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Statement on Pandemic-Related, Non-fraud Overpayments

Through unemployment benefits and pandemic unemployment assistance, the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DOLIR) has been pleased to assist nearly 600,000 Missouri workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In recent weeks, the state legislature has discussed unemployment “overpayments,” which can result from failing to report your earnings or even an honest mistake. Overpayments are a routine part of the process, and the massive increase in processed claims during 2020 resulted in a much larger number of overpayments. The Department has temporarily paused collections on pandemic related overpayments, except for the two listed below (due to compliance with state and federal law).

These two types of collections are:

- Offset of future benefit payments – when an amount is deducted from a future unemployment payment because of a previous overpayment owed by the claimant; and
- Federal tax refund intercept – when the amount of a tax refund is reduced to collect fraud overpayments and all overpayments due to earnings that were not reported.

After the legislative process concludes, DOLIR will review any changes to Missouri law that might affect overpayments and potential waivers. We will continue to communicate about such potential changes and related implementation plans by DOLIR.

As a reminder, weekly work search activities are required during your weekly filing for all unemployment programs, including Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA).