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Oregon Employment Department Begins Issuing Waiting Week Benefits

246,300 Oregonians to receive a combined total of \$176 million in benefits in initial payment run

Nov. 23, 2020 (Salem, OR)--Today the Oregon Employment Department announced it has begun paying the 'waiting week' for eligible Oregonians who received regular unemployment insurance (UI) benefits since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Today's announcement comes one week ahead of the Employment Department's end of November goal to begin paying the waiting week.

"We are very pleased to announce that many Oregonians will now start seeing the waiting week benefits they have been waiting for," said David Gerstenfeld, acting director of the Oregon Employment Department. "Our IT and Unemployment Insurance teams have worked incredibly hard to implement programming changes that allow us to issue payments at this scale. Oregonians have been patient with us, and we thank them."

The waiting week is the first week of a regular UI claim when a person meets all eligibility requirements. Traditionally, claimants do not receive benefits that week. The waiting week has been waived for regular UI initial claims filed March 8, 2020 through Jan. 2, 2021. Eligible initial claims for regular UI filed by Jan. 2, 2021 will receive a waiting week payment. Oregonians who received Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) or Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) will not receive a waiting week payment, as those programs pay claimants' first eligible week.

The Department estimates 246,300 Oregonians have been issued payments today totaling \$176 million. Most claimants can expect to receive their waiting week benefit by their typical method of payment within three business days.

"We know some claimants still have to wait to receive their payments, and we want them to know that we're working hard to get them their funds as quickly as possible," Gerstenfeld said.

Payments for an estimated 170,000 people will be delayed because they have to be manually processed. The Department estimates that while most will people will receive their waiting week benefit by the end of December, it may take until the end of January for claimants receiving Pandemic Unemployment Emergency Compensation (PEUC), Extended Benefits (EB), or benefits through Workshare to receive their waiting week payment.

Eligible claimants will receive the same weekly amount as their regular unemployment benefit amount. However, state law restricts claimants from receiving more than the maximum benefit amount for their claim. For most claims, the maximum benefit amount is 26 times the weekly benefit amount or 26 weeks of benefits. The waiting week **does not** add any more benefits to a claim balance or the maximum benefit amount.

Eligible claimants whose waiting week falls between March 29, 2020 and July 25, 2020 also will receive the \$600 Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation payment in addition to their weekly benefit amount.

Eligible claimants whose waiting week falls between July 26, 2020 and Sept. 5, 2020 and who have certified that they are COVID impacted will receive the \$300 LWA payment in addition to their weekly benefit amount.

The waiting week is taxable under federal and state law like other unemployment benefits. If a claimant has taxes withheld from their benefits, they also will be withheld from the waiting week. Child support will be withheld from the waiting week and \$600 FPUC payment. It will not be withheld from LWA.

To see if they have served a waiting week, claimants can review the weeks they have claimed and those that have been paid in the [Online Claim System](#). Claimants can log in to the Online Claims System and select '*Where is my check?*' Claimants, including those whose waiting week payment will be manually processed, do **NOT** need to contact the Employment Department to receive their payment.

More information about the waiting week can be found in [this FAQ](#).

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