

NEWS RELEASE



STATE OF ALABAMA
Department of Industrial
Relations
News For Immediate Release
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DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS APPROVED FOR 32 COUNTIES

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, MAY 14, 2003.Unemployed workers in 32 Alabama counties declared disaster areas as a result of last week's severe storms, tornados, and flooding may be eligible for benefits under the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program.

The affected counties are: Barbour, Bibb, Blount, Bullock, Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Colbert, Coosa, Cullman, DeKalb, Etowah, Jackson, Jefferson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Lee, Limestone, Macon, Madison, Marshall, Morgan, Randolph, Russell, Shelby, St. Clair, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Tuscaloosa, and Walker.

"DUA benefits are available to persons who work or live in those counties and became unemployed, or could not engage in their customary self-employment, due to the violent weather that occurred on May 5," says Phyllis Kennedy, Alabama Department of Industrial Relations director.

Claims for DUA may be filed by calling the toll-free telephone number, 1-866-234-5382. Generally, persons who are eligible for regular unemployment benefits are not eligible for DUA, but the claimant may qualify for DUA if the regular benefits are exhausted. Self-employed individuals should bring a copy of their 2002 income tax records when applying for benefits. *The final date to file a claim is June 11, 2003.*

DUA services are administered by the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations through its network of Unemployment Compensation Call Centers across the state. Funding is provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

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Industrial Relations is an umbrella organization of State government which administers: the State Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Compensation, and Labor Market Information. Smaller programs also administered include Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation, Mine Safety and Inspection, and Surface Mining of Non-Fuel Minerals. For more information on DIR visit the Web site: www.dir.state.al.us.