



RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

October 15, 2021

Secretary Dane Eagle
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Secretary Eagle:

My administration remains committed to ensuring Florida has the strongest economy in the nation. As the country sees jobs numbers underperforming, growth slowing, and concerning signs of inflation, Florida remains strong. The common-sense policies we enacted over the past year have resulted in an extraordinary period of economic recovery, and we have sustained 16 consecutive months of private sector job growth, and the state of Florida's unemployment rate has remained below the national average for 13 straight months.

As you are aware, the pandemic created financial obstacles for many Floridians, which caused millions to file claims for Reemployment Assistance benefits. During the height of the pandemic, our number one priority was to ensure Floridians received their benefits on a timely basis, and we focused on reducing red tape to speed up that process. As result of providing this swift response, many claimants, believing they were fully and accurately applying for Reemployment Assistance within the bounds of the law, received overpayments from the state.

In Florida, we have chosen to lift people up instead of shutting them down and we must continue to lead with compassion and grace to help Floridians elevate above avoidable setbacks in their personal economic recoveries. To that end, I am directing you to submit a request to the state's Chief Financial Officer to indefinitely defer all referrals to collection agencies for all non-fraudulent overpayments incurred during the pandemic. To be clear, this request must not apply to overpayments related to fraud, and DEO must continue to vigorously investigate fraudulent overpayments and ensure individuals be held accountable for their fraudulent actions in accordance with the law.

Thank you for your continued efforts to support Floridians' robust economic recovery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron DeSantis".

Ron DeSantis
Governor