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On the Web: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/news.htm>

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DWD Announces Additional Steps to Link UI Claimants to Job Opportunities

MADISON – To increase the opportunity for unemployed individuals to find new jobs, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) will take additional steps this fall to ensure that new Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants register for work with the Wisconsin Job Service through JobCenterofWisconsin.com

The additional steps will apply to new UI claimants who file initial claims on or after October 13, 2013, and meet the legal requirement that they register for work. The steps will ensure these claimants have direct access to Wisconsin Job Service resources provided either in person or online, including tens of thousands of job openings to choose from.

“We are here to help unemployed individuals move from government dependence to the independence of having family-supporting jobs, and we need to do everything we can to motivate claimants to take advantage of the resources in the Wisconsin Job Service system, including JobCenterofWisconsin.com, to find new employment quickly,” DWD Secretary Reggie Newson said. “Claimants can file for UI benefits and then complete this one-time, online registration within one hour, and for those who need extra help, we stand ready to deliver one-on-one assistance either in person at our 26 comprehensive Job Centers and dozens of additional sites, or assistance by phone through our Job Service Call Center toll-free line.”

Key highlights of the upcoming changes that will apply to new UI claimants who are affected include:

- Starting October 13, new UI claimants who file for benefits and who must register for work will be advised at several points throughout the filing process that they have 14 days to register with Wisconsin Job Service using JobCenterofWisconsin.com in order to receive benefits. This includes creating a Job Match profile and uploading or creating a résumé.
- Individuals will receive a special reminder flyer in the orientation packet that's mailed to them after they file that they have 14 days from the time they file their claim to register on JobCenterofWisconsin.com. Claimants will not receive benefits until they register on JobCenterofWisconsin.com. DWD will send an automated reminder by phone to those who haven't registered by the 12th day that they must register in order to receive benefits.
- Wisconsin Job Service staff who are based at dozens of Job Center locations and operating the Job Service Call Center will be ready to provide step-by-step guidance through the JobCenterofWisconsin.com registration process. Staff in the UI Call Centers will also connect individuals who need registration help to Wisconsin Job Service for help.
- An alternative registration method will be available to help claimants who face significant barriers that impact their ability to complete the online registration.

“It is to the advantage of unemployed individuals to make a direct link with Wisconsin Job Service and other workforce partners, who are based in every corner of the state and can help them find new jobs,” Secretary Newson said. “This change reinforces the historic Unemployment Insurance reforms that have been advanced through the legislative and budget process this year to promote program integrity, efficiency and accountability, while also focusing on helping to connect job seekers to available work.”

(more)

Secretary Newson noted that work registration has been a longstanding federal requirement, and Wisconsin implements this mandate by requiring claimants to file with Wisconsin Job Service. However, while many states across the country including in the Midwest enforce work registration, Wisconsin has not uniformly enforced the requirement since the mid-1990s, when the state transitioned from in-person filing at UI offices to telephone claims-taking.

In 2011, DWD added the requirement that claimants who must register with Wisconsin Job Service do so using JobCenterofWisconsin.com, and urged claimants to comply. Since then DWD has worked to set in place both the technology and resources to not only enforce the requirement uniformly and effectively, but also to provide affected individuals with ample opportunity and support to meet the requirement.

In the coming weeks, DWD will conduct training with staff in Job Centers and call centers, make technical enhancements to its online system, conduct education and outreach to the public, and engage community agencies and other local partners across the state that provide free computer access and may be visited by claimants seeking to complete their online registration.

For more information:

Unemployment Insurance: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/ui/>

Job Center of Wisconsin: JobCenterofWisconsin.com

Wisconsin Job Service Call Center: 1-888-258-9966