



PUBLIC NOTICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 8, 2020

Lost Wages Assistance Program Approved for Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, AR (September 8, 2020)— President Trump signed four Presidential Memorandums on Aug. 8, 2020, including one to offer enhanced unemployment insurance benefits of \$300 per week for eligible individuals with at least \$100 weekly benefit amount. Arkansas' application to receive LWA funding was approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on August 26, 2020.

The state must follow the federal guidelines for determining who is eligible.

You could be eligible for the LWA benefit if:

- You are eligible for state or federal unemployment benefits and have a weekly benefit amount of at least \$100 and
- You are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

Note: Since the minimum weekly benefit amount for PUA is \$132, PUA claimants who are otherwise eligible for benefits will automatically receive the \$300 LWA benefit.

Under LWA, eligible claimants could receive a payment of \$300 in addition to their regular weekly benefit amount. LWA benefits will be distributed based on available state and federal funds. Individuals do not need to call or apply separately for this benefit. DWS will send letters to all individuals who are potentially eligible for LWA benefits with instructions detailing next steps.

DWS plans to begin issuing payments the second week of September. Payments will begin no later than October 2, 2020. Benefits will be paid retroactively for those determined eligible as long as funding is available. Future LWA benefits will be based on federal funds, therefore, payments may stop at any time.

We are committed to helping Arkansans in need during this uncertain period through all available programs administered by the Division of Workforce Services (DWS). Under the direction of Governor Hutchinson and the Arkansas Department of Commerce, DWS has implemented an emergency assistance program using existing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to provide benefits to UI claimants with families who are ineligible for LWA and have lost wages due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The emergency assistance program will be available for UI claimants who are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19. In order to qualify, you must:

- be a custodial parent with a child under the age of 18 or a woman who is currently pregnant; and
- have a family income less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level; and
- have a demonstrated need that can be verified through documentation.

Those who qualify for the emergency assistance program will be eligible for benefits in an amount that is, at a minimum, equal to the amount of benefits that other UI claimants will receive through the LWA program.

The application for the emergency assistance program will be available through the Local Workforce Development Boards and other service providers in your area. Please visit the DWS website at www.dws.arkansas.gov and click on the yellow “INELIGIBLE FOR LWA” button at the top of the homepage for a list of service providers and their contact information. The service provider in your area will provide instructions for submitting your application. Applicants should be prepared to submit all necessary documentation with their application to expedite processing and avoid having to apply again.



About the Arkansas Department of Commerce:

The Arkansas Department of Commerce is the umbrella department for workforce and economic development drivers. Its divisions and regulatory boards include Division of Aeronautics, Waterways Commission, Wine Producers Council, Division of Workforce Services, Office of Skills Development, State Bank Department, Insurance Department, Securities Department, Economic Development Commission and Development Finance Authority. It was established July 2019 as part of Governor Asa Hutchinson’s wide-sweeping efficiency and transformation efforts to reduce 42 cabinet agencies to 15 while maintaining services for all Arkansans.



About the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services:

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services is a division of the Arkansas Department of Commerce. ADWS administers Arkansas’ Unemployment Insurance program and facilitates employer compliance with the Arkansas Employment Security Law, collects unemployment insurance contributions from employers, provides unemployment insurance benefits to those eligible, and maintains management information systems for filing unemployment insurance claims and fraud detection.