



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Rhode Island Assists Louisiana File Unemployment Insurance Claims

Customer service representatives from the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training's Unemployment Insurance Division will be assisting some individuals from Louisiana who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina and need to file for Unemployment Insurance benefits, announced Department Director Adelita S. Orefice.

"We want to do anything we can to help the citizens of New Orleans get through this tragic event," pledged Director Orefice.

Rhode Island was one of the first states to volunteer and joins Texas, California, Montana, and Michigan in helping Louisiana file an expected 500,000 claims for benefits.

Raymond Filippone, Assistant Director of Income Support, explained that, "calls will be routed via the Texas Workforce Commission to the Rhode Island Unemployment Insurance Call Center, where Rhode Island agents will file claims for Louisiana unemployment benefits. An individual could be contacting a representative from any one of the volunteer states."

Filippone commented that without help from these states, it would be virtually impossible for Louisiana to process the large number of claims resulting from the hurricane.

"We are compelled to help in any way we can. I know that other states would do the same for us," he added.

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The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training offers a wide array of employment and training services to both the general public and to individuals with unusual barriers to employment. DLT is ready to assist any job seeker, whether the goal is a first job, a better job, or a career change. Rhode Island's work force is protected through the enforcement of labor laws, prevailing wage rates, and work place health and safety standards. Temporary income support is available to unemployed, sick, or injured workers and a comprehensive rehabilitation program is available to those injured on the job.

DLT is dedicated to the growth and competitiveness of Rhode Island industry, administering a variety of training grants, tax credits, and apprenticeship programs to help employers. Economic indicators and labor market information are available for long-range planning. The Agency engages in active outreach, helping large and small employers retain their best workers or retrain their existing work force. At no cost to the employer, DLT will also screen job applicants, post job vacancies, and help businesses institute cost-sharing programs that can avert layoffs.

For more information on the innovative programs and services available to all Rhode Islanders at the Department of Labor and Training, please call (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at www.dlt.ri.gov.

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