

Shutdown spurs state rule change on unemployment for federal employees

Written by By Andy Lyman NM Political Report
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After a little more than a week in his new job, New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions Secretary-designate Bill McCamley, made a major, albeit temporary, rule change for federal employees seeking unemployment benefits because of the ongoing federal government shutdown.

McCamley announced Wednesday that he is temporarily waiving a federally mandated work requirement to receive state unemployment benefits.

“If you file for unemployment, by federal law, you’re supposed to show that you were looking for two jobs a week, and if you get a job and you turn it down, you lose unemployment,” McCamley told *NM Political Report* on Wednesday evening. “That’s really crappy for an air traffic controller who’s still working and not getting paid.”

Thousands of New Mexicans are either [working without pay](#) or have been furloughed.

In a [YouTube video](#), McCamley outlined some specifics of the rule change, which could last for 180 days if necessary. McCamley said there is still a week-long waiting period between when a person applies for unemployment benefits and when they receive them. Once their federal paychecks resume, applicants will need to return the unemployment benefits to the state of New Mexico.

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If the shutdown does not end by Saturday, it would mark the longest U.S. government shutdown in history and the first missed paycheck for employees since the current shutdown began.

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