

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Scarlett Boudier
Phone: (614) 466-6650

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES PROVIDES
TIMELINE ON EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION
BENEFITS**

Benefit Payments to Eligible Individuals Begins Week of December 22

COLUMBUS – Today the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services announced that extended unemployment compensation benefit payments to eligible individuals will begin the week of December 22, 2008. These individuals will be contacted by the state, via telephone, between now and the week of December 22 with specific information on how they can claim their benefits.

“It is our commitment that all individuals eligible for extended benefits will receive them. We understand that times are extremely tough and we are working very hard to ensure we provide a solution to the challenges people are facing with a timely benefit payment” said Jan Allen, acting director.

During the month of November, ODJFS received close to 400,000 calls to its Unemployment Compensation and Extended Benefits call centers. This is almost four times the call volume seen in November of 2007 where calls were tallied at 100,000. In response to this demand, ODJFS is finalizing a call system that will proactively contact approximately 70,000 individuals, the first wave will be 40,000, who have inquired about extended benefits. This recorded call will include contact information for a special customer service center with live operators to record their benefit information for processing. This information will be inserted into a computer system that will begin making payments to eligible Ohioans the week of December 22, 2008.

The Federal government amended existing legislation on November 21, 2008 that will provide, in part, up to 20 weeks of additional federal unemployment compensation to eligible Ohioans. Amended federal legislation requires states to update their systems to ensure the computations in the software comply with the amended law. The first extension of benefits in July of 2008 demanded over one month of software updating and testing. This extension will be expedited with the coordinated effort of several state agencies and will be completed in 28 days. According to ODJFS research, no other state has initiated extended benefit payments to eligible individuals.

For an more information on who is eligible go to:

http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocomm_root/Ext%20Benefits%20FAQ%202008REV.pdf