



Arkansas House Newsletter

May 29, 2020

Update on Arkansas Economy



On Wednesday, members of the Arkansas Legislative Council were given an update on unemployment claims in the state. This week, we have also been reviewing a preliminary report from the Arkansas Economic Recovery Task Force.

Arkansas's unemployment rate doubled from 5.0% in March to 10.2% in April. The U.S. rate is 14.7%. There were more than 206,000 of initial unemployment claims filed from the week ending March 7 to the week ending May 9. For the week ending May 2, there were 119,332 continued unemployment claims.

Since May 1, close to 39,000 Arkansans have applied for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance resulting in \$19.3 million of paid claims. Pandemic Unemployment Assistance is being offered through the CARES Act and provides compensation to those not typically eligible for unemployment benefits such as free-lancers and those who are self-employed.

If you have filed for unemployment or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, be sure to check your emails for updates to your account and make sure you submit your weekly claims.

While Arkansas's economy is faring better than many other states, the fact remains that Arkansans are

hurting. The challenge now is to restore our economy and consumer confidence in a way that protects the health of workers, customers, and communities.

The Arkansas Economic Recovery Task Force was created in April to develop a strategy for economic recovery efforts.

The task force released a preliminary report this week outlining several recommendations. Those recommendations include increased testing and tracing, addressing COVID-19 related liability concerns for businesses, increasing childcare resources, workforce training, and broadband availability.

The task force noted that much of Arkansas's recovery will be predicated by our citizens and our businesses continuing to be responsible stakeholders in the recovery efforts. The report states, "Over the next few months, we will all need to adhere to Arkansas's Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control's directives in order to manage the impact of COVID-19 throughout our state. Importantly, we need Arkansans to maintain social distancing protocols set out by the Arkansas Department of Health in public settings. Doing so will help protect our friends and relatives from the spread of the virus and undoubtedly accelerate our state's economic recovery."

You can read the entire report at www.arkansasready.com.

[Arkansas ERT p5.pdf](#)

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