VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

To:	**Vermont Legislature**
From:	**Michael Harrington, Interim Labor Commissioner**
Date:	**May 18, 2020**
Subject:	**Unemployment Insurance Daily Update**

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
- Another 9,000 PUA claimant payments are being processed today 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.

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.
- We are finalizing the process for automatically moving approximately 1,500 claimants into PEUC and opening past benefit weeks. Claimants will be notified when the program is available, which should occur during the week of May 18th.
- 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.

Communications

- Updating FAQs for PUA and regular UI
- More than 10,000 PUA claimants were emailed today 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 will be 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%.

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.
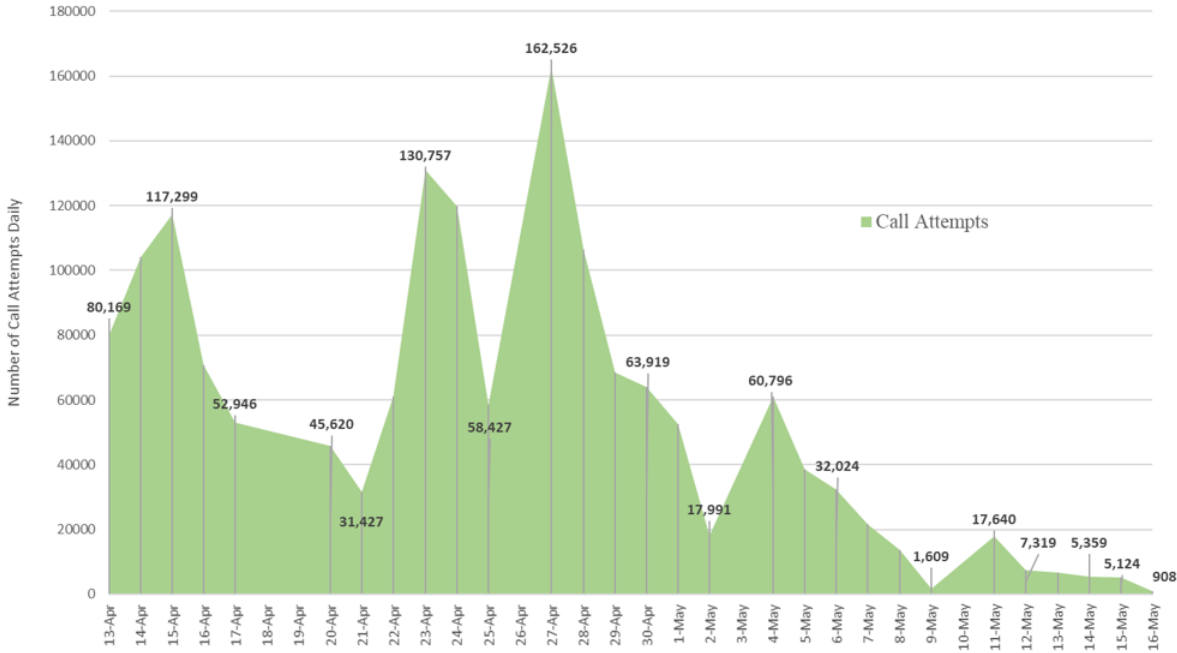
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APPENDIX

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](#)

Total Initial Claims	90,517	Total number of initial claims since 3/1/2020.
Initial Claims with no Eligibility Determination	**1,289**	Initial claims without eligibility determination for UI or PUA. A subset of this population does not, and will not, qualify for UI or PUA.
Unemployment Insurance		
Initial Claimants Eligible for UI	**63,630**	Number of claimants eligible for UI
Initial Claimants Eligible for UI - Paid	**57,804**	Number of claimants who are receiving UI benefits
Initial Claimants Eligible for UI - Not Paid	**5,826**	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)	**$388,247,524**	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		
Initial Claimants Eligible for PUA	**25,598**	Total number of claimants that could complete the PUA application and are in the system
Initial Claimants Eligible for PUA - Filed	**15,220**	# of eligible claimants who have completed PUA application
Initial Claimants Eligible for PUA - Filed and Paid	**12,148**	Number of eligible claimants receiving PUA benefit.
Initial Claimants Eligible for PUA - Filed and Not Paid	**3,702***	Number 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	**$50,040,141**	Total amount of PUA benefits paid

Includes pending payments due to PUA system update

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Daily Incoming Call Attempts
GMP & Maximus Call Center Combined

Number of Call Attempts Daily

Call Attempts

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

Number of Agents on Staff

Percentage of Calls Answered vs Unanswered

Axis Title

Number of Agents On Staff Daily GMP   Number of Agents On Staff Daily Maximus   Answered %   Unanswered %