

“Special Session?”

- On August 19th, Representative Geran Tarr and I called on Governor Dunleavy to convene a Special Session to correct the CARES Act funding relating to small business grants.
- The Governor revised the RPLs (Revised Program Legislative) to relieve some of the restrictions on the Small Business Grants and forwarded his document to the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee (LB&A) for approval. On August 27th, the LB&A Committee met and voted to give more Alaskans access to the Federal pandemic relief money made available through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The vote amends the eligibility requirements of the small business relief program originally approved on May 11th.
- I am relieved that this money will now bring relief to small businesses in need and to the Alaskans who are hurting financially.

Unemployment

The Federal Government has approved a grant to the State of Alaska to expand weekly unemployment benefits by \$300 a week. (*\$19.9 million*)

- Payments are expected to start in about six weeks.
- Payments will be retroactive to July 25th.
- The additional Federal unemployment benefit will be paid for about six weeks.
- Currently, the maximum unemployment payment in Alaska is \$370 per week.

Those receiving help through the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program will not receive the additional federal unemployment payments.

- The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program is for the self-employed and those in the gig economy.

Alaskans can now file unemployment benefit claims on a weekly basis rather than the normal every two weeks.

- File online through the my.alaska.gov portal.

**Senator Gray-Jackson's Notes
Turnagain Community Council
September 3, 2020**

- For questions contact the nearest unemployment claim center.
 - Anchorage: (907) 269-4700.

Census

The U.S. Census Bureau will end door knocking efforts on **September 30** due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

- The original end date was July 31st.
- The end date was subsequently extended to October 31st.
- Online self-response closes on September 30th.
- The U.S. Census must be completed by December 31st.

Respond to the 2020 online at **2020census.gov**.

- File online at **my2020census.gov**
- File via the telephone by calling 1-844-330-2020.

New COVID-19 Testing Sites in Anchorage

Five new COVID-19 testing sites are up and running in parking lots in Anchorage. (*Free tests*)

- ChangePoint Church, 6689 ChangePoint Drive
- Fairview Community Recreation Center, 1121 East 10th Avenue
- Anchorage Church of Christ, 2700 Debarr Road
- Muldoon Community Assembly, 7041 Debarr Road
- Z.J. Loussac Library, 3600 Denali Street

The new testing sites are open three days a week through October 20th.

- Monday - 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Friday - 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Saturday - 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The tests are free to the public.

- Referrals are not required.
- People do not have to be showing symptoms to get tested.

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