

Jim Doyle
Governor

Roberta Gassman
Secretary



State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
201 East Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 7946
Madison, WI 53707-7946
Telephone: (608) 266-3131
Fax: (608) 266-1784
<http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/>
e-mail: dwdsec@dwd.state.wi.us

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CONTACT: Jessica Erickson, Communications Director, 608-266-6753

Disaster Unemployment Assistance Application Deadline Approaches

Secretary Gassman Reminds Individuals in Nine Counties Hit By August's Storms, Severe Flooding to Apply for Benefits by October 8

MADISON – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today reminded workers in Columbia, Dane, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Kenosha, Racine, and Rock counties who lost their employment due to flooding and severe storms in August that they must apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) by Monday, October 8, 2007.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance is a federal program that provides financial assistance to workers, including self-employed farm and non-farm workers, who lost work and wages as a direct result of a disaster. Individuals may be eligible for DUA benefits if, as a direct result of the flooding, they were unable to reach their place of employment, lost work because of an injury, or became the major support of a household because the head of the household died as a result of the storm. DUA benefits are not payable if the individual qualifies for regular unemployment benefits.

DUA benefits are based on a person's earnings for the most recent tax year. As a result, applicants will be asked to furnish earnings data from their 2006 federal tax return when filing a claim. The DUA benefit, depending upon yearly income and loss of wages, can range from \$132 to \$355 per week.

Applications must be filed by telephone by calling the state Unemployment Insurance Division in Madison at (608) 232-0678, in Milwaukee at (414) 438-7700, or toll free at (800) 822-5246. A special (TTY) number for the hearing impaired is also available at (888) 393-8914.

After flooding and severe storms hit southern Wisconsin beginning August 18, Governor Doyle announced the nine counties were declared federal disaster areas for individual assistance, which means DUA benefits are available to workers who qualify.

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