

NEWS RELEASE



STATE OF ALABAMA
Department of Industrial Relations
News For Immediate Release
News Media Contact:
G. Thomas Surtees, Director
334-242-8990

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, November 26, 2008 Recently-passed legislation extending unemployment compensation benefits became effective November 23, 2008, offering needed assistance to many Alabamians looking for work.

The legislation was signed by President Bush on November 21.

Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director Tom Surtees said the new legislation will further extend unemployment compensation benefits for jobless Alabamians by an additional seven weeks. The revision now makes up to 20 weeks of extended benefits available in addition to the existing 26 weeks of regular benefits.

"The Department of Industrial Relations will work to provide these much-needed extended benefits to those workers who qualify," Surtees said. "We are hopeful that these additional resources will help unemployed workers bridge the financial gap as they seek new jobs."

More than 12,000 Alabamians may currently be eligible for the additional benefits. Workers who may qualify will be notified by mail with filing instructions. Current and future beneficiaries who exhaust their regular benefits will automatically be continued on the extended benefits as long as they qualify.

"While Alabama has fared better than most other states, today's job market is challenging for many in the state's workforce. Our career centers are working diligently to help unemployed workers find good-paying jobs and these benefits provide an economic bridge until they do."

More information concerning unemployment benefits and filing instructions can be found on the Department's website: www.dir.alabama.gov.