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The Facts Behind Today's Unemployment Numbers

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Concord, NH –Today, the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security issued the following press release in response to the updated unemployment numbers.

“The weekly unemployment report released today by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) continues to show good news for the state of New Hampshire’s workforce and economy,” said Employment Security Commissioner George Copadis. **“However, the numbers reported for New Hampshire by the Federal Government this week are wrong and present a misleading view of trends in the state’s unemployment claims, and it’s important to look at the facts behind the data.”**

Bottom line up front: Because of the timing, some claimants were counted twice by US DOL: Once when they received their last week of federal unemployment benefits and a second time as a new claim for state level benefits the following week.

Background Information: New Hampshire ended participation in the federal pandemic unemployment programs (Pandemic Unemployment Assistance or PUA and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation or PEUC), on June 19th, ahead of surrounding states, and instead incentivized people to return to work through the creation of a new \$1,000 bonus payment.

This final week of benefits is included in the claims numbers reported today.

Some of these individuals might qualify to receive benefits in the state’s regular UI benefit program during the week ending June 26th. If so, these same individuals were then counted a second time by US DOL.

“The difference in the reporting dates for federal and state programs means that some individuals were counted in both the state and federal programs in this week’s national report, artificially inflating New Hampshire’s numbers and presenting an inaccurate picture of weekly continuing claims,” said Brian Gottlob, Director of the Economic and Labor Market Information bureau at the Department of Employment security.

“These numbers are wrong and give the misleading appearance of an increase from the prior week which has not occurred in the prior 3 months,” said Rich Lavers, Deputy Commissioner at Employment Security. “In reality when you compare claims filed by people in the regular state unemployment program, the weekly claims fell by 19% compared to the prior week and federal claims fell by 12% in the final week they were available.”

New Hampshire will be reporting its unemployment rate for June on Tuesday, July 13th.

New Hampshire’s unemployment rate for May was the lowest in the county at 2.5%.