



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY
Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

News Release

Clarence H. Carter, Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2012

MEDIA CONTACT
Tasya Peterson
602-542-5204
TasyaPeterson@azdes.gov

DES Announces Federal Changes to Emergency Unemployment Program

Thousands of Arizonans will be affected

PHOENIX – When Congress extended the Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program in December, it also changed the rules on how states can receive the benefits. As of June 1, a state now must experience at least a nine percent unemployment rate over a three-month period to qualify for Tier 4 benefits.

“Although the decrease in the Arizona unemployment rate is a positive indicator signaling an incremental improvement in the economy, DES is aware many Arizonans are still struggling to find employment,” said Director Clarence Carter. “As the Department implements this change in federal law, we remain committed to assisting those who are seeking employment through our statewide Employment Service Centers and job training programs.”

Arizona’s three month average unemployment rate is expected to fall below the nine percent threshold in June as a result of the March (8.6%) and April (8.2%) unemployment rates. The May unemployment rate data will be available in mid-June, but based upon preliminary information, the rate will not increase to the point of qualifying the state to remain on Tier 4 benefits. Arizona would need to rise to an unemployment rate in excess of 10 percent for the month of May to remain eligible for Tier 4 benefits.

The effect on Arizona’s unemployed will depend on their individual status on certain dates. For example:

- The change will not affect the approximately 11,000 individuals currently receiving Tier 4 benefits. These individuals will continue to receive their entire allotment of up to 16 weeks of EUC Tier 4 benefits.
- Individuals will still be eligible to receive EUC benefits for Tiers 1, 2, and 3, which total up to 47 weeks after they have received 26 weeks of regular unemployment insurance benefits.
- Those who will be eligible for Tier 4 benefits between June 1 and June 23 may get up to 6 weeks instead of the previous maximum of 16 weeks.
- Arizona will no longer be able to place people on Tier 4 after June 23.

The Department of Economic Security estimates as many as 700 people could lose their benefits each week starting June 23, and is currently notifying those who might be affected. It’s important to note that this change in the EUC program will not affect the regular state unemployment benefit program which allows up to 26 weeks of benefits of not more than \$240 per week.

For more information on this benefit change, please visit www.azui.com. Those who need employment assistance are encouraged to visit the One-Stop Career centers in Arizona. DES also maintains job listings, job-search assistance and job fair information online at www.azjobconnection.gov. (A listing of the One-Stop Career centers is available by clicking on the 'Contact' link on that web site).

###