
N E W S R E L E A S E

**Legislation extends deadlines for federal unemployment
extension benefits through 2012**

Benefits for 1.1 million Californians will continue uninterrupted

SACRAMENTO – Congress and President Obama have extended federal jobless benefits through 2012, sparing an estimated 1.1 million unemployed Californians from potentially losing their extension benefits starting next month.

The new law also gradually reduces the maximum total weeks of benefits available from up to 99 weeks to up to 93 weeks as long as the state economy remains weak. If the economy further improves and unemployment continues to decline, total unemployment benefits could drop to a maximum of up to 73 weeks by the beginning of September. **(Please see accompanying chart.)**

“There are positive indicators that the economy is on the rebound,” said Pam Harris, director of the California Employment Development Department (EDD). “But with California’s unemployment rate still high, there remains a need for us to continue offering a helping hand to those trying to secure employment. Federal extensions help bridge the gap with some financial support.”

The legislation does not include any additional weeks of benefits; it extends the current filing deadlines. Without this latest legislation, maximum unemployment benefits would have returned to up to 26 weeks, the pre-recession standard for regular unemployment benefits.

“The new legislation brings about major changes and additional requirements to the federal extension program,” Harris added. “We’re awaiting further guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor on the implementation of requirements brought about under the new law. It’s very important for our customers to understand how these new changes in the system will affect them and their unemployment claim so I encourage them to monitor our EDD website, Facebook, and Twitter accounts for updated information and details.”

A major factor in determining how many weeks of federal extension benefits will remain available to unemployed Californians this year is whether the state will

(more)

continue to be eligible for the last extension known here in California as the FED-ED.

The separate FED-ED extension is tied to the state's unemployment rate and has provided up to 20 weeks of benefits to long-term unemployed workers since March 2009.

If California does continue to meet the unemployment rate threshold for providing FED-ED extension benefits, then it's possible the total number of benefits available – state benefits and federal extension benefits combined – will continue to be up to 99 weeks, at least in the short term.

But if California's unemployment rate falls below the threshold for FED-ED and those benefits are no longer available, then the maximum total number of benefits available could gradually reduce from up to 99 weeks to up to 73 weeks by the end of 2012. **(Please see details in accompanying chart.)**

The new law authorizes the payment of federal unemployment extension benefits through the end of 2012. After that, the payment of all federal unemployment extension benefits will end.

Federal extensions are typically available after a claimant exhausts up to 26 weeks of regular state unemployment benefits. EDD paid \$17.1 billion in total benefits in calendar year 2011. Currently, an average of \$327 million a week is paid out in benefits.

The recent legislation contained more than the benefit extensions. The new law requires claimants receiving federal extension benefits to participate in reemployment services and meet specific work search requirements as a condition of receiving extended benefits. Further details will be made available soon.

As of February 17, 2012, 625,900 unemployed Californians have exhausted all available UI benefits, up to the current 99 week maximum, combining regular UI and federal extensions. While there are no further unemployment benefits available for these individuals, they may be eligible for assistance to meet basic needs as well as other services such as health care, counseling, employment and training assistance.

For more information, read the "Assistance for Unemployed California Residents" flyer and the "Job Dislocation Brochure" on EDD's website at:
www.edd.ca.gov/Unemployment/Federal_Unemployment_Insurance_Extensions.htm.

Follow EDD closely for more developments and explanations about this latest legislation. For more information on unemployment benefits and other EDD programs and services, we encourage our customers to visit our website at www.edd.ca.gov and our EDD Facebook and Twitter pages.

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Federal Unemployment Benefit Extensions

Potential Maximum Weeks Of Benefits Provided

Claim/Extension Filing Date	Feb 19 – May 26 2012	Feb 19 – May 26 2012	May 27 – Sep 1 2012	May 27 – Sep 1 2012	Sep 2 – Dec 2012	Sep 2 – Dec 2012	Claim/Extension Filing Deadline Date
	With FED-ED	Without FED-ED	With FED-ED	Without FED-ED	With FED-ED	Without FED-ED	
Regular Claim	Up to 26 weeks	Once someone becomes unemployed					
Tier 1	Up to 20 weeks	Up to 14 weeks	Up to 14 weeks	December 23, 2012			
Tier 2	Up to 14 weeks	December 23, 2012					
Tier 3	Up to 13 weeks	Up to 9 weeks	Up to 9 weeks	December 23, 2012			
Tier 4	Up to 6 weeks	Up to 16 weeks	Up to 6 weeks	Up to 6 weeks	Up to 10 weeks	Up to 10 weeks	December 23, 2012
Separate FED-ED*	Up to 20 weeks	0 weeks	Up to 20 weeks	0 weeks	Up to 20 weeks	0 weeks	December 30, 2012
TOTAL	Up to 99 weeks	Up to 89 weeks	Up to 99 weeks	Up to 79 weeks	Up to 93 weeks	Up to 73 weeks	

** In order to be able to continue to file and pay FED-ED extension benefits, California’s unemployment rate must meet a certain threshold. As long as California continues to meet the unemployment rate threshold, California will continue to be able to file FED-ED extensions through the effective date of December 30, 2012.*