

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: Dick Jones, Agency Liaison, 608-267-4780

Governor Doyle Announces Additional Federal Unemployment Benefits

Insured unemployment rate triggers up to 13 weeks of additional federal benefits

MADISON – Governor Doyle today announced additional extended unemployment benefits for Wisconsin workers who have exhausted their regular Wisconsin benefits and federal extended benefits that were approved last year.

“The national economic crisis continues to take a toll on Wisconsin’s hardworking families,” Governor Doyle said. “Wisconsin now qualifies for additional federal unemployment benefits and I am directing the Department of Workforce Development to quickly expedite payment. Meanwhile, I continue to work with President Obama and members of Congress on a federal recovery package that will get the economy moving again and put people back to work.”

Wisconsin provides up to 26 weeks of regular benefits with the maximum payment currently at \$363. As the national economic crisis grew worse, Congress acted twice last year to allow federal extended benefits. Last summer, Congress authorized up to 13 weeks of federal extended benefits. Last fall, it approved a second round of extended benefits under a two-tier system.

Under the two-tier system, up to seven weeks of additional benefits were allowed in Wisconsin and other states. For those states with an unemployment rate of 4 percent among workers covered by unemployment insurance, up to 13 weeks of additional benefits were allowed. Wisconsin now has qualified for this second tier of eligible benefits.

When the second round of benefits was approved on November 21, Wisconsin was below the trigger rate of 4 percent for insured unemployment. As a result, individuals who had exhausted their benefits were entitled to receive up to seven weeks of additional benefits but not the additional 13 weeks. In the week of January 4th, however, Wisconsin’s rate of insured unemployment reached the 4 percent threshold, ensuring that Wisconsin claimants can access the entire amount of extended benefits.

All individuals eligible for the additional benefits will receive a notice from the Department of Workforce Development. DWD will be contacting those that may be eligible for extended benefits by mail, including those who may have exhausted their benefits up to this time.

“Please continue to file your weekly claim if you are currently doing so,” DWD Secretary Roberta Gassman said. “We appreciate the public’s patience as this notification is being distributed to those eligible.”