

IDES Preparing to Administer New Federal COVID-19 Relief Legislation

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SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today that it remains committed to implementing newly announced federal unemployment benefits and relief measures as quickly and effectively as possible. After nearly a week of delays, President Trump signed the omnibus spending bill, H.R. 133, on Sunday, December 27. IDES and state unemployment agencies nationwide await

further U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) guidance to begin supporting claimants and are urging federal authorities to not create further hardship as a result of the president's inaction.

Claimants are encouraged to check the [IDES website](#) and social media platforms for additional updates. The Department will share additional information as soon as it becomes available. Included in the bill were critical extensions to the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), and Extended Benefits (EB) programs, which technically expired on December 26 because of the delay in the presidential signature. Because of this delay, IDES and all other state unemployment agencies await guidance on how to move forward with continuing to accept and pay benefits under these programs.

In addition to guidance surrounding existing federal unemployment programs, this new legislation includes an option for states to implement the Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation (MEUC) program. Illinois and IDES plan to adopt the MEUC program, which addresses mixed-income earners who have self-employment income but are disqualified from receiving PUA because they are eligible to receive regular unemployment benefits. MEUC will mark the sixth federal unemployment program IDES has stood up this year.

“The Department will do everything in its capacity to ensure claimants experience as seamless a transition as possible given that this new law contains changes to existing programs that all states must now work to implement” said IDES Acting Director Kristin Richards.

From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, IDES has stood up five brand new federal programs in record time, alongside numerous changes to existing programs to help claimants access benefits. Since March, IDES has paid out more than \$19 billion in benefits.