

Overpayment Waiver Now Available for UI Claimants

Affected individuals to receive notification through U.S. Mail

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 18, 2021) — Unemployment insurance (UI) claimants who were overpaid benefits in 2020 can now apply for a waiver that may clear them from having to repay those funds.

The Kentucky Office of Unemployment Insurance today mailed Notice of Determination letters to approximately 14,000 UI claimants who were identified as having been overpaid between Jan. 27 and Dec. 31, 2020. The letters inform claimants how much they were overpaid and provide instructions on how to apply for the waiver, either online or by completing an enclosed form.

Gov. Andy Beshear said that early in the pandemic the federal government asked state unemployment offices to get benefit payments in the hands of millions of people as quickly as possible. Weeks later, as guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor changed, some people who received benefits were deemed ineligible and asked to repay those funds.

“I have fought for this waiver because it is the right thing to do,” the Governor said. “Without it, a lot of Kentuckians would have received collection notices during a pandemic, and in many cases the money they received has already been spent, creating an additional hardship for folks in the toughest of times.”

Claimants have 30 days from the date postmarked on the letter to apply for the waiver, and must attest that the overpayment was the result of no fault of their own and that recovery of the funds would be contrary to equity and good conscience.

The agency recommends that claimants use the online option to expedite the process.

The Continued Assistance Act amended federal law to allow states to waive non-fraudulent unemployment insurance overpayments during the pandemic late last year, but Kentucky was among a handful of states that required legislative action to provide relief.

On March 12, the Governor signed legislation allowing the waiver after the Kentucky General Assembly passed Senate Bill 7 during its regular session.

The state has paid out more than \$6 billion in total unemployment benefits during the pandemic. An unprecedented number of unemployment insurance claims, more than 2.2 million, have been filed in Kentucky since March 2020. No one in state government will be satisfied until all eligible Kentuckians have received their benefits.

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