



NEWS RELEASE

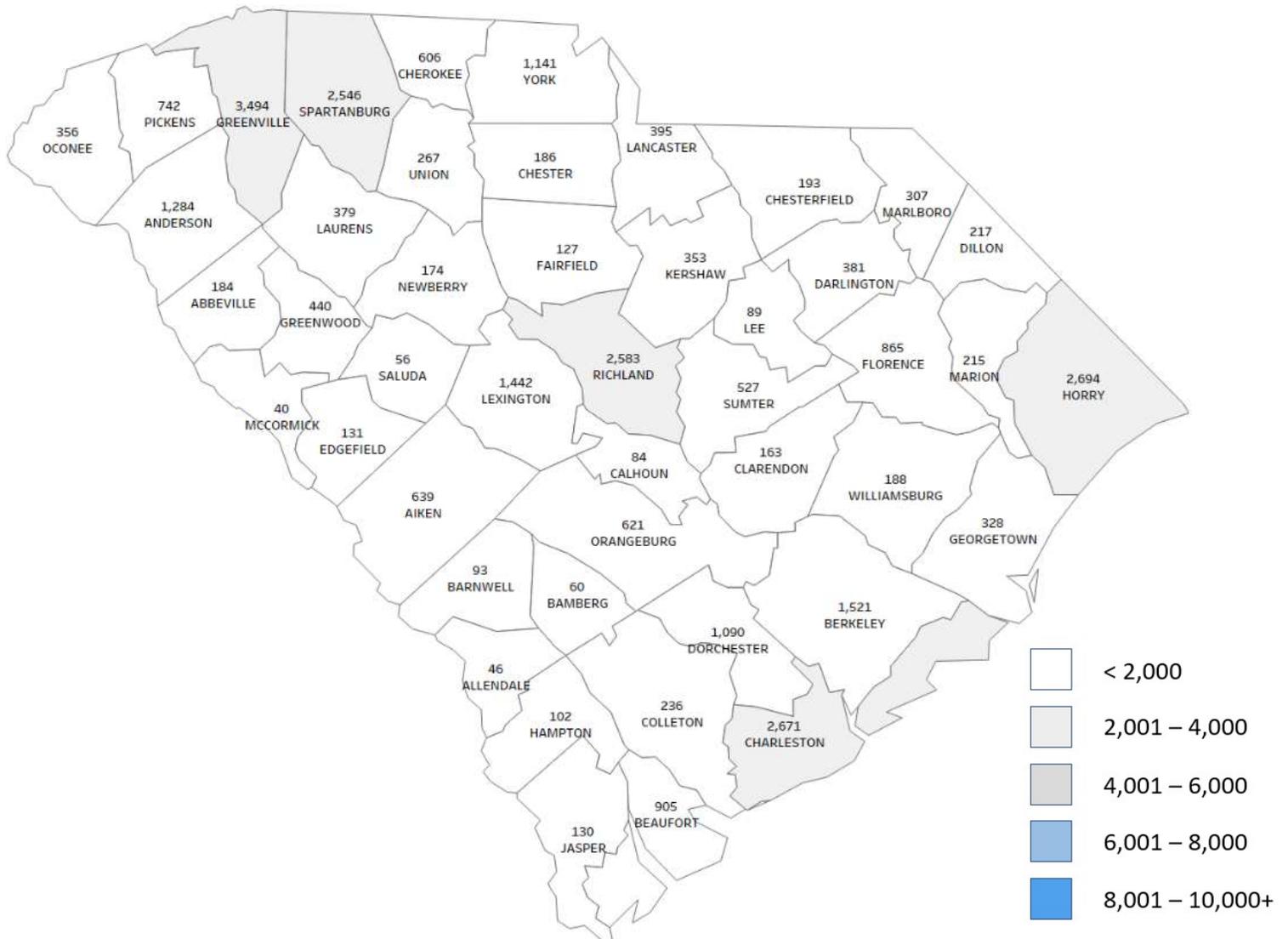
Media Contact:
Heather Bianca

For Immediate Release
8:35 a.m. May 14, 2020

South Carolina Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims Data Week Ending May 9, 2020

Initial Claims: For claim week ending May 9, 2020, the number of South Carolinians who filed their initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits is 32,513, a decrease of 14,234 initial claims from the week prior. This means that there were 32,513 individuals who both live and work in the state of South Carolina who filed an initial claim during the claim week, May 3, 2020 – May 9, 2020. This is the data you will see reflected in the county information below.

County Map (Intrastate)





SC Department of Employment and Workforce

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“Over the last week we have seen another decline in the number of Unemployment Insurance (UI) initial claims. This four-week trend correlates with the gradual transition from pronounced unemployment to a portion of the population reporting back to work as the Governor reengages the state’s businesses,” said Dan Ellzey, Executive Director, S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce.

“At the same time, our agency is continuing to process claims to make sure all eligible individuals receive payments, back-dated appropriately,” continued Ellzey. “As South Carolinians begin to return to work, we know most will be ready to get back to the long-term stability of employment, but we also understand that some individuals may face challenges. We will support employers and employees through this process of reemployment, which is key to the state’s economic recovery.”

Agency Responsiveness:

- From March 15, 2020 to May 12, 2020, the agency has paid more than \$1.09 billion in a combination of state UI benefits, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (for the self-employed and others) and the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (\$600 per week) program.
- Earlier this week the agency announced the Recall Taskforce as one of the many resources available to employers who offer work to their employees as the state reopens.
- On March 15, the agency had approximately 49 employees working in the call center. They were able to handle the call level at that point. In an attempt to meet current demand, we have added staff to our call centers that now total approximately 550 employees.
- The **Chatbot** feature on the dew.sc.gov website continues to grow! This is a great resource for finding FAQ type information about the UI process, federal funds provided through the CARES Act, employer filing and more.

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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.*
