

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development: To retire 1990's era automated inquiry phone system October 25, introduce new claimant assistance line

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MADISON – On October 25, 2017, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) will implement the final phase of the transition to online services that began in May by retiring the 1990's-era automated telephone system for unemployment insurance inquiries. This follows the transition of initial applications and weekly claims for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits to DWD's free, fast and secure 21st century online application. Currently, 98 percent of all weekly claims are filed online and 94 of initial applications are completed online.

“DWD's robust online application for applying for UI benefits, filing weekly claims and seeking answers to UI related questions has outperformed our expectations,” DWD Secretary Allen said. “With virtually all UI claims now being filed online and the low volume of callers to the automated telephone system for UI inquiries, it makes sense to retire the last portion of the system.”

DWD is also transitioning to a new Claimant Assistance Telephone Line, which will be the central resource number for claimants who need assistance with using the online application or help locating answers to complex UI questions. Claimants may call 414-435-7069 during normal business hours, Monday through Friday.

By utilizing DWD's online claim filing and inquiry system, customers can easily access account information previously provided through the automated telephone system as well as additional information, such as:

- Individual claim information, payment status, and remaining benefit balance
- Printer-friendly documentation of payments received for housing and energy assistance
- 1099-G tax forms to view and print
- Personal information including the ability to update an address, tax withholding, payment method, and bank information

Additional benefits of the modern online claim filing system include:

- The ability to enter work search information online preventing any payment delays that may be caused by providing information via fax or U.S. Mail
- The online application is mobile-friendly, allowing claimants to file their claim using any smartphone, tablet or computer
- Provides claimants the ability to save their claim and return later that same day to complete the claim
- A convenient employer search tool to add important employer information to a claim
- Clarifying help text and questions to support greater self-service and accurate claim filing

DWD's transition to predominately online claim filing and help center model responds to the trends of UI customers toward more online and self-service options. According to the Pew Research Center, 95 percent of Americans now own a cell phone, and nearly 8 out of 10 Americans own a smartphone. If individuals need help using the online services or are unable to go online, DWD's Help Center staff will provide assistance via phone.

The Notice to Employees About Applying for Wisconsin Unemployment Benefits poster has been updated to reflect online claim filing and the new Claimant Assistance Line. Employers should visit

<http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/publications/ui/notice.htm> to print the required workplace poster and display it where it is visible to employees.

To file an unemployment claim, or to seek answers to claim questions and other UI related information online, UI claimants can log on to <https://my.unemployment.gov>



and create a username and password. For more information, please visit <http://dwd.wi.gov/ClaimsOnline>.