

TO: Senator Michael Rodrigues, Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means
 Representative Aaron Michlewitz, House Committee on Ways and Means
 Senator Patricia D. Jehlen, Chair, Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce
 Development
 Michael D. Hurley, Senate Clerk
 Steven T. James, House Clerk

FROM: Secretary Rosalin Acosta, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

SUBJECT: Lost Wages Assistance Program

The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development respectfully submits this report pursuant to Chapter 197 of the Acts of 2020:

“The secretary of labor and workforce development shall file a final report on the: (i) number of claimants eligible pursuant to this act; and (ii) additional federal Lost Wages Assistance funds received for each week of the covered period with the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the joint committee on labor and workforce and the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than December 31, 2020.”

The Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) was authorized by a Presidential Order issued on August 8, 2020, and was administered and funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), in coordination with DUA, submitted the Commonwealth’s grant application to administer the LWA program to FEMA. DUA received and disbursed six weeks of \$300 LWA supplemental benefits to eligible unemployment claimants in the Commonwealth.

The LWA program initially applied to all eligible claimants receiving unemployment benefits for the weeks ending August 1, 2020 through September 5, 2020, excluding claimants whose weekly benefit amount (WBA) was under \$100 inclusive of the dependency allowance. Approximately 461,000 regular unemployment insurance (UI) claimants and 234,000 Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claimants were determined eligible for LWA during the program’s time frame. The total amount disbursed to eligible claimants was over \$1.3 billion.

To extend LWA benefits to claimants with WBAs less than \$100 per week, the Legislature passed and Governor Charlie Baker signed S.2934, *An Act Relative to Additional Unemployment Benefits for the Neediest Recipients Currently excluded from the Lost Wages Assistance Program* on October 26, 2020. The bill provided LWA supplemental benefits for individuals who were originally excluded from the LWA program. The legislation raised claimants’ WBAs to \$100 each week for the six weeks of the LWA program, which allowed the claimants to be eligible for the \$300 LWA supplemental benefits.

Below details the:

- (i) Number of claimants deemed eligible pursuant to Chapter 197 of the Acts of 2020;
- (ii) Additional federal LWA funds received for each week of the covered period

Requested week	Number of distinct claimants	Sum of catch-up payments	Sum of LWA payment

8/16/2020 (week ending 8/22/2020)	13,471	\$ 220,150.00	\$ 3,789,496.00
7/26/2020 (week ending 8/1/2020)	15,274	\$ 250,780.00	\$ 4,312,441.00
8/9/2020 (week ending 8/15/2020)	13,957	\$ 228,030.00	\$ 3,930,262.00
8/2/2020 (week ending 8/8/2020)	14,455	\$ 236,518.00	\$ 4,074,717.00
8/30/2020 (week ending 9/5/2020)	12,497	\$ 204,086.00	\$ 3,488,440.00
8/23/2020 (week ending 8/29/2020)	13,018	\$ 212,665.00	\$ 3,645,699.00
Total	82,672	\$ 1,352,229.00	\$ 23,241,055.00