

Colorado Department of Labor and Employment press call 1.5.2

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## Joe Barela

- Recap 2020 state of UI
  - Historic low to historic high unemployment in 3 months (Feb to April)
  - Directed by CARES Act to implement 4 new UI programs
  - Complex programs to administer, many claimants navigating between programs during claim life cycle
    - PUA - never before have gig workers been eligible
  - Administered more than **\$6.7B in UI - these are dollars put into the Colorado economy as consumer spending**
  - Nearly 1 million Unemployment Insurance claims filed in this time period
  - Today we have over 265K Colorado's receiving UI Benefits
- Current priorities
  - Modernization:
    - Project in the works for many years
    - Will bring about more flexibility, agility with cloud based system
    - Modernizing technology, creating more security
    - Pull down old system tonight and stand up new system this weekend
    - All claimants in new system (cher will discuss more)
    - Claimants in multiple applications creates issues with data, reporting and claimant communication
  - Federal benefits extensions
    - Received partial federal guidance on extension of benefits on 12/31
    - Reviewing guidance and will focus on reprogramming after MYUI+ go live
    - New system will shorten reprogramming timeframes
    - May roll out in phases, for ex \$300 weekly FPUC first
    - Committed to ongoing comms with impacted claimants
    - Any Claimant that was receiving Federal Cares Act UI Benefits have and not and will not receive benefits until CO can program the system to pay these new or extended benefits. All benefits will be paid retroactively when commenced.
    - Yesterday we emailed all claimants about the status of the implementation.
    - We will continue to provide updates via email, outbound calls, web alerts, social media and media advisories
  - Fraud Issues

- As we have reported since July, fraud within the Unemployment insurance system has become rampant following the passage of the CARES Act.
  - PUA is a relatively easier target, as it does not have the same checks and balances inherent in the state UI system.
  - Colorado was one of the first agencies to begin an aggressive fraud detection and prevention program when this issue began to present itself.
  - We believe sheer volume of identity theft creating an increase in fraud is the result of one or several data breaches that have occurred over the past few years, which compromised hundreds of millions of identities.
  - New system will help address fraud with regular UI which has increased in recent weeks due to expiration of CARES Act.
  - Unfortunately we now live in a world where once thought of PII as being reliable for authentication is no longer reliable. Systems need to be resourced and built with this in mind. Biometrics!...
- Help for unemployed workers
  - These are difficult times and will continue to be until the pandemic and economic crisis are halted. Many jobs and industries most significantly impacted will take months and years to recover.
  - Working hard to get benefits to people in need and roll out extended benefits
  - CDLE committed to helping point to additional resources - we share weekly job openings in our weekly press release, other assistance resources at [coloradoui.gov](http://coloradoui.gov), Onward CO

## **Cher Haavind**

### **MyUI+ go live update and claimant messaging**

- We were preparing to go live in April
- Covid hit and we were forced to redirect resources to stand up PUA
- PUA system is the foundation for MyUI+
  - Major differences are:
    - More streamlined processes since all programs are in one system, more streamlined communication
    - Easier navigation for claimants and better user experience
    - Claimants will be able to more readily find out what issues might be impacting their claim without a need to contact us
- We started communicating change to claimants at the end of November
- Claimants MUST have an email and need to create a new password
- We shared a how to video via email to all claimants and posted on [coloradoui.gov](http://coloradoui.gov)
- All claimants will request benefit payment when the system is back up on 1/10

- We have a special call center established to help with technical issues on Sunday