



NEWS RELEASE

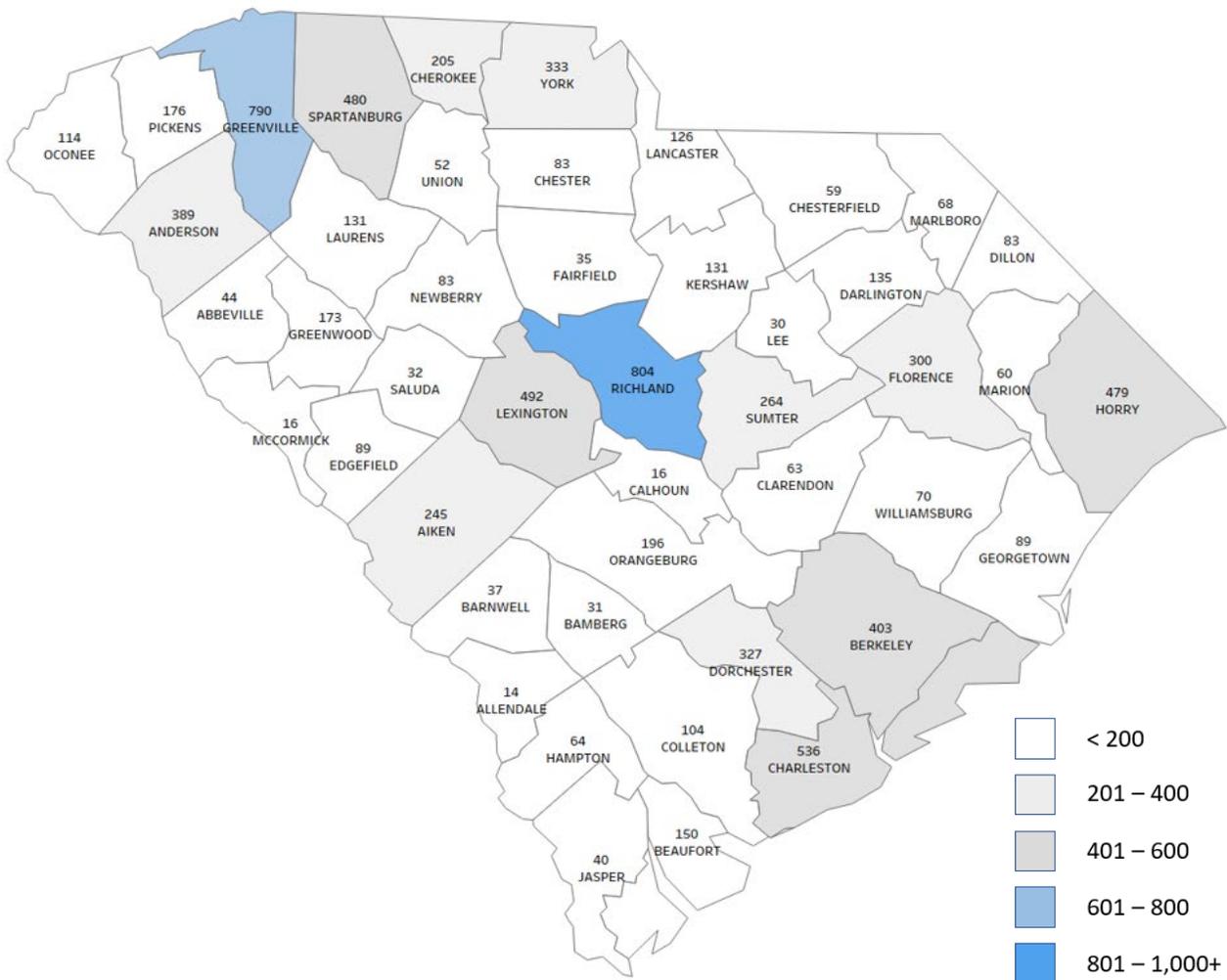
Media Contact:
Heather Biance

For Immediate Release
8:35 a.m. August 6, 2020

South Carolina Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims Data Week Ending August 1, 2020

Initial Claims: For claim week ending August 1, 2020, the number of South Carolinians who filed their initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits is 8,909, a **decrease** of 3,285 initial claims from the week prior. This brings the initial claims total to 706,528 received since mid-March.

County Map (Intrastate)





SC Department of Employment and Workforce

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Media Contact:
Heather Bianca

“For the first time since this pandemic began, our initial claims numbers have dipped well below the 10,000 mark. People are reentering the workplace as employers find new ways to provide innovative and safe working conditions. With the latest restrictions removed last week on theaters, sports venues and concerts, the hope in the coming weeks is this will give a needed boost to many of our state’s desirable attractions and the talented hospitality-driven employees who work there,” states executive director Dan Ellzey.

“In fact, there are approximately 45,000 South Carolina jobs posted online. SC Works centers around the state have services, virtually and in person, to help individuals connect with actively-hiring employers and hot jobs in their area. People can also take advantage of the state’s largest job database by logging into jobs.scworks.org, posting a resume and searching for work,” continued Ellzey.

“While we monitor the promising downward trend in initial claims, there is a more unfortunate development state unemployment offices are noticing nationwide. We are currently tracking potential claimants who are filing for unemployment benefits while receiving a paycheck from their employer through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Each week during the claim certification process, claimants are specifically asked if they have earned wages for that claim week. If it is investigated and confirmed that a claimant is receiving both unemployment benefits and a paycheck from their employer, their eligibility status for unemployment will be deactivated, they’ll be required to pay the benefits back in full and they may face criminal charges. Employers found complicit to this activity will have their forgivable loan status revoked, which would require them to repay the amount loan in full. This is a very serious matter,” continued Ellzey.

“Our agency will do everything we can to be good stewards of the state and federal funding entrusted to us and maintain the integrity of the Unemployment Insurance program so we can continue to provide benefits to those who are eligible, in need and honorably following the law,” concluded Ellzey.

Agency Responsiveness:

- From March 15, 2020 to August 4, 2020, the agency has paid more than \$3.68 Billion in a combination of South Carolina UI benefits, **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance** (for the self-employed and others), the **Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation** (\$600 per week) program, the **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation** (extension of benefits for 13 weeks) program and **Extended Benefits** (Additional 16 weeks of benefits after PEUC).

Call center hours (1-866-831-1724)

Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Saturday 8 a.m. - NOON

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About the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce

The S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce is putting South Carolinians to work. The agency has four missions: (1) workforce development; (2) free job match employment services; (3) unemployment insurance; and (4) labor market information. All four missions contribute to workforce development. The agency is dedicated to advancing South Carolina through services and programs that meet the needs of our businesses, jobseekers and those looking to advance their careers.

**An initial claim is a claim filed by an unemployed individual after a separation from an employer. The claimant requests a determination of basic eligibility for the UI program. When an initial claim is filed with a state, certain programmatic activities take place and these result in activity counts including the count of initial claims. The count of U.S. initial claims for unemployment insurance is a leading economic indicator because it is an indication of emerging labor market conditions in the country. However, these are weekly administrative data which are difficult to seasonally adjust, making the series subject to some volatility.*
