

# WisGOP: ICYMI: Months into pandemic, Gov. Tony Evers' DWD still can't get its act together

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MADISON - The problems with Gov. Tony Evers' Department of Workforce Development are seemingly never ending. Under Evers' leadership, the DWD has bungled the response to the pandemic since the beginning — [creating](#) months of backlog for Wisconsinites filing unemployment claims and [failing to answer](#) more than 99 percent of [calls](#) to the DWD unemployment call center.

Now, the problems with the DWD persist, despite Gov. Evers' first-and-only meeting with the Secretary of DWD to [fire him](#) back in September. Jobless Wisconsinites who are contacting the DWD unemployment call center are being told "incorrect" and "contradictory" information, according to a report by [Wisconsin Public Radio](#) — teaching them that "they cannot rely on information they get from the government agency in charge of [Wisconsin's unemployment] system."

Read more from WPR [here](#) or find excerpts below.

***'I Don't Know Who's Right': Jobless Wisconsinites Say DWD Call Center Giving Incorrect, Contradictory Information***  
[Wisconsin Public Radio](#)

Rachael Vasquez

February 2, 2021

Dawn Gleason estimates she's called the state Department of Workforce Development's unemployment call center between nine and 12 times since late December.

Gleason, a single mother in Franklin who had breast cancer last year, lost her job as the manager of a limousine dispatch service in March. She was relying on unemployment insurance to get by until those benefits ran out in December.

On one call to DWD's help line, Gleason said she was told her new benefits would be paid by the beginning of January. That never came to pass.

On the next call, a different representative told Gleason there was no date set for when her benefits would be paid — information that was correct at the time. But then, the call center staffer informed Gleason she would be required to pay back \$1,800, a portion of her past benefits.

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Complaints about incorrect and contradictory information from staff at DWD's call center are widespread among jobless Wisconsinites relying on the state's unemployment system, according to interviews with multiple unemployment recipients and numerous posts on online unemployment support groups.

Some say those experiences have taught them that, as they try to navigate the state's complex and arcane unemployment system, they cannot rely on information they get from the government agency in charge of that system.

Requests to speak to call center staff who have more information have also been unsuccessful, and at times, have even been met with pushback.

Gleason said she was once told she "did not qualify" to speak to a supervisor, and later was told there was no supervisor available to talk to her.

*Mahnke and Gleason, both of whom are struggling to meet their basic expenses and provide for their families, said they've had a different experience. Both said the faulty information they receive adds an incredible amount of a stress to a situation that is already stressful.*

"I don't know who's right. I don't know who's wrong. I don't know if I'll ever see a check," Gleason said, adding she stays up at night thinking about her unemployment claims. "It makes a difference between a food bank and a grocery store."

Read more from WPR [here](#).