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ODU's Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy: Layoffs Continue While Continued Claims Fall

46,524 Virginians file initial unemployment claims; continued claims decline to 345,542.

Norfolk, VA – (July 30, 2020) – Newly released nonseasonally adjusted data from the U.S. Department of Labor shows that 46,524 Virginians filed an initial unemployment claim for the week ending July 25, an increase of 8,578 from the previous week. For the week ending July 18, continued claims decreased by 11,556 to 345,542.

“The latest unemployment claims release continues to highlight the challenges facing the U.S. economy. Another 2 million Americans filed an initial unemployment claim through a regular state program (1.2 million) or the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (829,697) program for the week ending July 25,” said Robert McNab, director of the Dragas Center. “Over 30 million Americans received some form of unemployment benefits for the week of July 11. While continued claims for all kinds of unemployment insurance declined by 1.6 million, broader measures of unemployment exceeded 18% in June. Without a concerted effort through universal masking, testing, tracing and isolating known cases, it will be difficult to regain all the jobs lost in the spring.”

The release of initial estimates for second quarter Gross Domestic Product (GDP) provides a measure of the economic shock. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. GDP contracted by 32.9% on an annualized basis from the first to second quarter of 2020. Even though projections suggest that U.S. GDP will grow between 10% to 15% in the third quarter of 2020, a complete recovery in economic activity will not occur until 2021. A severe influenza season, natural disaster or delays in therapeutics or vaccines could further prolong a recovery.

“Virginia’s labor market continues to show signs of uncertainty. Initial claims for unemployment benefits increased to their highest level since early May while continued claims declined by more 11,000 from the previous week,” said Dominique Johnson, research associate at the Dragas Center. “As daily COVID-19 cases continue to trend upward and new restrictions on social gatherings are implemented in Hampton Roads, we expect the return to pre-pandemic levels to take some time.”

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: For comparability with other states and the nation, we use data from the U.S. Department of Labor for unemployment claims in Virginia. We use data from the Virginia Employment Commission and the U.S. Department of Labor for unemployment claims and labor market statistics at the city and county level.

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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 Robert M. McNab (831-917-2455, rmcnab@odu.edu) or Dominique Johnson (757-506-1565, 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
Headline Unemployment Rates (U3)
March 2020 - June 2020
US, Virginia, Virginia Cities and Counties

	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020
U.S.	4.4%	14.7%	13.3%	11.1%
Virginia	3.3%	10.6%	9.4%	8.5%
Accomack	4.8%	9.8%	9.2%	8.1%
Albemarle	2.8%	9.1%	7.9%	7.6%
Alleghany	4.4%	11.5%	9.0%	8.8%
Amelia	3.6%	9.8%	7.9%	7.3%
Amherst	3.8%	9.6%	7.6%	7.2%
Appomattox	4.3%	9.4%	7.7%	7.3%
Arlington	2.2%	7.0%	6.1%	5.9%
Augusta	2.9%	8.4%	6.7%	5.9%
Bath	3.1%	20.5%	15.8%	14.3%
Bedford	3.5%	9.9%	7.6%	6.6%
Bland	4.0%	11.5%	8.2%	7.4%
Botetourt	3.0%	8.6%	7.4%	6.1%
Brunswick	5.3%	10.4%	10.0%	9.9%
Buchanan	8.1%	14.1%	10.8%	10.9%
Buckingham	5.2%	10.3%	9.4%	9.6%
Campbell	3.8%	10.2%	8.4%	7.8%
Caroline	3.7%	11.0%	9.4%	9.0%
Carroll	5.8%	16.1%	11.1%	9.8%
Charles City	3.9%	10.2%	9.3%	9.4%
Charlotte	4.6%	8.3%	6.9%	7.1%
Chesterfield	3.1%	10.7%	8.8%	8.2%
Clarke	2.8%	8.2%	7.1%	6.2%
Craig	3.4%	10.1%	8.4%	6.7%
Culpeper	3.2%	9.1%	7.7%	6.6%
Cumberland	3.4%	9.2%	8.0%	8.1%
Dickenson	7.3%	12.0%	9.4%	9.2%
Dinwiddie	3.8%	9.6%	8.5%	8.3%
Essex	4.5%	11.1%	9.5%	8.6%
Fairfax	2.6%	10.2%	8.8%	8.1%
Fauquier	2.8%	8.8%	7.2%	6.4%
Floyd	3.5%	11.1%	8.3%	6.8%
Fluvanna	2.8%	9.2%	7.9%	7.6%
Franklin	3.6%	9.5%	8.1%	7.4%
Frederick	2.8%	9.5%	7.6%	6.6%

Giles	4.5%	13.0%	10.5%	8.4%
Gloucester	3.0%	10.2%	8.0%	7.3%
Goochland	3.0%	8.9%	7.1%	6.6%
Grayson	5.1%	10.8%	7.5%	6.8%
Greene	2.6%	9.6%	7.8%	7.5%
Greensville	3.9%	8.4%	8.7%	8.7%
Halifax	4.9%	10.7%	8.6%	8.4%
Hanover	2.8%	9.0%	7.3%	6.5%
Henrico	3.2%	11.1%	9.5%	9.0%
Henry	4.0%	12.8%	10.5%	9.6%
Highland	3.8%	6.3%	5.6%	5.2%
Isle of Wight	3.2%	8.5%	7.1%	6.6%
James City County	3.2%	13.7%	11.1%	9.8%
King and Queen	3.1%	7.7%	6.7%	6.5%
King George	3.2%	7.6%	6.3%	6.0%
King William	3.3%	9.7%	7.9%	7.2%
Lancaster	7.0%	11.3%	9.1%	8.6%
Lee	5.0%	10.9%	8.8%	8.1%
Loudoun	2.6%	9.9%	8.4%	7.7%
Louisa	3.1%	8.9%	7.6%	7.1%
Lunenburg	3.4%	7.6%	6.6%	6.8%
Madison	2.5%	7.1%	5.8%	5.1%
Mathews	3.5%	8.9%	6.6%	6.2%
Mecklenburg	4.8%	10.9%	9.2%	8.7%
Middlesex	3.3%	9.0%	7.2%	6.7%
Montgomery	3.4%	9.3%	7.7%	6.7%
Nelson	3.2%	9.8%	8.3%	7.8%
New Kent	2.6%	8.9%	6.9%	6.8%
Northampton	5.7%	11.6%	10.9%	9.8%
Northumberland	7.0%	9.7%	7.6%	7.2%
Nottoway	3.2%	7.5%	6.4%	6.4%
Orange	3.3%	9.8%	8.3%	7.4%
Page	5.8%	14.0%	11.7%	9.6%
Patrick	4.6%	14.1%	8.9%	7.5%
Pittsylvania	4.3%	12.7%	9.1%	7.9%
Powhatan	3.0%	9.6%	7.6%	6.8%
Prince Edward	4.6%	9.5%	8.2%	8.2%
Prince George	3.8%	10.0%	8.8%	8.6%
Prince William	3.0%	11.3%	10.1%	9.2%
Pulaski	5.9%	17.1%	12.7%	9.8%
Rappahannock	2.9%	8.3%	6.7%	5.9%

Richmond	3.6%	7.3%	6.2%	6.5%
Roanoke	3.1%	9.8%	8.2%	7.0%
Rockbridge	3.2%	9.4%	7.9%	6.9%
Rockingham	2.8%	9.7%	8.0%	6.9%
Russell	5.7%	10.8%	8.6%	8.5%
Scott	4.0%	9.8%	7.3%	6.7%
Shenandoah	3.1%	9.5%	8.2%	7.0%
Smyth	4.7%	10.7%	9.1%	8.8%
Southampton	3.3%	6.9%	6.4%	6.3%
Spotsylvania	3.3%	11.1%	9.2%	8.3%
Stafford	3.1%	9.9%	8.4%	7.8%
Surry	3.9%	9.3%	7.5%	7.8%
Sussex	5.2%	10.3%	10.7%	11.0%
Tazewell	5.6%	12.5%	9.9%	9.5%
Warren	3.2%	11.1%	9.0%	7.8%
Washington	3.9%	10.8%	8.2%	7.9%
Westmoreland	4.5%	8.6%	7.5%	7.5%
Wise	6.0%	11.9%	9.1%	9.4%
Wythe	5.2%	17.2%	12.2%	9.9%
York	3.0%	10.4%	8.5%	7.9%
Alexandria city	2.5%	9.9%	8.7%	8.3%
Bristol city	4.4%	15.3%	11.0%	10.2%
Buena Vista city	2.9%	8.7%	7.2%	6.6%
Charlottesville city	2.6%	10.8%	9.5%	9.3%
Chesapeake city	3.3%	10.2%	8.9%	8.3%
Colonial Heights city	3.4%	11.5%	9.7%	9.3%
Covington city	6.3%	16.0%	13.8%	13.6%
Danville city	6.3%	16.0%	12.7%	11.8%
Emporia city	5.1%	13.0%	14.5%	14.4%
Fairfax city	2.5%	10.1%	8.7%	8.1%
Falls Church city	2.3%	5.8%	4.9%	4.9%
Franklin city	4.2%	9.6%	9.5%	10.7%
Fredericksburg city	3.7%	12.1%	10.5%	9.7%
Galax city	6.3%	17.3%	10.5%	9.8%
Hampton city	4.4%	13.4%	12.0%	11.5%
Harrisonburg city	3.6%	11.2%	10.9%	9.4%
Hopewell city	4.9%	14.7%	13.9%	14.2%
Lexington city	4.9%	10.3%	8.9%	9.2%
Lynchburg city	4.3%	12.1%	10.2%	9.7%
Manassas city	3.0%	10.9%	9.8%	9.0%
Manassas Park city	2.9%	11.6%	10.5%	9.9%

Martinsville city	5.0%	16.9%	14.7%	14.3%
Newport News city	4.2%	13.9%	12.6%	12.0%
Norfolk city	4.0%	13.3%	11.9%	11.6%
Norton city	5.4%	12.4%	9.8%	10.2%
Petersburg city	6.6%	16.7%	17.2%	17.9%
Poquoson city	2.9%	8.0%	6.1%	5.7%
Portsmouth city	4.4%	12.8%	12.2%	12.4%
Radford city	4.5%	11.5%	10.0%	9.0%
Richmond city	3.8%	14.2%	12.5%	12.2%
Roanoke city	3.7%	12.8%	11.6%	10.6%
Salem city	3.4%	10.8%	9.1%	7.8%
Staunton city	3.1%	11.3%	9.4%	8.6%
Suffolk city	3.5%	9.7%	9.0%	8.8%
Virginia Beach city	3.1%	12.2%	9.7%	8.5%
Waynesboro city	3.3%	11.2%	9.6%	8.8%
Williamsburg city	4.7%	15.0%	12.6%	11.6%
Winchester city	3.3%	11.2%	9.4%	8.2%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy.