

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 15, 2021

MEDIA CONTACTS:
Tom Betti: 614-817-2945
Thomas.betti@jfs.ohio.gov

Bill Teets, 614-403-2331
Bill.teets@jfs.ohio.gov

5,000 Ohioans Previously Denied Pandemic Unemployment Assistance May Be Eligible for Redetermination

ODJFS offers process for those denied benefits prior to expanded eligibility

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Director Matt Damschroder today announced the department is contacting approximately 5,000 individuals concerning their Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) applications. Those being contacted were denied for PUA prior to February 2021 and may be eligible for benefits retroactively as a result of additional [COVID-19 reasons](#) established by Department of Labor (DOL) guidance.

“In February of this year, the Department of Labor expanded eligibility for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program,” said Damschroder. “As we continue to work through the unprecedented level of activity cause by the pandemic, we now have the opportunity to reach back out to those who may have been eligible under the expanded eligibility.”

In February 2021, DOL expanded the list of eligibility scenarios that could potentially qualify someone for PUA. ODJFS [modified](#) its application process to include these reasons. Individuals who were denied prior to these changes may be eligible to have their applications redetermined if they believe one of these expanded reasons applied to them when they filed their claim.

ODJFS has started notifying potentially impacted individuals and is placing worksheets in their PUA accounts that will help them complete the process. Those worksheets are loaded in the unemployment system in batches, meaning it could take up to a week to reach a PUA claimant’s account. Individuals contacted are strongly urged to log into their PUA accounts to check their inboxes for the worksheet. Once the worksheet is available, individuals will have five business days to complete it.

The federal PUA program provided benefits for many individuals ineligible for state unemployment benefits, including self-employed workers, 1099 tax filers and part-time workers. The program ended Sept. 4, 2021.

-30-

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services manages vital programs that strengthen Ohio families. These include job training and employment services, unemployment insurance, cash and food assistance, child care, child and adult protective services, adoption, and child support services.

