



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Disaster Unemployment Assistance Available

**Richmond, Va.** – Individuals unable to work due to the flooding from tropical depression Gaston that occurred August 30, 2004 may be eligible for disaster unemployment assistance.

Self-employed and unemployed workers who live or work in the designated disaster areas and are not covered by regular state unemployment insurance programs may be eligible for this federally funded assistance. Under this program, benefits of up to \$326 per week may be paid to eligible individuals until they are able to return to work.

Individuals that live or work in the designated disaster areas of the cities of Richmond, Hopewell, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg, and the counties of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Hanover, Henrico, and Prince George can apply for assistance. The deadline for applying is October 6, 2004.

Disaster unemployment assistance covers those places of business/employment in the affected jurisdiction and those who:

- No longer have a job as a direct result of the disaster;
- Are unable to reach their place of employment as a direct result of the disaster;
- Were to commence employment and do not have a job or are unable to reach the job as a direct result of the disaster;
- Are self employed but are prevented from working due to the effects of the disaster;
- Have become the breadwinner or major support of a household because the head of the household died as a direct result of the disaster; or
- Cannot work because of injury caused as a direct result of the disaster.

Anyone interested in filing for disaster unemployment assistance should visit the nearest Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) field office, or the Disaster Recovery Center at 730 E. Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia. Applicants should bring their Social Security number and, if possible, documentation showing earnings for the calendar year 2003.

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