

# Sen. Smith: Repeal the one week waiting period

Posted on Friday, Apr 3, 2020

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MADISON - During this unprecedented public health emergency, Senator Jeff Smith (D-Brunswick) is urging the legislature to repeal the one week waiting period for unemployment insurance benefits.

The mandatory one-week waiting period for Wisconsin residents to receive unemployment insurance benefits was enacted in 2011 by former Governor Walker. According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), legislation passed by the federal government would fully fund the first week of benefits. However, Wisconsin residents still cannot receive these federal funds within the first week, unless the Wisconsin legislature repeals the one-week waiting period law.

Two weeks ago, Governor Evers called upon the legislature to repeal the one-week waiting period. Additionally, Governor Evers included a proposal to repeal the waiting period in the COVID-19 relief package. Now, Republican legislative leaders have the authority to act on this proposal and the legislative package.

“I echo Governor Evers’ plea to repeal the one week waiting period for Wisconsin residents to receive unemployment insurance benefits,” said Senator Smith. “The one week waiting period restricts someone’s ability to access efficient relief during this challenging time. As elected officials, we must do everything we can to support Wisconsin families throughout this public health crisis.”

Since the COVID-19 public health emergency began, there has been a significant increase in unemployment insurance benefit claims. In response, DWD has modified programming policies and increased staff to respond to residents’ concerns in a timely manner. However, when possible, residents are encouraged to file for



unemployment insurance benefits online at [DWD.Wisconsin.gov](http://DWD.Wisconsin.gov).