



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo, other legislators, have virtual meeting with Commissioner of Department of Labor on unemployment claims

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. June 9, 2020

| ISSUE: **UNEMPLOYMENT, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19, ADDABBO**

State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. recently participated in a Zoom meeting with other state legislators and the NYS Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon to discuss how the department is handling the influx of unemployment claims due to the Coronavirus.

According to Commissioner Reardon, between March 8 and May 9, the NYS Department of Labor has taken in approximately 2 million unemployment claims — that is more than 2.5 years' worth of claims in a two-month period.

In order to help process these unprecedented number of claims, the Department of Labor has rolled out a new, secure online system that allows New Yorkers to easily submit prior weeks' certifications that they had missed. They have also expanded their workforce, with over 4,000 staff and 3,000 volunteers working 12-hour shifts, to make calls to those waiting to hear about the status of their claims.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has put millions of New Yorkers out of work, more than during the Great Depression," Addabbo said. "As the Department of Labor continues to receive claim

applications, they are dedicated to prioritizing those claims that were filed first.”

The Senator explained that a number of factors could delay an individual’s unemployment claim, such as incorrect information given to the Department of Labor, the complexity of an individual’s work history, or the federal requirements of properly identifying the individual and certifying the benefits. More information is available at www.dol.ny.gov.

Governor Andrew Cuomo’s office recently sent out a release stating that the NYS Department of Labor has paid out over \$10 billion to over 2 million New Yorkers. The backlog of pending unemployment benefit applications that were filed before April 22 has been reduced to 7,580 — which includes applications that are missing critical information and cannot be processed, duplicates, and abandoned claims. There are also an additional 20,801 claims filed before April 22 that have been processed, but cannot be paid until federally mandated weekly certifications are submitted.

“While great strides have been made at the Department of Labor to clear the backlog of claims, more still needs to be done,” Addabbo said. “I appreciate the hard work and dedication of the Department of Labor employees, and I want to thank Commissioner Reardon for keeping us legislators updated on this situation, as many of our constituents are concerned about their benefits. We need to continue to work together to ensure that all New Yorkers are able to financially survive this pandemic. I look forward to assisting my constituents with their unemployment claims.”

Senator Addabbo’s Howard Beach and Middle Village offices are open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and a team member can be reached at 718-738-1111 or 718-497-1630. After 2 p.m., a 24/7 live operator is available. The building where the Senator’s Rockaway office is located is currently undergoing renovations and is therefore closed, but constituents on the peninsula can still call 718-318-0702 to reach a team member.