



FROM THE DESK OF

**JOHN BRAGG**  
LABOR MEMBER



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U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

May 11, 2020

As explained in the attached press release, I am pleased to announce that beginning tomorrow, May 12, 2020, unemployment insurance (UI) beneficiaries will begin to see deposits in their accounts which involve new and expanded UI extended benefit periods in accordance with the CARES Act. This means that eligible railroad employees who had exhausted their UI for this benefit year will again be able to file for and receive UI benefits. Over 2,300 claimant records were adjusted and the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) paid over \$1M in benefits.

These payments reflect a successful completion of Phase 1 of the RRB's CARES Act implementation plan. Phase 1 required the RRB to identify all employees who exhausted their regular UI benefits during the benefit year that began July 1, 2019, establish new extended UI periods and lengthen existing extended UI benefit periods as appropriate, and pay any denied days of unemployment already on record. The RRB also sent UI claimants a letter of the payment actions and mailed any needed claim forms to bring claimants current so they can continue to receive the extended benefits. For those who file their claims electronically, the RRB loaded appropriate claim forms to their online accounts so that individuals can file them online through **myRRB** on the website **RRB.gov**.

Phase 2 will be the payment of the additional \$1200 per registration period for claims beginning April 1, 2020 or later. Our team is working on the necessary programming changes to provide for those payments. We do not have an implementation date as of yet, but barring unforeseen complications, hope to have Phase 2 completed by the end of the month.

I assure you that agency employees recognize the lifeline that these benefits represent for the railroad community and all appropriate resources are being directed towards completing this work as soon as possible.

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