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NEWS RELEASE

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Pritzker Administration to Provide Unemployment Benefits to Workers Impacted by Coronavirus

Benefits to cover workers without access to paid sick leave impacted by COVID-19

SPRINGFIELD – Today, Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced they are taking additional steps to support workers and families impacted by COVID-19. The administration will file emergency rules this week to clarify that individuals unemployed due to COVID-19 can generally qualify for unemployment benefits to the full extent permitted by federal law.

“The state of Illinois faces unique challenges as we work to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19,” said Gov. Pritzker. “To protect people across the state, it’s imperative that all workers stay home if they’re feeling sick or have come in contact with someone who has COVID-19. In order to overcome the unique challenges we’re facing, we’ve had to come up with innovative solutions and hope the federal government will support this endeavor as we continue to grapple with this public health crisis.”

If an individual is off work through no fault of their own, they can seek unemployment insurance benefits from IDES. The emergency rules, once filed, will provide assistance to individuals who may be restricted in the type of work they can perform due to COVID-19. The administration is also asking Congress to waive interest on any federal loans that Illinois and other state Unemployment Trust Fund accounts might require due to added strain from the outbreak, as well as maintaining the full federal unemployment tax credit for employers in states that may require those loans.

These measures accompany those Governor Pritzker has already taken to help ensure the health and safety of communities across the state, including the declaration of a state of emergency earlier this week that will release State Disaster Relief Fund assistance and ongoing requests for additional COVID-19 testing kits from the federal government.

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