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# Disaster News

March 15, 2007

DR-1686-GA-NR-011

**Joint Information Center:**

FEMA/State News Desk: 229-401-2770

## **APRIL 7 IS DEADLINE FOR APPLYING FOR DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE**

**CORDELE, Ga.** – Applications for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) for individuals impacted by the severe storms and tornadoes of March 1-2 will be accepted through April 7, 2007, according to state and federal agencies concerned with disaster recovery.

Benefits, which also extend to self-employed persons, are funded through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in a 26-week Disaster Unemployment Assistance program administered by the State of Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL).

"People recovering from disasters sometimes overlook this vital element that can relieve some of the stress during the recovery phase," said Federal Coordinating Officer Michael Bolch, in charge of federal disaster recovery efforts in Georgia. "The program applies to commission-paid employees, farmers, and loggers and anyone else who cannot work because of the severe weather."

Officials are recommending that people whose jobs were affected by the disaster apply for help even if they are unsure about eligibility. Eligibility is not automatic and assistance may be in form of regular unemployment insurance rather than Disaster Unemployment Assistance. Duplicate benefits are not payable and the maximum weekly benefit amount is \$320.

"Registrations for DUA are running low," added State Coordinating Officer Charley English, who heads state disaster operations as director of the Georgia Emergency Management Agency. "We know there are hundreds of jobs that were impacted in this disaster, and we encourage the people who held those jobs to apply for help immediately."

Claims may be filed between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at any of the Georgia Department of Labor Career Centers listed below:

- **Americus Career Center, 120 W. Church St., serving Sumter and Taylor counties, 229-931-2520;**
- **Camilla Career Center, 26 S. Harney St, serving Baker and Mitchell counties, 229-522-3630;**
- **Macon Career Center, 3090 Mercer University Drive, serving Crawford County, 478-751-6164;**

(MORE)

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- **Thomson Career Center, 232 Main St., serving McDuffie County, 706-595-3665.**

The program is available to unemployed U.S. nationals and qualified aliens who worked or were self-employed, if they:

- Worked or were self-employed in or were scheduled to begin work or self-employment in an area declared as a federal disaster area;
- Can no longer work or perform services because of physical damage or destruction to the place of employment as a direct result of a disaster;
- Establish that the work or self-employment that they can no longer perform was their primary source of income;
- Do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits from any state;
- Cannot perform work or self-employment because of an injury or incapacity that is a direct result of the disaster;
- Became the breadwinner or major support of a household because of the death of the head of the household;
- Cannot work or perform self-employment due to closure of a facility by the federal government;

Applicants for assistance should keep FEMA informed on changes to their status, such as address changes. Call **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 1-800-462-7585**. Online, go to **[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)**.

*FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident, initiates mitigation activities and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA works closely with state and local emergency managers, law enforcement personnel, firefighters and other first responders. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.*

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Editors: For more information on Georgia disaster recovery, visit [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) or [www.gema.state.ga.us](http://www.gema.state.ga.us)