

## **Federal Extension of Unemployment Compensation Benefits Frequently Asked Questions**

Governor Ted Strickland signed an agreement to provide additional federal unemployment compensation benefits to eligible Ohioans. The extension was made possible as a result of the President's signing of the Emergency Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 2008, passed by Congress on June 26, 2008 and amended on November 21, 2008 and February 17, 2009. This legislation will allow up to 33 weeks of additional federal unemployment compensation to eligible Ohioans.

### **Who is eligible to receive this extension?**

Currently unemployed individuals who satisfy all of the following criteria could qualify:

- had an unemployment application in effect as of May 5, 2007, or later;
- have exhausted all regular state UC benefits;
- have no rights to regular UC or extended benefits under any other state unemployment compensation law or federal law or in Canada.

### **What are individuals eligible for?**

Individuals are eligible to receive up to 20 weeks of additional benefits. These benefits are known as Tier 1 benefits. The extended benefit amounts will be the same as claimants' previous UC benefit amounts, unless there is some other change in circumstances (such as an adjustment in deductions, like child support). Individuals will be expected to continue their work search efforts. An additional 13 weeks of extended benefits, known as Tier 2 benefits, could be payable when a claimant exhausts his/her Tier 1 entitlement.

### **I think I am eligible for extended benefits. What do I do?**

Individuals who exhaust regular unemployment benefits will receive instructions on how to file for these benefits. Those individuals who exhaust the original 20 weeks of (Tier 1) federal benefits will automatically receive a recomputation of their total benefits payable, adding up to 13 weeks of Tier 2 federal extended benefits to their balance.

### **How long will it take to process my application and start benefit payments?**

Once claimants are determined to be eligible for extended benefits, payments will be issued on a routine, weekly or biweekly basis, with their preferred payment method (debit card or electronic funds transfer).

### **How can I find out if my payment has been issued?**

By visiting <http://unemployment.ohio.gov> or by calling 1-877-OHIO JOB (644-6562) and selecting the option to obtain information about your unemployment compensation claim. Both options require a personal identification number (PIN).

### **May I file continued claims of extended benefits by telephone?**

Yes. Once a favorable determination has been made, continued weeks may be claimed by calling 1-877-OHIO JOB (644-6562) and following the recorded instructions. This option also requires a personal identification number (PIN).

**How does this program affect my current benefits?**

If you are receiving regular unemployment compensation benefits, you must exhaust those benefits before you can receive extended unemployment benefits. You will receive a notification from the Office of Unemployment Compensation alerting you when your benefits are about to expire. If you are still unemployed, you can apply for the extended benefits by following the instructions on the notification.

If you are receiving other federal benefits—such as Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) or Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)—the federal extended unemployment compensation benefits must be paid before benefits from any other programs. You will receive notification to file an extended unemployment benefits application, and you must comply in order to receive future benefits. Once you have exhausted the extended unemployment benefits, your claim will automatically be converted to the other appropriate program type. Please note that the extended unemployment compensation program will reduce the benefits otherwise payable to individuals who are receiving "basic" Trade Readjustment Allowances or Disaster Unemployment Assistance. For example, the maximum 26 week eligibility for basic TRA would be exhausted for any individual eligible for the maximum 33 weeks of extended unemployment compensation benefits

**How long does this program last?**

The last possible effective date for the original 20 weeks (Tier 1) of federal extended benefits is December 20th, 2009. These Tier 1 benefits must be exhausted by the week ending December 26th, 2009 in order to be eligible for the additional 13 weeks (Tier 2) benefits.

The last week ending date that can be paid federal extended benefits is the week ending June 5th, 2010. No federal extended benefits will be paid after that time.