



April 21, 2021

Dear Chief Elected Officials of SCRCOG,

The past month has made it clear that May will be taking off like a rocket. The roll outs of the American Rescue Plan, Shuttered Venue Operators Grant, Restaurant Revitalization Fund and more programs have created both hope and relief for our businesses. The lifting of the Reopen Connecticut guidelines on May 19th will give businesses and consumers the opportunity to make decisions based on their best judgment. The guidelines will continue to be best practices, but they will no longer be mandated by the governor's Executive Orders. The lone mandate that will extend beyond May 19 is the requirement for masks when indoors. May 19th is unlikely to result in a stampede to public venues but is rather a step forward in building consumer confidence.

For REX, the next month will be focused on assisting businesses navigate new SBA programs, supporting public health best practices and continuing to promote the availability of vaccines to people over the age of 16. As we encourage vaccinations, we will remain respectful of people's personal choices. We will provide information regarding vaccination rates and hope this will encourage more residents to be vaccinated. Many people who are hesitant about receiving the vaccine are simply waiting for more evidence that the vaccine is safe. As friends, family and coworkers are vaccinated, we anticipate a slow but steady increase in vaccinations.

At our monthly REDFO meeting, we hosted Daniel Fitzmaurice from the Arts Council of Greater New Haven. He shared the challenges facing the arts sector in our region. New federal funding for shuttered venues and additional programs will help the industry get back on its feet as we move beyond May 19.

In preparing for the 2021-2022 CEDS update, we have scheduled the CEDS outreach meetings starting on April 22. With the societal and economic upheaval since our 2020 Annual Update and Performance Measurements Report, we are eager to obtain input from each of the towns based on their experiences and to hear suggestions for moving forward as a region. As a result of the American Rescue Plan, the state has the opportunity to implement substantial change in economic development and the barriers to it. Using the Transfer Act as an example, a defined objective with supporting evidence promotes regulatory changes to make Connecticut more business friendly. Our goal should not be to return to the status quo but to elevate South Central Connecticut to its full potential. You are welcome to attend the session in your town, but REX will be presenting to SCRCOG at the May meeting and requesting approval in June.

Graphs of regional unemployment claims are attached. If you would like the spreadsheet by town, please let us know.

Sincerely,

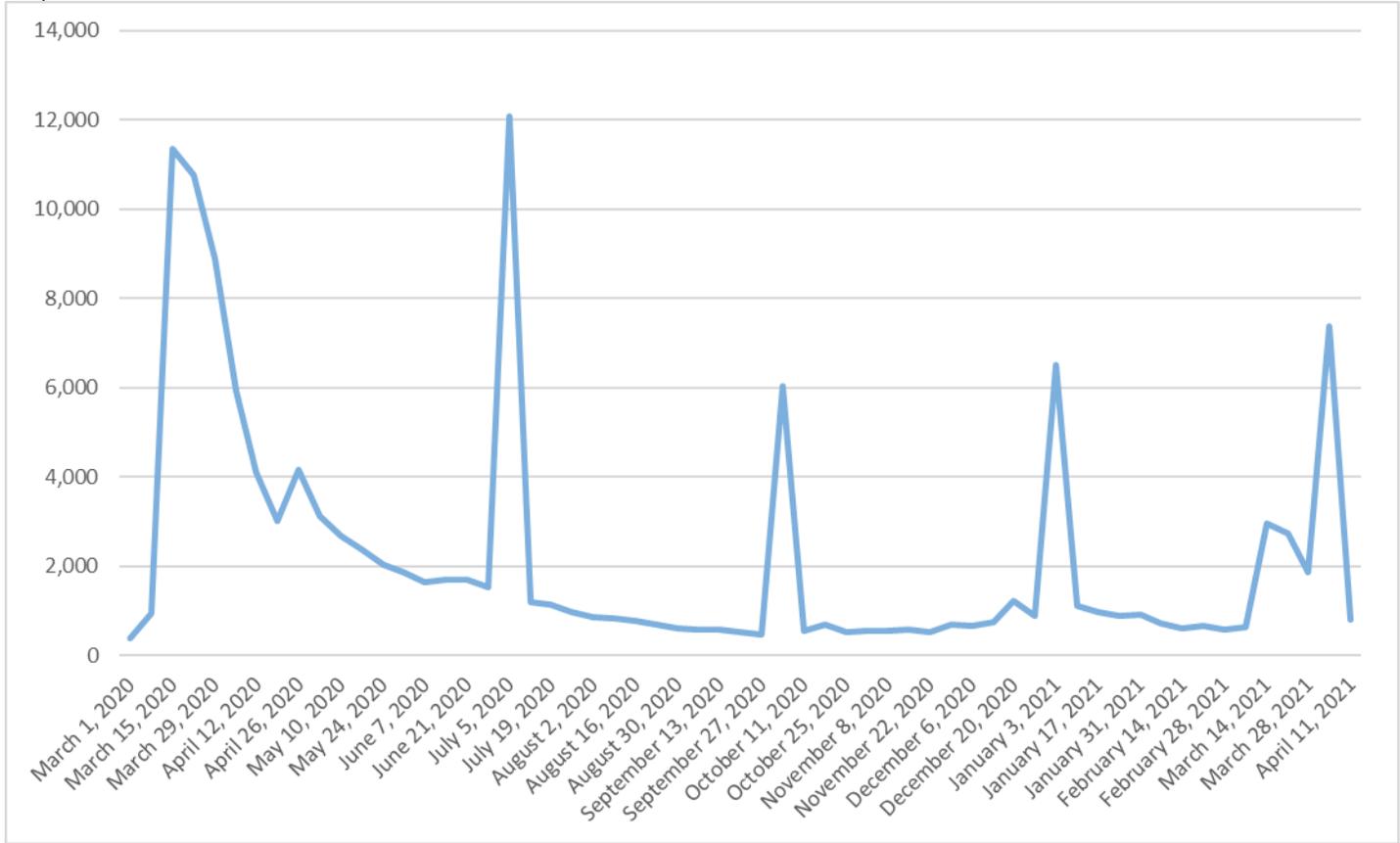
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ONE REGION. 15 TOWNS. UNLIMITED POTENTIAL.

Regional Initial Claims – Updated April 19, 2021
 Dept. of Labor Office of Research

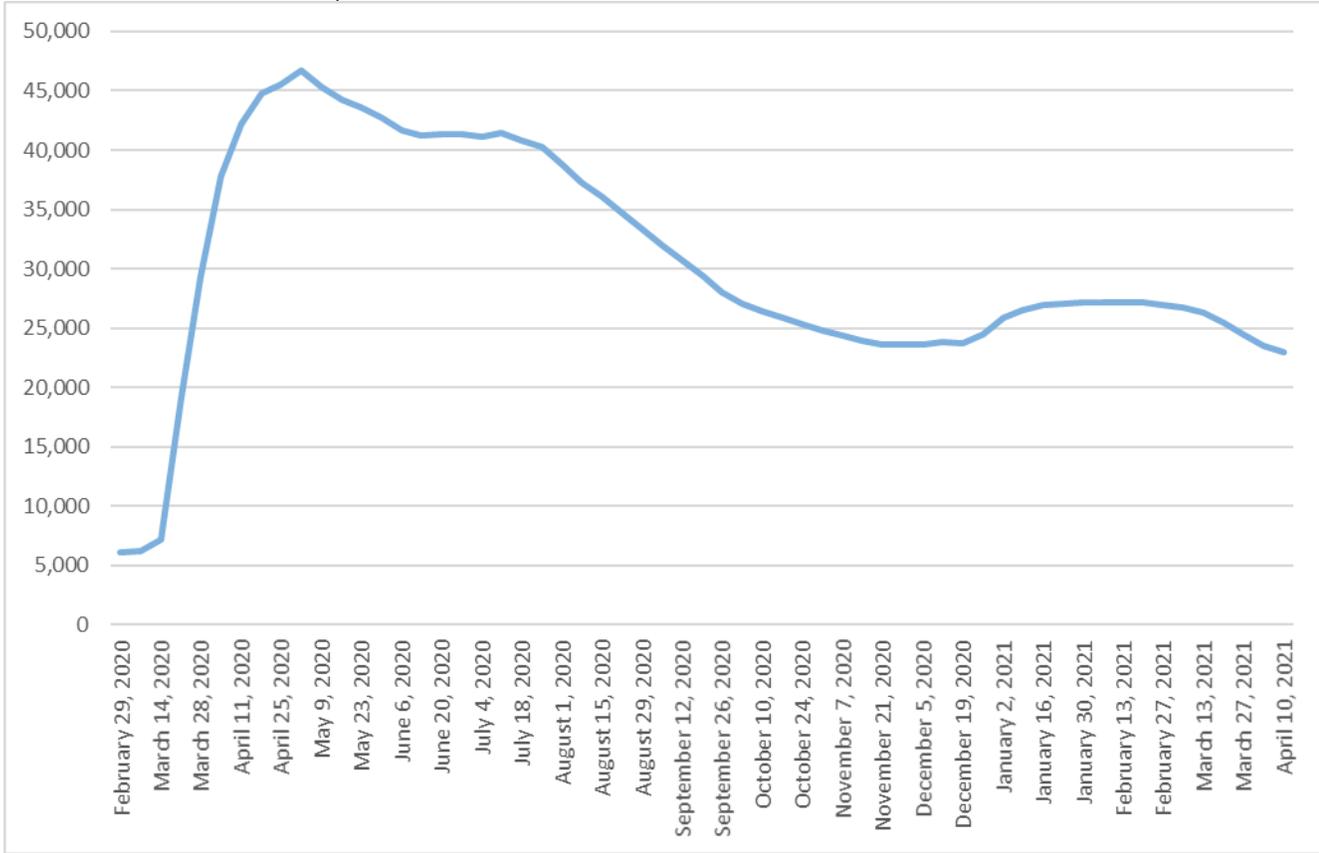


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REX

DEVELOPMENT

Regional Continuing Claims – Updated April 19, 2021
 Dept. of Labor Office of Research
 Claims after March 27 incomplete



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