

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Unemployment Benefits Will Soon Expire for Many Ohioans

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Many unemployed Ohioans will soon reach the end of allowable unemployment benefits – some because of upcoming federal eligibility deadlines, others because they are about to exhaust all possible weeks of benefits – the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services announced today.

“This is an unfortunate situation, and we very much regret having to share this news,” said ODJFS Director Douglas Lumpkin. “We hope these claimants will continue to take advantage of our other resources, so they can get training and other assistance, if needed, and ultimately find jobs.”

Currently, claimants who exhaust their maximum 26 weeks of regular unemployment benefits after March 27, 2010, or those who exhaust their current “tier” of extended federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) benefits after April 3, 2010, will not be eligible for additional federal extended benefits. ODJFS is encouraging Congress to extend the deadlines. It began notifying claimants last week via an automated dialer message and also has posted updates to www.unemployment.ohio.gov.

Eligible unemployed workers in Ohio may receive benefits for up to 99 weeks: 26 weeks of “regular” unemployment benefits, followed by 53 weeks of federal EUC benefits. An additional 20 weeks of Ohio Extended Benefits, or Ohio EB, has been available to eligible claimants who exhausted EUC benefits between March 15, 2009, and March 13, 2010.

By the end of March, an estimated 17,000 Ohioans will have exhausted all possible weeks of benefits. By the end of April, if Congress does not extend EUC deadlines, another 79,000 could exhaust all benefits.

“As unemployed Ohioans continue searching for employment, we would like to remind them that ODJFS offers alternative sources of help,” Lumpkin said. “For example, they might be eligible for training assistance, adult education services or apprenticeship opportunities. They also might be eligible for food assistance, Medicaid or cash assistance.”

For more information about employment programs, Ohioans should visit their local One Stop Center. To find the nearest One Stop, go to <http://jfs.ohio.gov/workforce/jobseekers/onestopmap.stm>. For more information about other agency programs, Ohioans should visit their county department of job and family services or Ohio Benefit Bank site. To find the nearest county department of job and family services, go to <http://jfs.ohio.gov/County/cntydir.stm>. To find the nearest Benefit Bank site, go to www.obb.ohio.gov or call (800) 648-1176. Additional information also can be found at www.jfs.ohio.gov. Unemployed workers are also encouraged to visit www.ohiomeansjobs.com, where they can access tens of thousands of job openings, for positions ranging from file clerks to CEOs.