

LABOR

MICHAEL L. PARSON
GOVERNOR



NEWS

ANNA S. HUI
DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 16, 2020

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Delores Rose 573-751-1518

Missouri Launches Virtual Assistant for Unemployment Questions; Issues \$600 Federal Payments and Encourages Direct Deposit for Quick Payment

Jefferson City, MO — The Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations' (DOLIR's) Division of Employment Security (DES) has introduced a virtual assistant chatbot feature on its home page labor.mo.gov. The virtual assistant is designed specifically to assist in answering unemployment questions by simply clicking on the icon and typing in a question.

With the unprecedented volume of calls and emails the DES is currently receiving, the chatbot will provide answers more efficiently. The DES encourages the use of the virtual assistant, as well as taking advantage of up-to-date information on federal unemployment programs and answers to frequently asked questions available at labor.mo.gov/coronavirus, watching how-to videos at labor.mo.gov/des/videos, and checking claim status and correspondence online at uinteract.labor.mo.gov.

This week the DES was able to release the first payments to regular insured employees under the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) provision of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Over 115,000 individuals received funds totaling more than \$66 million dollars through FPUC. The first \$600 payment received by eligible recipients was paid retroactively for the week of March 29 through April 4, the first week for which anyone would have been eligible to receive benefits under the FPUC. Additional \$600 payments for subsequent claimed weeks will continue as long as a claimant remains eligible through the week ending July 25.

The DES notes that child support payments, existing non-fraud over payments, and taxes, for those that have elected to have taxes withheld, reduces both the \$600 payment as well as any weekly unemployment payments.

Additionally, the DES would like to remind those filing for unemployment that the quickest way to receive payment, if an individual does not already have a Missouri Access debit card is by direct deposit. Typically, after the DES processes a payment, which can be seen online in individual UInteract accounts, a claimant will receive payment in their account within a day or two depending on how long their bank holds funds.

Before calling the DES, check for additional information on unemployment by visiting labor.mo.gov/coronavirus, watch how-to videos at labor.mo.gov/des/videos, check for correspondence and claim status at uinteract.labor.mo.gov and ask unemployment questions of the Department's virtual assistant at labor.mo.gov.

###