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Contact:
Joe Garvey
Public Affairs Specialist
Old Dominion University
Office: 757-683-6479
jgarvey@odu.edu

ODU's Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy: Hampton Roads Economy Improves, Slowly

Another 5,983 individuals file initial claims in Hampton Roads; continued claims decline to 83,110

Norfolk, VA – (June 26, 2020) – Nonseasonally adjusted data from Virginia's Employment Commission shows for the week ending June 20, 5,983 individuals in the Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News ("Hampton Roads") Metropolitan Statistical Area filed an initial claim for unemployment insurance, a decline of 148 claims from the prior week. The number of continued claims decreased by 2,226 to 83,110.

Initial claims declined from the previous week in all but three of the cities and counties within Hampton Roads. In Portsmouth, claims increased by 47, totaling 700, while in Norfolk and Hampton, initial claims rose by 142 and 30 respectively. In Virginia Beach, initial claims declined to 1,120, while claims in James City County declined slightly from 216 to 152.

"The data for latest week continues to show clear signs of a recovery in Hampton Roads. The number of individuals receiving benefits declined for the fifth consecutive week while initial claims have declined for 11 straight weeks," said Dominique Johnson, research associate at the Dragas Center. "On the other hand, even as economic activity continues to increase across the region, the road to initial claims returning to pre-pandemic level remains long. For the week ending March 14, the week before the crisis began, initial and continued claims in Hampton Roads totaled 464 and 4,315, respectively"

Data for Virginia show that Black or African American residents of the Commonwealth continue to be disproportionately impacted by the recession. Over the last two weeks, approximately 41% of initial claims were made by Black or African American workers, even though, according to the U.S. Census, Black or African American residents comprised 19.9% of the population of the Commonwealth in 2019.

Note 1: Advance claims are not directly comparable to claims reported in prior weeks. Advance claims are reported by the state liable for paying the unemployment compensation, whereas previous weeks' reported claims reflect claimants by state of residence. In addition, claims reported as "workshare equivalent" in the previous week

are added to the advance claims as a proxy for the current week's "workshare equivalent" activity.

Note 2: Data from the Virginia Employment Commission. Reported state totals will vary because not all reported claims are included in the announced data. Only intrastate claims are included in the data.

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About the Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy:

The Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy in the Strome College of Business at Old Dominion University undertakes a wide range of economic, demographic, transportation and defense-oriented studies. For two decades, the Center and its predecessors have produced the highly regarded State of the Region Report for Hampton Roads and economic forecasts for the region. If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Agarwal can be reached at 757-287-5619 or by email at vagarwal@odu.edu or Dominique Johnson at 757-506-1565 or by email at d1johnson@odu.edu

About Old Dominion University:

Old Dominion University is Virginia's entrepreneurial-minded doctoral research university with more than 24,000 students, rigorous academics, an energetic residential community and initiatives that contribute \$2.6 billion annually to the Commonwealth's economy.

Table 1
Initial Unemployment Claims
Week Ending June 13 and June 20
Hampton Roads Metropolitan Area Cities and Counties

	Initial Claims for Week Ending June 13	Initial Claims for Week Ending June 20	Change from Prior Week	Percent Change from Prior Week
Gloucester	81	77	-4	-4.9%
Isle of Wight	73	68	-5	-6.8%
James City County	216	152	-64	-29.6%
Mathews	15	10	-5	-33.3%
Southampton	26	20	-6	-23.1%
York	96	70	-26	-27.1%
Chesapeake	770	728	-42	-5.5%
Franklin City	51	47	-4	-7.8%
Hampton	608	638	30	4.9%
Newport News	854	795	-59	-6.9%
Norfolk	1,082	1,224	142	13.1%
Poquoson	23	16	-7	-30.4%
Portsmouth	653	700	47	7.2%
Suffolk	314	304	-10	-3.2%
Virginia Beach	1,235	1,120	-115	-9.3%
Williamsburg	34	14	-20	-58.8%
Hampton Roads	6,131	5,983	-148	-2.4%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy. Initial Claims for week ending June 20 are advanced estimates subject to revisions, and therefore not directly comparable to prior weeks. September 2018 definition of the Virginia portion of Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News MSA. Only Virginia localities are included in this table.

Table 2
Headline Unemployment Rate (U3)
March 2020 - May 2020*
US, Virginia, Virginia Cities and Counties

	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020*
Gloucester County	3.1%	10.2%	13.9%
Isle of Wight County	3.2%	8.5%	11.8%
James City County	3.2%	13.7%	19.4%
Mathews County	3.5%	8.9%	11.8%
Southampton County	3.4%	6.9%	9.2%
York County	3.1%	10.4%	13.1%
Chesapeake city	3.3%	10.2%	15.3%
Franklin city	4.2%	9.6%	19.8%
Hampton city	4.4%	13.4%	20.5%
Newport News city	4.2%	13.9%	21.1%
Norfolk city	4.0%	13.3%	20.1%
Poquoson city	2.9%	8.0%	10.7%
Portsmouth city	4.5%	12.8%	20.9%
Suffolk city	3.5%	9.7%	15.5%
Virginia Beach city	3.1%	12.2%	17.0%
Williamsburg city	4.7%	15.0%	16.5%
Hampton Roads	3.6%	12.0%	17.6%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy. Nonseasonally adjusted data. *Unemployment rate projections use initial claims per month, the latest available labor force data, and assume that the individuals who file initial claims do not depart the labor force. Virginia portion of the Virginia Beach - Norfolk - Newport News metropolitan area.