

Kansas Farm Service Agency: Furloughed Employees and Unemployment Benefits

Concerns:

- FSA with 450 employees effected by the 35 day Government shutdown
- 350 county office employees had to work an additional 3 days after the Dec 22nd shutdown
- On Jan 16th we recalled 120 employees associated with loan programs without pay
- On Jan 22nd all FSA employees were called back to work until the government shutdown ended on Jan 25th
- Length unemployment benefits took
- Lack of benefits when called back to do work although no pay
- Having to actively look for employment and acceptance if offered

Stories from Kansas FSA Employees with experiences of filing for unemployment benefits:

- A Kansas FSA Employee with over 30 years' experience, completed all necessary paperwork to receive unemployment benefits. This employee was disappointed that she would have to look for jobs to receive unemployment benefits, when she had a job; just not working due to her furlough status. Once the shutdown was over, she would return to her job that she had. This employee wishes the procedure would be different for those employees that already had jobs and would not have to look for jobs if those employees were on a furlough/shutdown status.
- Another Kansas FSA Employee reported that it took 26 days from starting the unemployment benefit status to being able to utilize their benefits. During that time span, this employee had to apply for jobs, had to accept interview and had to accept work if it was offered. These benefits were deposited 16 days after she applied, but it took another 10 days to get access to the funds.
- Several Kansas FSA Employees were concerned about the call back to work without pay that occurred on January 23, 2019. Based on individual calculations, employee's unemployment benefits were significantly reduced after performing minimal hours of work (in some instances less than 5 total hours of work). Some employees that performed 24 hours of work or more during the call back were ineligible for benefits, even when the employee was not being paid for those hours at that time.