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Alaskans Eligible for Unemployment Insurance Extended Benefits

JUNEAU, Alaska— Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development Heidi Drygas announced today that up to 13 weeks of extended benefits will be available to eligible workers receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits beginning the week of November 5, 2017.

Alaska's unemployment rate controls when extended benefits are available, and the U.S. Department of Labor has determined that Alaska's current unemployment rate of 7.2% triggers these additional benefits. Unemployed workers who exhaust their regular Unemployment Insurance benefits after 16 to 26 weeks may be eligible for an additional 8 to 13 weeks of benefits. Funding for extended benefit payments is split equally between the state's Unemployment Insurance trust fund and the federal government.

The Alaska Division of Employment and Training Services, which administers the Unemployment Insurance program, will notify potentially eligible workers by mail. Individuals with remaining balances of regular Unemployment Insurance will continue to draw out their benefits until exhaustion. Upon exhaustion, workers will be able to submit an application for extended benefits to be eligible for continued payment.

Alaskans were last eligible for extended benefits in 2013. Prior to that, the triggering of extended benefits occurred annually since 1995, with the exception of 2006, generally due to higher unemployment rates in Alaska compared to national averages.

Individuals wishing to apply for extended benefits should contact their nearest Unemployment Insurance Claim Center by dialing (907) 269-4700 in Anchorage, (907) 451-2871 in Fairbanks, (907) 465-5552 in Juneau, or toll free at (888) 252-2557 from all other areas.

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