Press Release

Scoping Tomorrow's Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims Shock

ANDREW EVANS | MARCH 18, 2020

Tomorrow the Department of Labor will release new data of initial unemployment insurance (UI) claims, and these data will almost certainly show a spike in new unemployment filings. In a new analysis, AAF's Director of Fiscal Policy Gordon Gray provides some historical and contemporary context for tomorrow's numbers. If tomorrow's figures are not the highest levels of initial claims ever, that record will likely follow in the weeks to come, he writes.

An excerpt:

> According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in February there were 12.3 million workers in the food-service industry. There were over 2 million in the accommodations industries. There are over 2 million workers whose jobs are to provide services to buildings and dwellings, such as janitors. These industries are clearly and directly affected. While it is implausible that these jobs would entirely disappear, these industries face direct exposure to the shuttering of gathering spots. Beyond these industries, knock-on effects will cascade throughout the economy.

Read the Analysis