

HOME

NEWSROOM

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Italiano

한국어

Русский

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Andrew M. Cuomo -
Governor

Governor Cuomo Announces Federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance Now Available to New Yorkers Affected by Hurricane Sandy

*New Yorkers Who Work and Live in Bronx, Kings, New York, Richmond, Queens, Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland
and Westchester Counties Can Apply*

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Department of Labor Staff to Deploy to Disaster Areas to Register Impacted New Yorkers

Albany, NY (November 2, 2012)

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced that federal disaster unemployment assistance is now available to all New Yorkers who lost their jobs as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Disaster unemployment benefits are available to provide financial support to anyone who has lost their job and live or work in the Bronx, Kings, New York, Richmond, Queens, Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland and Westchester counties.

This assistance will supplement New York's existing unemployment insurance system and will expand eligibility

to include individuals who might otherwise not be covered. The United States Department of Labor has committed to providing additional assistance if needed.

“The physical destruction caused by Hurricane Sandy has been terrible, and the resulting job losses can be even more painful for New Yorkers,” Governor Cuomo said. “These federal funds will quickly provide financial assistance to those whose livelihoods have been upended. I urge impacted New Yorkers to apply as soon as possible.”

Department of Labor staff will be deployed to hard-hit communities to help register impacted New Yorkers for Disaster Unemployment Assistance in person.

Anyone unemployed due to Hurricane Sandy is immediately eligible and can submit a claim to the Department of Labor. The criterion for collecting disaster assistance is broader than for collecting regular unemployment benefits. Specifically, an individual 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 must travel through the affected area, which is impossible due to disaster.
- Planned 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.

Examples of self-employment include small business owners, independent taxi drivers, vendors, independent commercial fisherman, and farmers.

State Department of Labor Commissioner Peter M. Rivera said, “These people want to work and are unable to because of circumstances far beyond their control. This money will directly help workers who have families to feed and bills to pay. Contact the Department of Labor and we will determine which program you qualify for.”

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 December 3, 2012.

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