N E W S   R E L E A S E

Unemployment benefits total $107 billion during COVID pandemic

New video available to help Californians through enhanced application process

Sacramento – A total of **$107 billion** in unemployment benefits have been paid since March, supporting California's workers, their families and their communities all impacted by this historic COVID-19 pandemic. The state's Employment Development Department (EDD) reports the average daily benefits paid in the week ending October 31 ($221.1 million) is 254% higher than the average paid during the same week at the peak of the Great Recession ($62.5 million in the week ending October 30, 2010).

The benefits stem from a total of **15.8 million claims** that have been processed by the EDD over the last seven and half months. Both claims processed and applications received are down slightly from the prior week. The latest available unemployment claims and trends data can be found on the EDD's online Newsroom.

In addition, the EDD also reports on the current backlog of claims. The EDD's Unemployment Data Dashboards webpage illustrates progress made since September 19.

To better assist workers who may lose their jobs or have their hours reduced due to the impacts of the pandemic, the EDD has updated a video tutorial entitled "UI Online: How to Apply for UI Benefits". It provides helpful guidance to workers seeking to apply for unemployment benefits, including the information needed to verify their identity through the new ID.me tool used in the new claims process. This enhancement allows EDD to more quickly confirm claimants are who they say they are and avoid the more manual verification process that has delayed some payments in the past.

Californians are encouraged to take advantage of all available resources on EDD's website including other video tutorials in several different languages, top FAQs updated each week, and other tools like a chat bot feature labeled "EDD Help" to provide answers to commonly asked questions and an Unemployment Benefit Programs Flowchart to give claimants an overview of what benefits they could be eligible for and how those claims are filed.

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