



## For Immediate Release

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## Additional Unemployment Benefits Available

Montpelier – The Vermont Department of Labor announced today that some unemployed Vermonters may be eligible for additional unemployment benefits. “We have been informed by federal administrators that Vermont will be eligible for the ‘3<sup>rd</sup> tier’ of federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) benefits. This means unemployed Vermonters who have exhausted their Tier 2 benefits may be eligible for an additional 13 weeks of Tier 3 benefits”, said Labor Commissioner Annie Noonan. “Despite the continued decline in the state’s unemployment rate – now at 5.4% - due to a seasonal fluctuation between December through March, we hit one ‘trigger’ that activated the additional benefits for some Vermonters”.

The week ending March 26, 2011 is the first week payable for Tier 3 benefits. The 3<sup>rd</sup> tier of extended unemployment benefits (EUC) is activated when either the total unemployment rate (TUR) reaches 6.0% or more, or the insured unemployment rate (IUR) is 4.0% or more. In this case, it was the “Insured Unemployment Rate” in the months of December through March of 4.0% that resulted in the extended benefits. As it is related to seasonal factors, the Department of Labor does not anticipate the IUR to remain above the 4.0% threshold for a sustained period of time. Overall, the total unemployment rate in Vermont continues to decline, as demonstrated by the two-tenths of one percent decline between February and March.

Regular UI benefits provide 26 weeks of state benefits. Vermont meets the criteria for three tiers of federal benefits. Tier 1 provides up to 20 weeks, Tier 2 provides 14 weeks and Tier 3 provides up to 13 weeks of federal EUC benefits. In Vermont, approximately 1,100 unemployed Vermonters will potentially qualify for this 13 week benefit, resulting in a combined total of up to 73 weeks of state and federal benefits.

The Vermont Department of Labor has 12 Career Resource Centers that will continue to provide Vermonters assistance with job seeking skills and strategies. For a list of the Department’s resource centers and other information, please visit our website at [www.labor.vermont.gov](http://www.labor.vermont.gov).