



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 25, 2020

Contact:

Melanni Rosales

OED_Communications@oregon.gov

503-949-1851

Extended Benefits Reduced Based on Oregon's Falling Unemployment Rate

Nov. 25, 2020 (Salem, OR)--Today the Oregon Employment Department announced a reduction in extended benefits as a result of Oregon's falling unemployment rate. Following a federal determination, Extended Benefits (EB) will be reduced from up to 20 weeks of benefits to up to 13 weeks, beginning Dec. 13, 2020.

"We know the benefit extension has been a critical safety net for many Oregonians, and this reduction in available benefits will be painful," said David Gerstenfeld, acting director of the Oregon Employment Department. "We are calling on our federal elected leaders to help Oregonians and pass legislation that will allow us to quickly provide benefits to those still facing hardships. We stand ready to implement any new or continued benefit programs as quickly as possible, so that Oregonians are able to make ends meet while the pandemic continues to spread."

Extended Benefits (EB) is a program that extends regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits when a state is at high unemployment. The average unemployment rate is reviewed at the federal level over a three-month period to determine if the state goes into this extension. If the average unemployment rate is below 8% but above 6.5%, then up to 13 weeks of additional benefits are available under EB. If the average unemployment rate is above 8%, the number of additional weeks of benefits increases to 20 through High Extended Benefits (HEB).

Because of Oregon's high unemployment rate during the pandemic, the Department began paying up to 20 weeks of HEB on the week ending July 11, 2020. Claimants receiving benefits under HEB will continue receiving those benefits through the week ending Dec. 12. Beginning Dec. 13, claimants will see a change to the number of extended benefits they have remaining.

Some examples of what will happen after Dec. 12:

- If the week ending Dec. 12 is your *10th week* on EB, you will receive benefits for that week and will have 3 weeks of EB remaining. Starting Dec. 13, you can continue claiming and receiving EB, for a total of 13 weeks.
- If the week ending Dec. 12 is your *13th week* of EB, you will receive benefits for that week but will have zero weeks of EB remaining. Starting Dec. 13, you will not receive any more weeks of EB.

- If the week ending Dec. 12 is your *15th week* of EB, you will receive benefits for that week but will have zero weeks of EB remaining. Starting Dec. 13, you will not receive any more weeks of EB.
- If the week ending Dec. 12 is your *1st week* of EB, you will receive benefits for that week and will have 12 weeks of EB remaining. Starting Dec. 13, you can continue claiming and receiving EB, for a total of 13 weeks.

Some Oregonians who have already received 13 weeks of EB may be able to receive Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits for the few weeks remaining before that program expires on Dec. 26, 2020. To qualify for PUA, claimants' unemployment must fit one of the CARES Act-listed criteria for being COVID-19 impacted. Oregonians can apply for PUA through the Employment Department's [Online Claims System](#).

The Department will send claimants a letter and an email informing them that their EB benefit amount has been reduced. Claimants can also check to see how many weeks of EB they have been paid by viewing their claim status in the Online Claims System.

More information about Extended Benefits and High Extended Benefits can be found on [these FAQs](#).

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