



# NEWS RELEASE

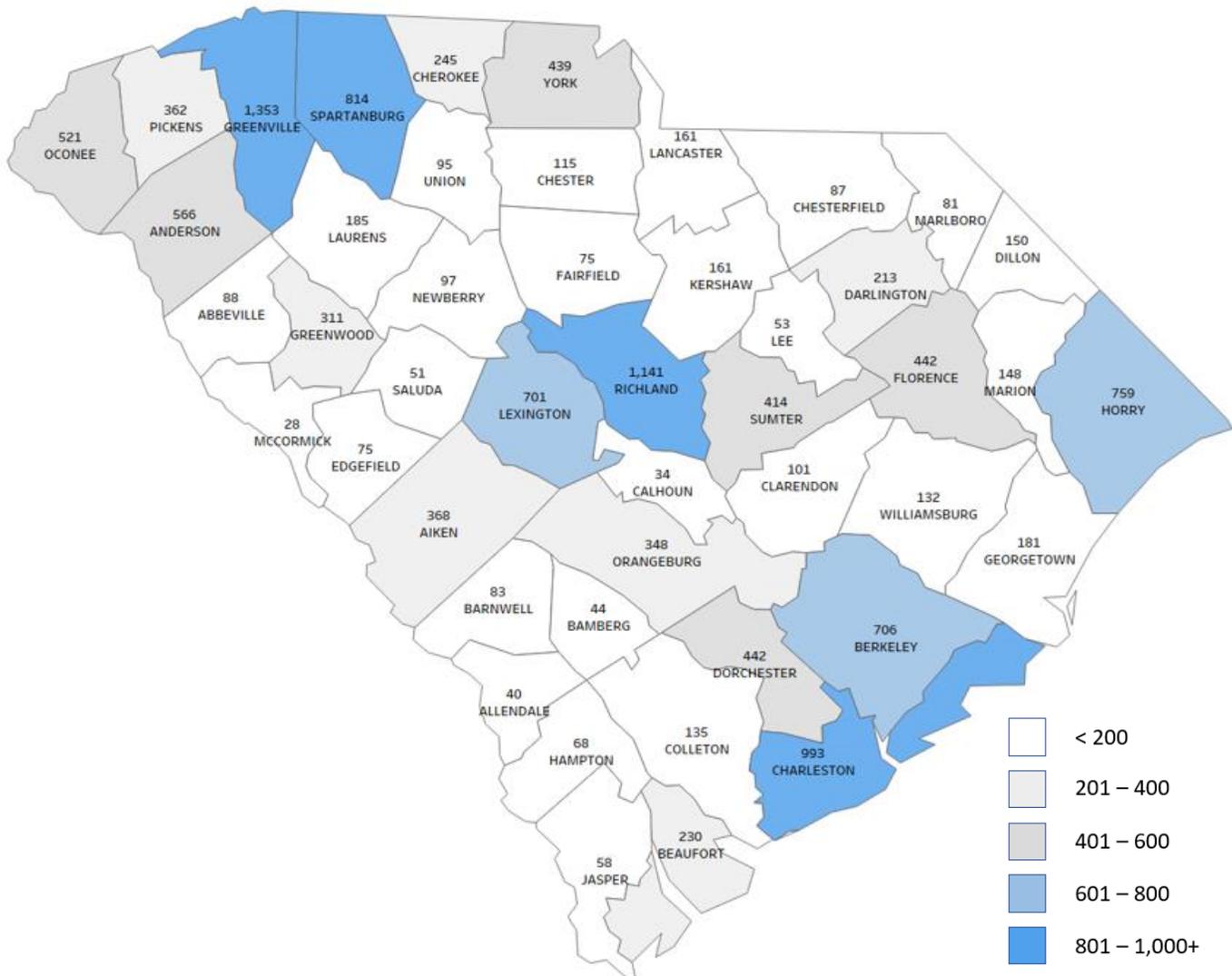
**Media Contact:**  
Heather Biance

**For Immediate Release**  
8:35 a.m. July 23, 2020

## South Carolina Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims Data Week Ending July 18, 2020

**Initial Claims:** For claim week ending July 18, 2020, the number of South Carolinians who filed their initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits is 14,346, a **decrease** of 4,983 initial claims from the week prior. This brings the initial claims total to 685,425 received since mid-March.

### County Map (Intrastate)





SC Department of Employment and Workforce

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Heather Bianca

“The latest initial claims data is evidence of a strong South Carolina economy. This week marks a more significant decrease than we have noted in the last six weeks of initial claims data. In fact, it is the lowest number since the pre-pandemic week of March 14, 2020,” states executive director, Dan Ellzey.

“The FPUC program, which provides an additional \$600 per week to eligible claimants will end on July 25. If there is no extension of the benefit, the \$600 payment will no longer be paid to eligible claimants. There is, however, congressional activity involving an extension or amendment of the current law. If additional funding is included in the new legislation, the US Department of Labor will have to provide guidance to states and then it will become the states’ responsibility to implement the program. The complexity of changes will dictate the timeline of implementation, which means there *could* be a lapse before the new law can be executed and additional payments are distributed. If there is a lapse, claimants will continue to receive their weekly benefit amount for each week they are found eligible for benefits, and, of course, if new legislation allows for a back date of pay,” continued Ellzey.

“Regardless of what happens this week on Capitol Hill, we want to assure claimants that there are opportunities out there. Right now on our SC Works Online Services (SCWOS) portal, there are more than 95,000 jobs statewide posted. We also want to encourage employers who are looking for workers, to post their available positions on SCWOS, which is the state’s largest workforce job portal. Both jobseekers and employers can explore these free services, by going to <https://jobs.scworks.org/vosnet/Default.aspx>,” concluded Ellzey.

### **Agency Responsiveness:**

- From March 15, 2020 to July 21, 2020, the agency has paid more than \$3.37 Billion in a combination of South Carolina UI benefits, **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance** (for the self-employed and others), the **Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation** (\$600 per week) program, the **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation** (extension of benefits for 13 weeks) program and **Extended Benefits** (Additional 16 weeks of benefits after PEUC).
- FPUC, which provides an additional \$600 per week to eligible claimants, is set to expire this Saturday, July 25, 2020. This expiration date was set in the CARES Act. Claimants are paid for the previous week of unemployment, therefore, eligible claimants will receive their last FPUC payment July 26- August 1.

### **Call center hours (1-866-831-1724)**

**Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.**

**Saturday 8 a.m. - NOON**

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### **About the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce**

*The S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce is putting South Carolinians to work. The agency has four missions: (1) workforce development; (2) free job match employment services; (3) unemployment insurance; and (4) labor market information. All four missions contribute to workforce development. The agency is dedicated to advancing South Carolina through services and programs that meet the needs of our businesses, jobseekers and those looking to advance their careers.*

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*\*An initial claim is a claim filed by an unemployed individual after a separation from an employer. The claimant requests a determination of basic eligibility for the UI program. When an initial claim is filed with a state, certain programmatic activities take place and these result in activity counts including the count of initial claims. The count of U.S. initial claims for unemployment insurance is a leading economic indicator because it is an indication of emerging labor market conditions in the country. However, these are weekly administrative data which are difficult to seasonally adjust, making the series subject to some volatility.*

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