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PRESS RELEASE

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Unemployment Insurance Call Center Taking Calls Saturday

Carson City, NV —The Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) will have live representatives on the phone in the unemployment insurance call center Saturday, Sept. 28 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for claimants who need to speak to someone about issues with their claims. All other claimants who need to file weekly or initial claims are urged to use the internet; and the phone lines open for those who need to speak to a representative.

The Department continues to identify problems with individual claims that require claims examiners to spend an unusual amount of time scrutinizing those claims to make necessary corrections. This small number of claims with issues is creating a jam in the phone lines, preventing claimants without problems from being able to get through the telephonic system to file their weekly claims. Many of the issues with the claims were errors made by the antiquated system that are now being detected and corrected by the advanced technology of the new system.

“Because of the backlog on the phone lines and problems claimants are having with filing on the internet, it may appear to the public that the system is not performing well. That is simply not the case. We want to assure our claimants that the new system has been operating consistently since we launched Sept. 4 and has handled the large capacity of users exceptionally well.” said DETR Director Frank Woodbeck. “We understand the frustration that the implementation of the new system has caused and we are truly concerned about the toll this has had on our claimants emotionally and financially,”

DETR has about 80 staff members handling calls. The average call takes about 12 minutes, with the average hold time about 75 minutes. About 1,800 calls per day are handled by claims examiners. DETR has received over 300,000 calls to the automated system and to examiners since the system went live earlier this month.

Another reason for the jammed phone lines is that many claimants prefer to use the automated telephone system, instead of filing online. Additionally, some claimants are encountering security issues or they are having trouble navigating the new set of prompts and requirements. There are also claimants who are calling just to check the status of

their claims that have no issues. Callers who have already resolved their issues and filed their claims are asked to refrain from calling back to check the status, so that other callers who need to speak to a representative to resolve an issue can get through the phone lines, Woodbeck said.

Filers using the online system are urged to write down their usernames and passwords and keep them in a secure place, so that they do not run into errors when filing their weekly certifications. Many claimants are calling to speak to representatives because they have set up multiple profiles in the system, causing errors and preventing them from filing.

“We realize that navigating a new system can be challenging for our claimants who were accustomed to the old computer program,” Woodbeck said. “We are continuing to scrutinize the components of the system to ensure that it will operate at maximum capacity and we just ask for our customers continued patience.”

Additionally, claimants receiving federal emergency unemployment compensation are jamming the phone lines to ask about sequestration. Those claimants were notified last month that a 59 percent cut would be implemented for the month of September and changed to a 7.2 percent cut from October to the expiration date in December.

Since the system went live on Sept. 4, more than 187,000 claims have been filed and 135,000 payments have been made. So far this week, more than 40,000 claims have been processed, Woodbeck said.



DETR is comprised of the Employment Security Division, Equal Rights Commission, Rehabilitation Division, the Information Development and Processing Division and the Research and Analysis Bureau. DETR works in partnership with the Nevada JobConnect System to provide training and job placement services to job seekers and to assist employers in hiring practices.