

On Friday, November 6, 2009, President Obama signed new federal legislation making further unemployment extension benefits available. A total of up to 20 more weeks of benefits are possible for unemployed workers who have run out of all available benefits.

The first eligible week for the new benefits is the week starting Sunday, November 8, 2009. Because the new extension is not retroactive, it does not apply to any weeks of unemployment prior to the enactment date of November 6.

The new extensions passed by Congress are complex and are a challenge for states to administer. The program adds:

- One week of benefits to the second federal extension already available in North Carolina,
- Up to thirteen weeks in a third extension, or third tier extension, for states with an unemployment rate of at least 6 percent, and
- Up to six weeks of benefits in a fourth extension, or fourth tier extension, for states with an unemployment rate of 8.5 percent or higher.

North Carolina currently qualifies under all provisions of the law.

ESC will automatically file extensions for as many of our customers as possible. Beginning on December 31, 2009, ESC will mail notices that include instructions for filing a Tier 3 unemployment insurance claim to those individuals who are potentially eligible to receive benefits under this program and for whom automatic extensions cannot be filed. To ensure prompt and proper payment, please call the telephone number and follow the instructions provided in the notice. You also may visit a local office of ESC. Customer service representatives will expedite your claim.