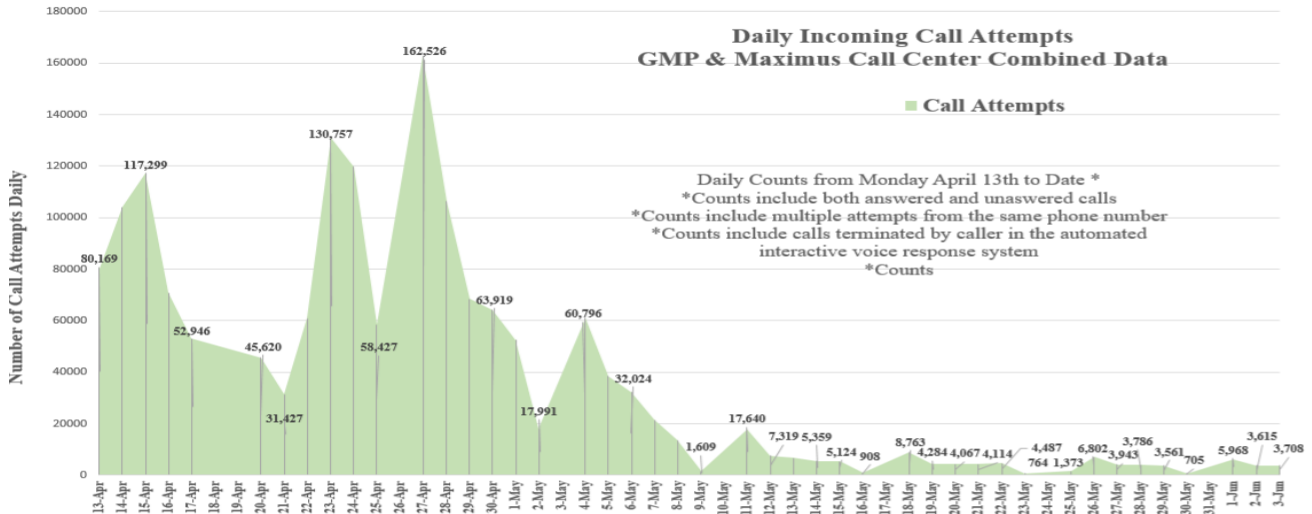


Figure 1.2

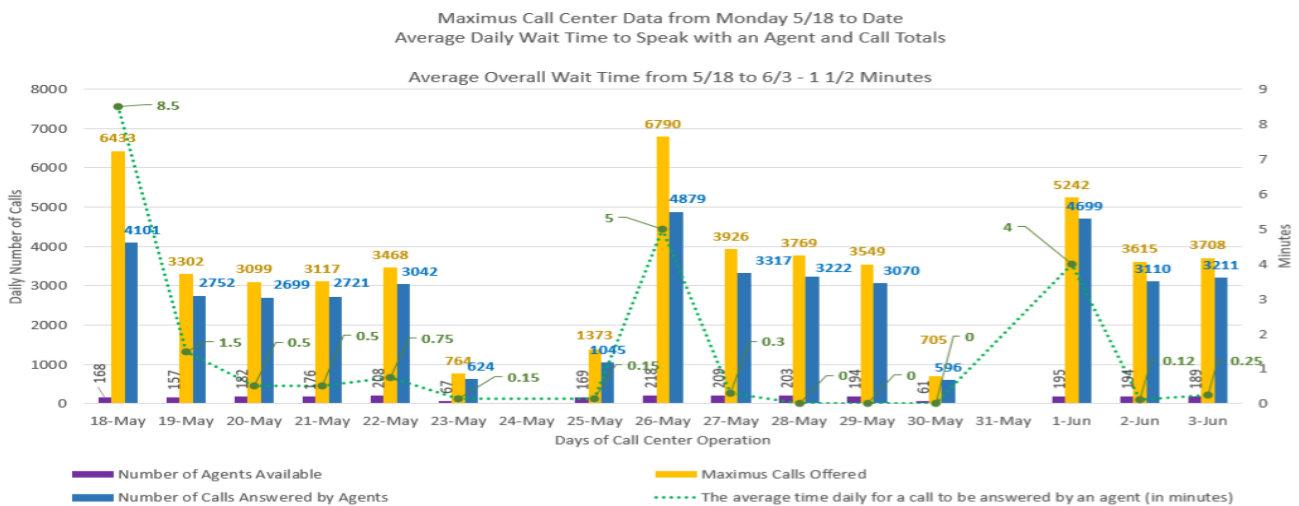


Figure 2.1

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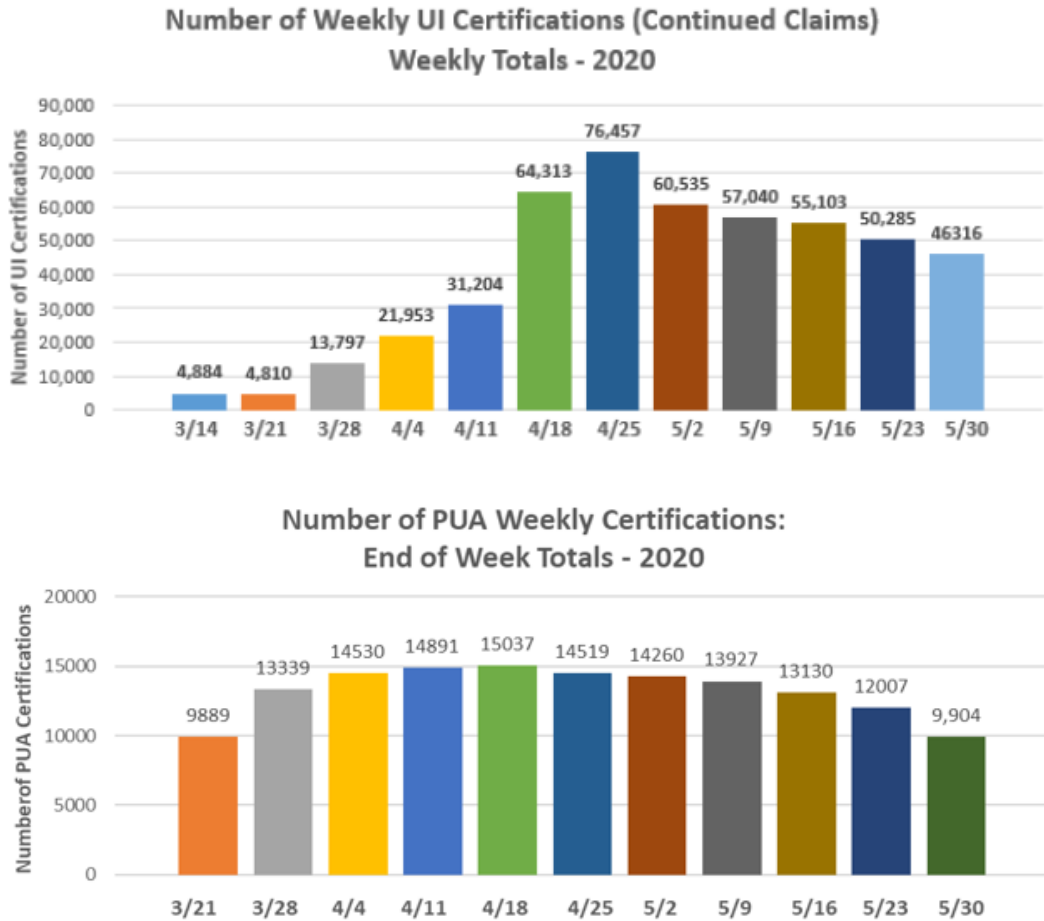
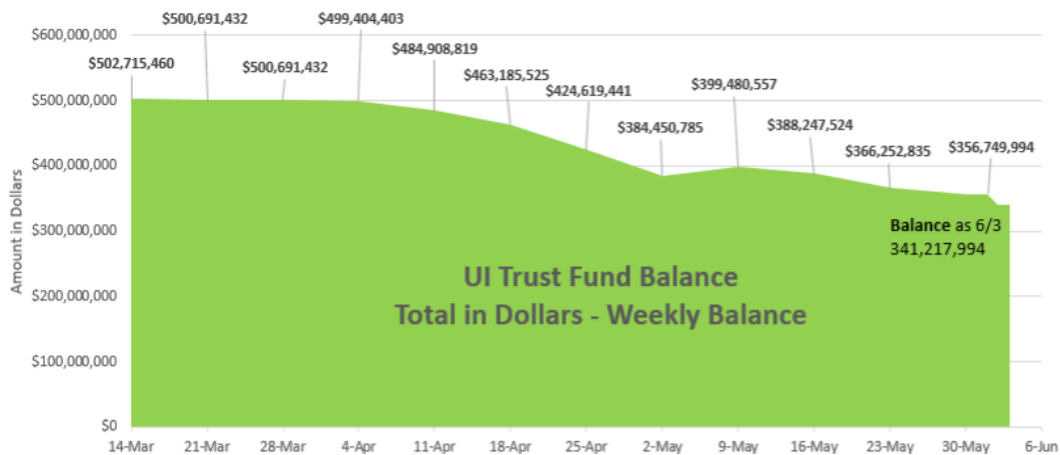


Figure 2.2



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