

Program Letter

United States Railroad Retirement Board Office of Programs



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Date: February 24, 2009

TO: Certification Registration, Retirement and Unemployment Contact Officials

SUBJECT: Special Extended Unemployment Benefits provided under The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

Please distribute this notice to all individuals within your organization who may need the information in connection with their work.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides an appropriation from Treasury funds totaling \$20 million to be used for payment of additional extended unemployment benefits under the RUIA. The Act provides extended benefits only to employees who received normal UI benefits for days in the period July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

- Railroad workers who previously were not eligible for extended unemployment benefits because they did not have 10 years (120 cumulative months of service) may be eligible for up to 65 days within an extended period consisting of 7 consecutive 2-week registration periods.
- Railroad workers who previously were eligible for extended unemployment benefits of up to 65 days may now be eligible for extended benefits of up to 130 days within an extended period consisting of 13 consecutive 2-week registration periods.
- The latest date that an extended benefit period under these special provisions may begin is December 31, 2009.
- Payment of these special extended benefits will cease when the \$20 million has been expended.

We are working to make and test programming changes needed to implement the temporary extended unemployment benefit provisions. Our plan is to identify claimants that may be eligible for the special extended benefits (XB), establish their XB periods, and provide a first XB claim. We will also send eligible claimants a letter to notify them of their XB beginning date and to ask if they would prefer a different XB beginning date.

Any special extended unemployment benefits paid based on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 will be charged to the \$20 million appropriation we will receive from the Department of the Treasury. These benefits will not be charged to the claimant's base year employer's benefit account balance and consequently will not be used when calculating the base year employer's experience rated RUIA contribution rate for any future years.

If you have any questions regarding the special extended unemployment benefits paid based on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, please contact the Railroad Retirement Board.