



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Application Deadline for Federal Unemployment Disaster Assistance Extended Through February

JACK M. MARTINS February 15, 2013

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New Yorkers who lost their jobs or income due to Hurricane Sandy now have an extension from February 4, 2013 to February 28, 2013 to apply for federal disaster unemployment assistance (DUA).

Disaster unemployment benefits are available to provide financial support to anyone who has lost their job and live or work in the Bronx, Kings, Nassau, New York, Orange, Putnam, Richmond, Rockland, Queens, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster or Westchester counties.

Anyone unemployed as a result of Hurricane Sandy can submit a claim to the state Department of Labor. The criterion for collecting disaster assistance is broader than for collecting regular unemployment benefits. Specifically, an individual who is not eligible for regular unemployment benefits can collect disaster assistance in any of the following cases:

- Injured in the disaster and unable to work, whether the person is an employee or self-employed.
- Workplace is damaged, or destroyed, or the person cannot work because of the disaster.

- Transportation to work is not available because of the disaster.
- Cannot get to work because they must travel through the affected area, which is impossible due to disaster.
- Scheduled to begin working, but cannot because of the disaster.
- Derived most of income from areas affected by the disaster, and business is closed or inoperable because of the disaster.

Self-employed individuals are also eligible and include small business owners, independent taxi drivers, vendors, independent commercial fisherman, and farmers.

State Department of Labor Commissioner Peter M. Rivera said, “As I’ve toured the areas hit worst, I’ve seen first-hand that people want to work, want to get back to their lives. This assistance has helped them and we want to make sure that everyone who needs the help gets the help. We urge everyone to contact us before the extended deadline of February 28th.”

Claimants applying during the extended period will have up to 90 days to submit proof of employment or self-employment and will be provided an IRS link to expedite the retrieval of lost or destroyed tax documents.

Federal rules require the state Department of Labor to first determine the claimant’s eligibility under the state unemployment insurance program before federal DUA can be offered.

To apply for unemployment benefits or disaster unemployment assistance, those affected by the storm and have lost their job or income should call the Telephone Claims Center (TCC) at 1-888-209-8124, or 1-877-358-5306 if they live out of state. Applicants should answer the

questions to indicate they lost their job due to Hurricane Sandy. In order to receive benefits you must apply by February 28, 2013.