

To: Vermont Legislature
From: Michael Harrington, Labor Commissioner
Date: September 15, 2020
Subject: Unemployment Insurance Weekly Update

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

Lost Wage Assistance Program (LWA)

- Regular UI claimants have continued to submit their responses to the self-attestation question required under the LWA program and we are on track to issue the first round of checks to eligible claimants later this week. We will continue to issue payments regularly as claimants complete the attestation. Eligible claimants will receive \$300 for each week in which they are eligible. Claimants who do not have internet access but need to complete the attestation should contact the UI Call Center at 1-877-214-3332. More information about the LWA program can be found online at: <https://labor.vermont.gov/unemployment-insurance/lost-wage-assistance-program>.
- We have submitted our second FEMA application for the Lost Wage Assistance program to provide the LWA supplemental benefit to eligible claimants for an additional three weeks (weeks ending August 22, August 29, and September 5). FEMA has informed all states that there will not be funding available beyond week six (week ending September 5).

Unemployment Extended Benefits

- The Department has implemented the high Extended Benefits program which will provide an additional 20 weeks of benefits to eligible UI claimants, but only after regular UI and PEUC benefits are exhausted.

Claim Issues

- Claimants that contact the Claimant Assistance Center with an issue that cannot be resolved within 24-hours will be moved to the Inquiry Tool and a specialist will be assigned to their case for expedited resolution. The Claimant Assistance Center can be reached at 877-214-3332.
- As we approach our “busy season” with regular seasonal layoffs, we are tailoring messaging specific to claimants who will likely need to reopen their claim (rather than reapply), which will mitigate the number of claim issues and hopefully expedite processing. The pre-COVID high unemployment season typically begins in November and runs through March each year.

UI Fraud

- Individuals who believe a fraudulent claim has been filed using their personal information should notify the Department of Labor at 802-828-4101. This line is exclusively for fraud reports. More information about fraud and the ability to submit online reports is available at: <https://labor.vermont.gov/ui-fraud>.

Claims Adjudications and Appeals

- Our team of factfinders has launched successfully. This effort is designed to expedite the adjudications process by increasing the speed in which claim determinations can be made. Additionally, the Department has hired more staff in both the adjudications and appeals units to accelerate the processing of contested claims.

Reimbursable Employer Charge Relief

- The Department has begun to reimburse employers who are classified as ‘Reimbursable,’ and who had already paid the full contribution amount for the second quarter filing.

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.

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](#)

Traditional Unemployment Insurance (TUI)

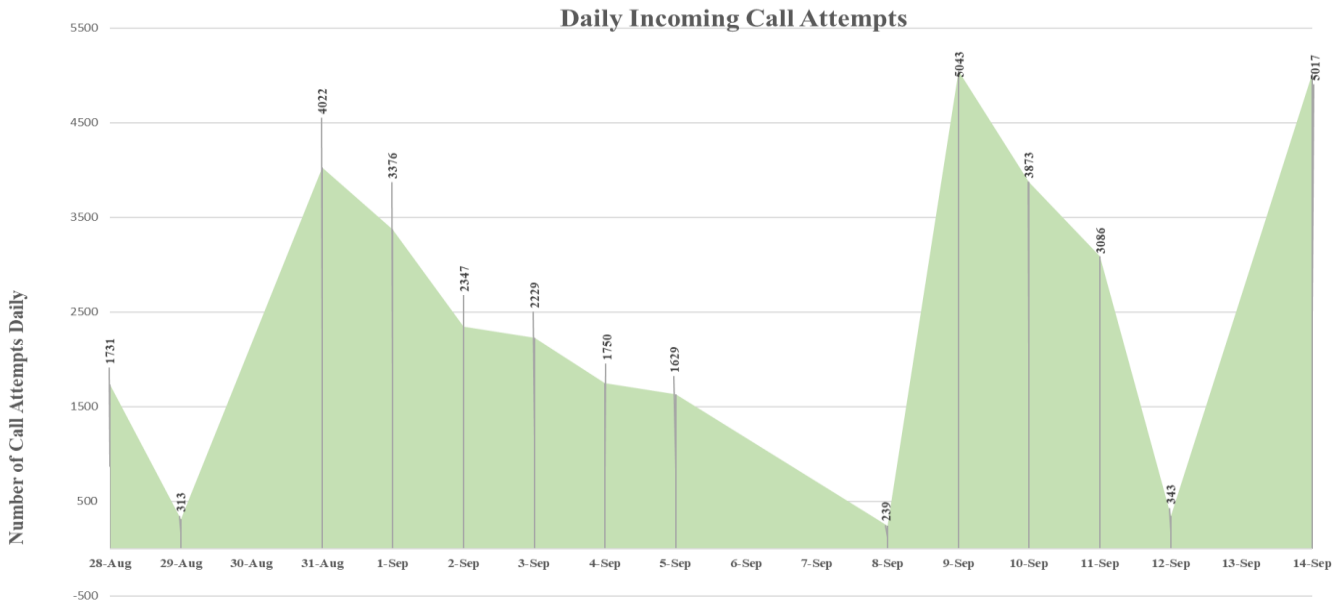
*Numbers as of Tuesday, September 15, 2020		
Total Initial Claimants Filed	120,367	Total Number of Initial Claimants.
Initial Claimants Eligible for UI	81,521	Number of claimants eligible for UI.
Initial Claimants Eligible for UI - Paid	74,362	Number of claimants who are receiving, or have received, UI benefits.
Initial Claimants Eligible for UI - Not Paid	7,159	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	\$271,484,195	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)

*Numbers as of Tuesday, September 15, 2020		
Claimants Potentially PUA Eligible	31,270	Total number of claimants that could complete the PUA application and are in the system
Claimants in PUA – Filed	23,343	# of claimants who have completed the PUA application
Claimants in PUA – Filed & Eligible	19,558	# of eligible claimants
Claimants in PUA – Filed & Ineligible	3,742	# of ineligible claimants
Claimants Eligible for PUA - Filed and Paid	18,355	# of eligible claimants receiving PUA benefit.
Claimants in PUA -Filed and Not Paid	1,203	# 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	\$196,050,257	Total amount of PUA benefits paid

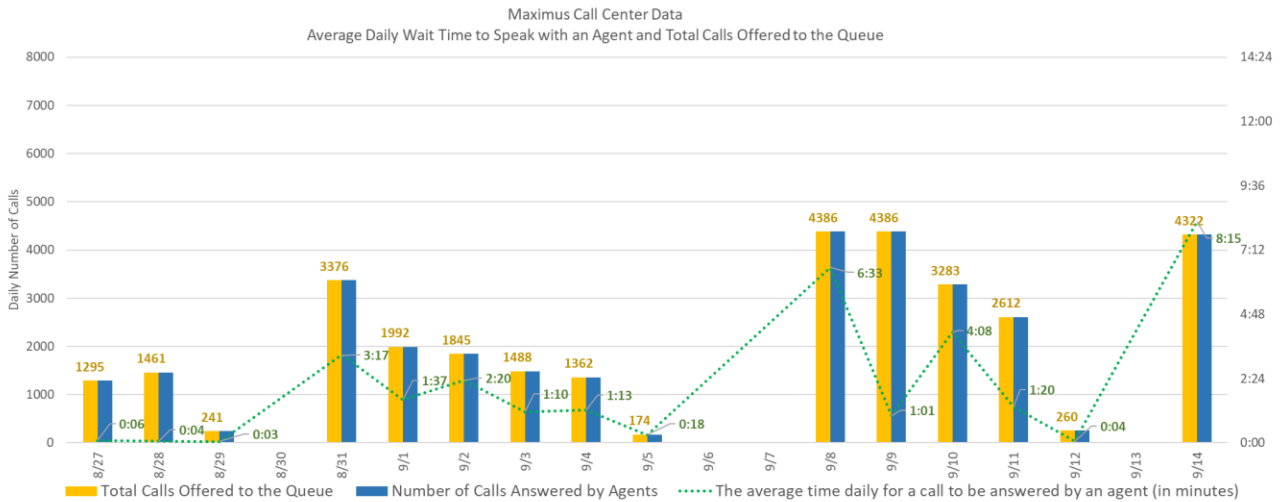
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Figure 1.1



*Counts include both answered and unanswered calls, multiple attempts from the same phone number and calls terminated by caller in the automated interactive voice response system

Figure 1.2



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Figure 2.1

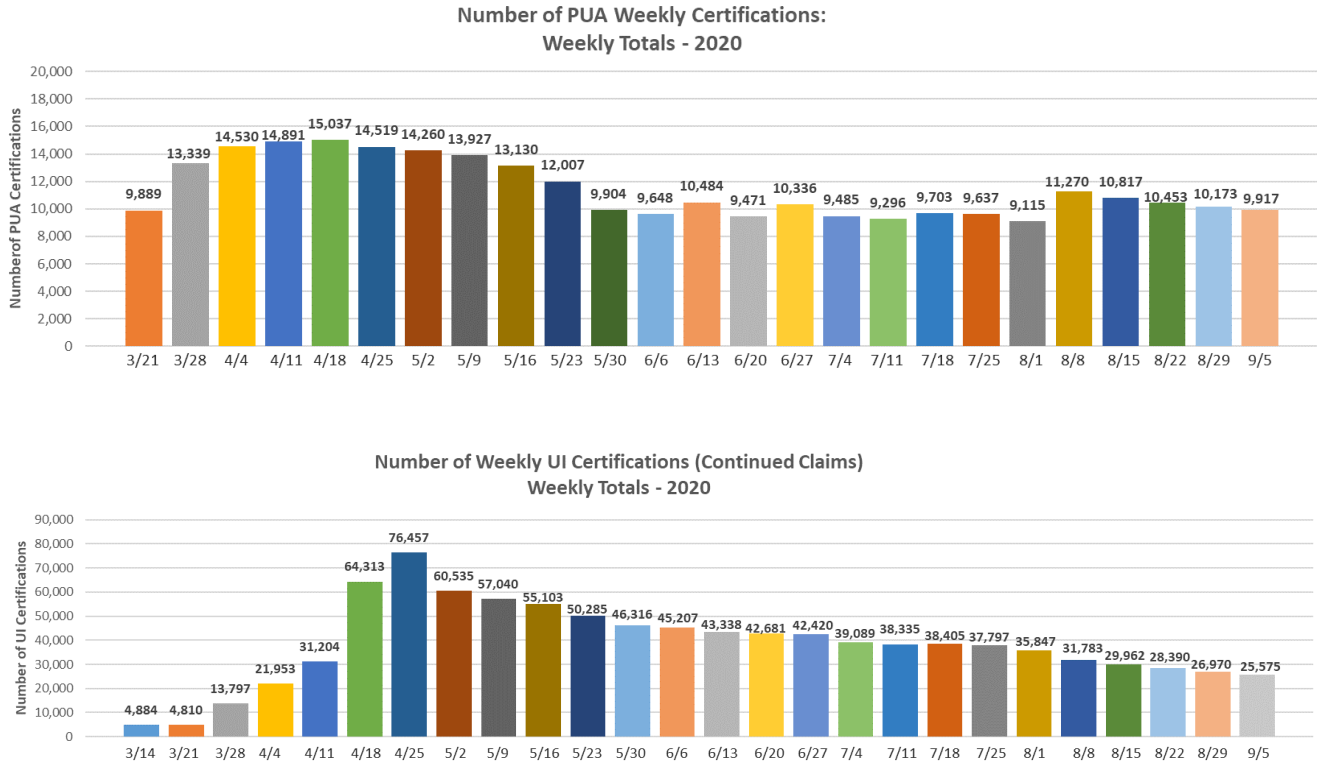
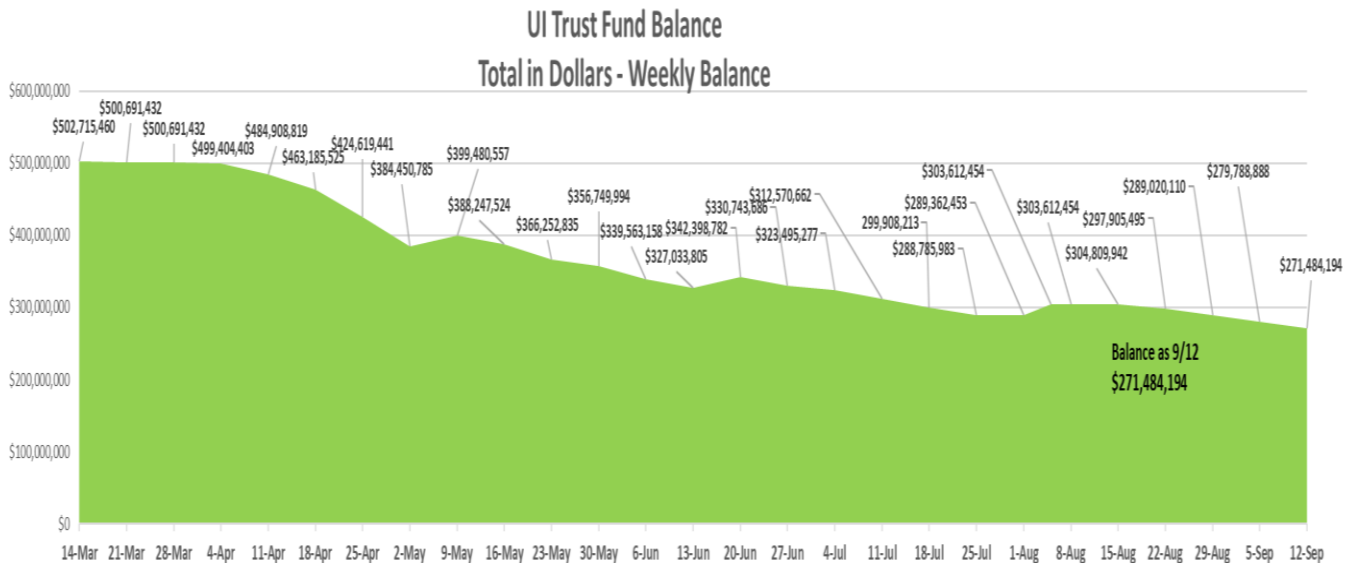


Figure 2.2



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