Continued UI claims fall below 100K since pandemic began
OESC reports four months of straight decline for continued claims

OKLAHOMA CITY – The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) today reports that the continued claims four-week moving average is less than 100,000 for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic started. Additionally, the same metric, which refers to unemployment workers who have already filed a claim and continue to receive weekly benefits, has continued its decline for the 16th straight week, landing at 90,445 for the week ending Oct. 10.

“These downward trending numbers are encouraging because they indicate that more Oklahomans are finding employment,” said OESC Executive Director, Shelley Zumwalt. “Despite the promising numbers, we are continuing to work tirelessly to provide Oklahomans the support they need. We know many Oklahomans are still struggling, so as we enter the last quarter of the year, we are focusing on measures to ensure the claims process is more efficient and secure, while shifting to proactively help connect Oklahoma employers with those seeking employment.”

Weekly Unemployment Numbers for Week Ending Oct. 10

- For the week ending Oct. 10, the advance number of initial claims, unadjusted, totaled 4,840, a decrease of 940 from the previous week's revised level of 5,780.
- Initial claims’ four-week moving average was 5,328, a decrease of 189 from the previous week's revised average of 5,517.
- The advance unadjusted number of continued claims totaled 70,832, a decrease of 17,295 from the previous week’s revised level of 88,127.
- Continued claims' four-week moving average was 90,445, a decrease of 10,019 from the previous week's revised average of 100,464.

Nationally, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims during the same period was 898,000, an increase of 53,000 from the previous week's revised level, the U.S. Department of Labor reports. The four-week moving average was 866,250, an increase of 8,000 from the previous week. For the week ending Oct. 3, DOL reports the advance seasonally adjusted insured unemployment rate was 6.8%, a decrease of 0.9 percentage point from the previous week's revised rate.

The national weekly seasonally adjusted initial claims report is one of 10 components in the Composite Index of Leading Economic Indicators. To smooth out the volatility in the weekly initial claims data, a four-week moving average is used to assess trends.
Claimant Resources

Individuals seeking unemployment benefits under the CARES Act should go to https://ui.ok.gov and create an account with the Get Started button to connect their social security number and pull all unemployment information into one location.

Unemployment claimants should be aware that not returning to work when recalled or when work is available could potentially lead to disqualification from receiving unemployment benefits.

Employers may report this activity by emailing returntowork@oesc.state.ok.us, calling 405-962-7524, or mailing OESC at P.O. Box 52006, Oklahoma City, OK, 73152-2006.

If a claimant returns to work full time, they should keep their unemployment claim open with OESC and not certify a weekly claim. If they return part time, a claimant may continue to certify their weekly claim and must report all gross earnings for the week to potentially receive a partial benefit. Eligibility for continued benefits is determined on the circumstances of each individual claimant.

OESC is an excellent resource for people looking to re-enter the job market by connecting Oklahomans with available employment through https://okjobmatch.com/.

If a PUA-eligible claimant reopens their business, they will still receive backdated unemployment benefits to when their COVID-19-related job loss or business closure occurred.

Updated Graphs for Week Ending Oct. 10