

I'd love to share the nightmare I'm going through currently with the absolutely trash system. To give a summary:

I was laid off from a job over a year ago, with a claim ending on July 4, 2020. I had actually exhausted benefits in January, continued looking, prior to COVID was about to be hired (I also have ageism working against me, which is why it's taking so long), but took a temp job (I was desperate for money) at a call center that turned out to be two hours each way by Trimet (I'm entirely public transportation dependent), so when it clearly wouldn't work and I was concerned about the increasing pandemic, I opted to quit after two days.

Fast forward to May, when the system first caught up with me about the PEUC extension, which would be payable in back dating to the end of March and sent me a letter. So yes, the system was already two plus months behind just in notifying me of a potential program.

I applied in mid-June, when I discovered I could upload the form.

I had to call Worksource, because the UI Center lines had endless busy signals and every time I called them (and spoke with UI representatives, eventually) I received a different answer.

It took until late August 7th for the system to even erroneously reject my reapplication as "benefits exhausted or claim expired". I called Worksource, ultimately somebody was able to assist me and I just needed to "restart" my claim.

On August 13th I received a helpful call from a lady, asking me to repeat information, etc. She told me I would receive a quit questionnaire (which asked the exact same information I've given them repeatedly). I asked about my claim going to adjudication and she assured me she didn't think that would be likely, so I needn't worry about that extended time frame.

I received the painfully redundant questionnaire and faxed it back. I made it very clear the work was automatically unsuitable given the lower pay rate and distance from my home that I had originally stated I would not accept work so far away. I also sought other temp assignments with the agency during this time.

I waited. Yesterday, I finally was able to get through (after, literally, twenty-five redial attempts), sat on hold for two hours and was ultimately told my claim is now in adjudication. And no other information could be given.

I started to cry, since I'm nearly out of money and this will now be an additional 10 - 16 weeks to the already 10+ weeks I've been waiting, for benefit weeks going back already five months.

I was put on hold again, this time for three hours so that MAYBE I can receive benefits while you wait. Though even that will take at least three weeks and the gentleman I spoke to didn't seem that hopeful and couldn't even find my application in my file (I emailed it to me).

I'm currently awaiting a follow up call from him.

When I've called helplines and left messages, the people who return my calls are unable to help me further and, honestly, the tone is very much, "yeah, well lots of other people are waiting, too". Except that remains completely unacceptable to myself or anyone else.

Today I receive a call informing me while she couldn't give me any timeline, my claim is now "in line to be assigned to an adjudicator". I was upset (again) and she was irritated by my being upset about this. Ultimately she asked, "what do you want, to speak to a manager?" Well, yes, that actually could be helpful.

We are discussing it will be, ultimately six months or nearly six months since I applied to receive these benefits, for a program that, apparently, I was eligible almost 3 months before that, so fully 8 to 9 months, due solely to the agency's gross incompetence.

I have also now reached out to nearly every elected official I have (my state reps, the governor's office, my congressman and Senator Merkley). None have returned my messages, yet, but Senator Merkley's office was staffed by a live person, who took my complaint and said he'd forward it.

This is completely and utterly unacceptable. I really don't care "how hard" the Unemployment Department's staff are supposedly working. If I'm going through this, so are countless others. And even if not, NOBODY should.

Thank you, in advance, for reading this.