

## **News for Immediate Release**

**Sept. 14, 2011**

### **Disaster Unemployment Assistance Available to Residents Affected by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee**

**Harrisburg** - Department of Labor & Industry Secretary Julia Hearthway today announced the availability of federal disaster unemployment assistance (DUA) benefits to individuals unemployed, including self-employed workers, due to the effects of Hurricane Irene between Aug. 26-30 or as a result of Tropical Storm Lee and the severe storms, heavy rains and flooding that have resulted since Sept. 3.

The federal DUA was made possible after approval of Governor Tom Corbett's request that affected counties be declared disaster areas. DUA is available under the federal disaster declaration for Hurricane Irene in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Sullivan and Wyoming counties.

DUA is available under the federal disaster declaration for Tropical Storm Lee in Adams, Bradford, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Luzerne, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Union, Wyoming, and York counties.

Additional disaster-related services are available at local Disaster Recovery Centers which are being established in Bradford, Columbia, Dauphin, Lycoming, Luzerne and Wyoming counties.

"The flooding has impacted residents, homes and businesses," Hearthway said. "Labor & Industry and the rest of state government are moving quickly to provide the resources our people need to get back to normal and return to work."

Pennsylvanians who are unemployed as a result of either storm can apply immediately for regular state unemployment compensation (UC) if the employment was covered under the state UC law, or for the special federal DUA benefits.

DUA is available to individuals who are self-employed or who would not normally qualify for regular state assistance. DUA covers people who, as a direct result of the disaster, no longer have a job, are unable to reach their place of employment, were to begin work and were prevented by the disaster, cannot work because of an injury or illness caused as a direct result of the disaster, or have become a breadwinner or major supporter of a household because the head of the household died as a direct result of the disaster.

Unemployment is considered a direct result of the disaster if it resulted from the physical damage or destruction of the place of employment; the physical inaccessibility of the place of employment due to its closure by the federal, state, or local government in immediate response to the disaster; or lack of work, or loss of revenues, if, prior to the disaster, the employer or self-employed business received at least a majority of its revenue or income from an entity in the major disaster area

that was damaged or destroyed in the disaster or an entity in the major disaster area closed by the federal, state, or local government.

Applicants may file for DUA by calling toll free at 877-FILE DUA (877-345-3382), from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday and 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. Individuals using a text telephone (TTY) may call toll free at 888-334-4046.

Applicants should be prepared to provide a Social Security Number and, if possible, any documents that show earnings and employment for the tax year that ended prior to their unemployment as a result of the disaster.

Claimants must file DUA applications no later than Oct. 14.

UC claimants not affected by the storms should continue to file claims online at [www.uc.pa.gov](http://www.uc.pa.gov).

Also, people who need help in returning to work or conducting a work search can contact their local Pennsylvania CareerLink® for assistance. Additional job services are available in person or online through the Pennsylvania CareerLink® website. Visit [www.pacareerlink.state.pa.us](http://www.pacareerlink.state.pa.us) for more information or to find the office closest to you.

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