

# Mississippi approved for Lost Wages Assistance Program for the unemployed

**Press Release** (the “Stafford Act”). The memorandum enables electing states to offer additional “Lost Wages Assistance” to eligible unemployed workers receiving unemployment benefits.

On Tuesday, August 25, Governor Tate Reeves and the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) announced that Mississippi’s application for a Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) grant under the Lost Wages Assistance Program (LWA) was approved.

FEMA Administrator, Pete Gaynor approved Mississippi for a FEMA grant under the LWA program and Jacqueline Turner, Executive Director for MDES, signed the acceptance award August 23, 2020.

On August 8, 2020, President Donald J. Trump signed a Presidential Memorandum making grant funding available to states and territories through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5174

Mississippians who are unemployed or partially unemployed due to COVID-19 and are currently receiving a weekly unemployment benefit amount of \$100 or more from one of the following programs will be eligible to receive an additional \$300 a week in the LWA FEMA program:

- Unemployment Insurance (UI)
- Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE)
- Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Servicemembers (UCX)
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)
- Extended Benefits (EB)
- Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA)
- Self-Employment Assistance (SEA)

MDES will implement the program and funds will be

**\*MS extends**  
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Both Reeves and the state epidemiologist, Dr. Paul Byers, urged Mississippi residents to continue to take precautions against the spread of COVID-19 during the Labor Day weekend. Mississippi saw an increase in virus cases after people had gatherings during the Memorial Day weekend and July 4.

available within three to four weeks.

Claimants do not need to file a separate application to receive LWA. MDES will make the LWA payments in the same manner as any payment from one of the above-listed programs payable for the week involved for all participating claimants. The \$300 LWA payment is subject to both federal and state income taxes.

To learn more about Mississippi Unemployment Benefits and for additional updates and information about unemployment assistance programs in MS, visit our website at [www.mdes.ms.gov](http://www.mdes.ms.gov).

During a news conference Monday in Jackson, Republican Reeves also responded to questions about photos that showed him without a mask at the White House last week when President Donald Trump accepted his party’s nomination during the Republican National Convention. Reeves posted photos of himself and his wife, Elee, wearing Trump-themed masks at the event, but others photographed the governor barefaced and sitting shoulder-to-shoulder with other people.

“As I have said repeatedly, many of us during this pandemic — six months in — have not always worn a mask 100% of the time,” Reeves said. “I will tell you, at that particular event, the vast majority of time I was there, I had on a mask. The vast majority of the time I was in D.C., I had on a mask.”

Reeves said he also had on a mask the “vast majority” of the time he was in North Carolina the week before that. Photos showed him speaking and posing for pictures in North Carolina at an event for the Republican gubernatorial candidate.

“As I look back on it, perhaps I should have done it more often,” Reeves said.

The state Health Department said Monday that Mississippi, with a population of about 3 million, has had at least 82,950 reported cases and at least 2,473 deaths from COVID-19 as of Sunday evening. That’s an increase of 274 confirmed cases and 32 deaths from numbers reported the day before; the figure included 19 deaths that occurred between July 8 and Aug. 24, with information from death certificates arriving later.

The true number of virus infections is thought to be far higher because many people have not been tested and studies suggest people can be infected without feeling sick. The virus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most but can be more severe or fatal for some, especially older adults and those with underlying health conditions.

# My Bucket List

If I could take one thing away that is positive from this time, ‘safe at home’ and ‘shelter at home’, it would be that I have had time, lots of time, to reflect on things that I would not necessarily think about. We have all had time to clean out drawers, purge our closets, dust places that have not seen the light of day in years, and just all chores that are put-off for a long time. Did I do these things? NO.



I sat in my office one day and thought, “I think I will inventory my pros and cons of my life on a divided sheet of paper.” I did this years ago in a bible study I was teaching, and we all learned that we had many more pros than cons listed on our sheets of paper. I thought about my “bucket list” that I have had stuck in yet another drawer, that I have added to for years. Listed were things I have done that I always wanted to do such as, been to New York City and have gone to a Broadway show, not only once but twice. I have visited Canada, Mexico, the U. S. Virgin Islands, and several other countries. I was queen for a day with Jr. Auxiliary, I have hosted a weekly show on our local television, gone to college in my sixties, realized my dream of being a published author and so many other things that I would have never dreamed about as a young girl.

But I have never danced in the rain, stood under a water

fall, ridden in a hot air balloon, ridden a horse on the beach, learned to swim, fly in a helicopter, gotten a tattoo, gone on a wine tour in Napa, walked the Champs-Élysées in Paris, and so many other things that there is not enough room to list.

So, I have decided to tackle some of the “not done” things on my list. If I wait this pandemic out, I will be too old or perhaps already gone Home before I see any of it come to fruition.

Again, my page of pros and cons are still not equal! I have so many more pros than I do in the other column. The heritage I leave my children and grandchildren will be the best of my pros because I am leaving them with a desire to LOVE. Love their lives with a passion that when they have lived a life of adventure, triumph, and above all sincerity and authenticity, they will say, “I did it all!”

**DREAM CAKE**  
1 box of yellow cake mix  
1 envelope of Dream Whip  
4 eggs  
1 cup cold water  
Combine all ingredients and mix until moistened. Beat at medium speed for about 4 minutes. Pour into a greased and floured tube pan and bake at 375\* for 15-20 minutes. Sprinkle with confectioners’ sugar on top and add fruit

*\*Peggy Sims is a life-long resident of Attala County and columnist.*

## “NOTICE OF A TAX INCREASE AND A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX LEVIES FOR THE TOWN OF PICKENS”

The Town of Pickens will hold a public hearing on its proposed budget and proposed tax levies for the fiscal year 2021 on September 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall located at 163 N. Second St. in Pickens.

The Town of Pickens is now operating with projected total budget revenue of \$881,749.00. 20.60% or \$181,499.00 of such revenue is obtained through ad valorem taxes. For the next fiscal year, the proposed budget has total projected revenue of \$677,000.00 of that amount, 26.5 or \$179,600.00, is proposed to be financed through a total ad valorem tax levy.

For the next fiscal year, the Town of Pickens plans to increase your ad valorem tax millage rate by 3 mills from 37.45 mills to 38.57 mills. This increase means that you will pay more in ad valorem taxes on your home, automobile tag, utilities, business fixtures and equipment and rental real property.

Any citizen of the Town of Pickens is invited to attend this public hearing on the proposed ad valorem tax increase, and will be allowed to speak for a reasonable amount of time and offer tangible evidence before any vote is taken.