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**PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES DISASTER
UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE****Individuals in Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester
Counties May be Eligible for Unemployment Insurance Benefits**

BOSTON - Friday, April 2, 2010 - Governor Deval Patrick today announced that Federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance benefits are available to help those left jobless as a result of damage and flooding caused by the March 12-14 rain storm. On March 29, 2010, President Obama declared Massachusetts a federal disaster area, making the state eligible for federal disaster aid to supplement recovery efforts in the areas struck by severe storms and flooding. The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) declared Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester Counties as official disaster areas and under that declaration, individuals in those seven counties are eligible for unemployment assistance benefits.

"We are pleased that the Obama Administration is working expediently to send funds to people in the areas of our state in need of help," said Governor Patrick. "I have visited some of our state's hardest hit communities and want our residents to have this financial assistance in hand as soon as possible."

The unemployment assistance eligibility began on March 14, 2010, and the disaster declaration assistance runs through October 2, 2010. The filing deadline for individuals eligible for assistance is May 3, 2010. An individual must be continuously unemployed as a result of the disaster in order to continue receiving Disaster Unemployment Assistance and, if eligible, he or she can collect benefits for the weeks during which they fulfilled the necessary criteria.

Workers who experienced temporarily job loss because of the disaster and who do not qualify for state Unemployment Insurance Benefits, such as self-employed individuals, may also be eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance.

"Severe flooding has impacted so many workers and their families," said Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Joanne F. Goldstein. "Relief is available through Disaster Unemployment Assistance. It's important that people who are eligible access these funds as soon as possible."

Examples of reasons for unemployment that may make a person eligible to receive Disaster Unemployment Assistance:

- You were injured in the disaster and are unable to work, whether you are an employee or self-employed.
- Your workplace was damaged, destroyed, or you can't work because of the disaster.
- Your transportation to work is not available because of the disaster.
- You cannot get to your job because you must travel through the affected area, and you cannot do that because of the disaster.
- You were about to begin working, but could not because of the disaster.
- You are now the breadwinner or major support for a household because the former head of household died in the disaster.
- You are out of work because the Federal government took over or closed the facility where you worked.
- You derived most of your income from areas affected by the disaster, whether you worked for yourself or for an employer, and your business is down as a direct result of the disaster.

Please note - this list is not exhaustive and if you are uncertain as to your eligibility, you are encouraged to apply. All applicants will be required to submit wage information and documentation regarding the basis of your claim.

To apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance an individual must first file for regular Unemployment Insurance. He or she must file an application by the deadline of May 3, 2010, with the Division of Unemployment Assistance at 617-626-6800 or visit a walk-in claims agent at one of Massachusetts' 37 One-Stop Career Centers.

For more information, please visit www.mass.gov/dua/disasterui.

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