



FEMA

Recovery News

Issue Date: April 26, 2010
Reference: DR1895NR030
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ONE WEEK TO DEADLINE FOR DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

ANDOVER, Mass. – Only one week remains for Massachusetts residents who have lost jobs as a result of the March flood disaster to apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits. Applications must be in by close of business Monday, May 3.

The special DUA program announced by Governor Patrick on April 2 provides benefits for workers who would not normally qualify for unemployment compensation, including self-employed persons, commission-paid employees, and other categories of workers.

Program benefits are available to unemployed individuals for up to 26 weeks from the date of the presidential disaster declaration on March 29. The assistance period ends Saturday, Oct 2.

To be eligible for DUA benefits, the person must have been working in or residing in Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk or Worcester counties at the time of the disaster. Once registered for DUA, an individual's benefits will continue if the reason for continuing unemployment remains disaster-related.

To file a claim, individuals must first file for regular Unemployment Insurance. Applicants may register online at the Massachusetts Labor and Workforce Development Department website www.mass.gov, call **617-626-6800**, or visit a walk-in claims agent at one of Massachusetts' 37 One-Stop Career Centers. The benefit amount is determined based on past income earned during calendar year 2009.

Register for Disaster Unemployment Assistance benefits if:

- You were injured in the disaster and are unable to work, whether you are self-employed or work for an employer;
- Your workplace was damaged, destroyed, or you can't work because of the disaster;
- Your transportation to work is not available because of the disaster;
- You could not get to your job because you had to travel through the affected area, and you could not do that because of the disaster;

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- You were about to begin working, but could not because of the disaster;
- You derived most of your income from areas affected by the disaster, whether you worked for yourself or for an employer, and your business is down as a direct result of the disaster.

Disaster officials say that all affected survivors who suffered damages should first call to register at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) toll-free registration line, **800-621-FEMA (3362)**, between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. seven days a week. Persons with speech or hearing impairments should apply by calling the TTY line, 800-462-7585. Registration online is at www.DisasterAssistance.gov.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders and to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

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