



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Eligible Previously Unemployed Arizonans May Now Apply for up to \$2,000 Return-to-Work Bonus**

*DES Announces the Launch of the Return-to-Work Bonus Application Portal*

**PHOENIX - (July 20, 2021)** The Arizona Department of Economic Security today announced eligible individuals who were previously receiving unemployment and have returned to work are now able to apply for a Return to Work Bonus (RTWB) of up to \$2,000.

On May 13, 2021, [Governor Doug Ducey and DES announced Arizona's Back To Work Program](#) to help individuals transition from unemployment and return to the workforce, which includes \$300 million of federal resources to distribute these bonuses on a first-come, first-served basis.

"With Arizona's economy on the rebound, we've seen a significant drop in unemployment claims since this program was announced," said DES Director Michael Wisehart. "Arizonans are going back to work, and the Return-to-Work Bonuses, combined with child care supports, will make the transition easier for unemployment claimants."

Nearly 81,000 fewer weekly unemployment claims were filed the week ending July 10, 2021, compared to the week ending May 15, 2021, when the Back to Work Program was first announced.

With the new Back to Work Program in place, Arizona stopped administering the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) supplemental benefit effective Saturday, July 10, 2021. Eligible claimants will continue to receive their weekly benefit amount for either regular Unemployment Insurance (UI), Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) or Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) without the additional \$300.

### **RTWB Eligibility**

Eligible individuals can apply to receive a \$2,000 RTWB after working 320 hours (the equivalent of eight 40-hour weeks) or more over ten consecutive weeks since returning to work (between May 13 and September 6, 2021) OR eligible individuals can apply to receive the \$1,000 RTWB after working 160 hours (the equivalent of eight 20-hour weeks) or more over ten weeks since returning to work (between May 13 and September 6, 2021). For the complete eligibility

requirements, please visit [our website](#). Individuals can apply for a bonus at [www.azreturntoworkbonus.com](http://www.azreturntoworkbonus.com).

### **Additional Back to Work Programs**

In addition to the RTWBs, claimants who are returning to work can also apply for the Child Care Returning Workers Program by visiting the [DES Child Care Assistance website](#) anytime through September 6, 2021. The State will provide three months of child care assistance for individuals with children who return to work after receiving unemployment benefits. Individuals who received unemployment benefits before or after, but NOT during the benefit week ending May 8, 2021 or May 15, 2021, are not eligible for this program. However, they may [apply for regular Child Care Assistance](#).

The State will also provide \$7.5 million to reimburse community colleges for scholarships for unemployed workers who are eligible for the Return-to-Work bonuses — as well as \$6 million for GED test preparation and exam fees for eligible workers without a high school diploma. Additional details regarding educational incentives will be published on the [DES website](#) as they become available.

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