



**LOUISIANA WORKS**

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Kathleen Babineaux Blanco  
Governor

John Warner Smith  
Secretary

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## News Release

### Storm-Related Jobless Benefits Extended by President *Eligible claimants to receive notification through mail*

BATON ROUGE – President Bush has authorized the extension of disaster unemployment benefits to individuals affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Louisiana Department of Labor announced today.

“Approximately 92,000 people whose unemployment is a direct result of either storm will be eligible for up to 13 weeks of continued benefits,” said Secretary of Labor John Warner Smith.

Those who are eligible for the extension will receive notification from the labor department through the U.S. Postal Service. Individuals do not have to call the department to apply for the extension; however they still must call in each week to meet the standard weekly reporting requirement.

The department will re-compute payments for claimants according to federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance guidelines. Based upon these calculations, some people may receive more than they had been receiving; others may receive less. The minimum weekly benefit for Disaster Unemployment Assistance is \$98; the maximum is \$258.

The cost of extending benefits will be paid by the federal government, Smith said.

The extension covers hurricane-related claims both in Louisiana and out of state. It is important for claimants to keep their mailing address current; failure to do so may result in the delay of benefits. To make a change of address, visit the department’s Web site, [www.LAWORKS.net](http://www.LAWORKS.net); or call 1-866-783-5567.

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