

NEWS RELEASE



STATE OF ALABAMA Department of Industrial Relations

News For Immediate Release

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ALABAMIANS SHOULD KEEP FILING FOR EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, January 3, 2003 On December 29, 2002, about 8,000 Alabamians receiving Temporary Emergency Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) benefits had their benefits end because the federal program expired. Pending federal legislation may extend the TEUC eligibility period during which an individual may receive 13 weeks of these extended TEUC benefits. When Congress reconvenes on January 7, it is possible that not only will the program be renewed, but benefits may even be made retroactive to December 29, 2002.

In order to ensure prompt payment of the potential benefits, the Department of Industrial Relations is providing recipients who are exhausting their regular unemployment benefits after December 29 with the ability to apply for weekly TEUC benefits pending Congressional action.

“We want to make sure that everyone eligible receives their benefits as soon as possible,” says Alice McKinney, director of the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations. “By having claimants continue to file weekly claims we will be in a position to pay benefits quickly if another extension is passed.”

If you are currently receiving TEUC benefits, or exhaust your regular unemployment compensation benefits for the week ending December 29 or later, please continue to claim weekly benefits with the telephone number provided for your local area. Those claimants who are receiving benefits under federal trade programs will continue to receive benefits with no interruption of service provided they continue to call in their claim.

The TEUC 13-week extension is in addition to the regular 26 weeks of unemployment compensation benefits for those who have lost their job though no fault of their own. The program began on March 9, 2002 and ended December 29, 2002. During this period, about 50,000 Alabamians received benefits which then poured over \$72 million into Alabama’s economy.

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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.