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The Ardmoreite

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Fact vs. fiction

Ardmore police dispel COVID-19 rumors circulating across southern Oklahoma

By Sierra Rains
 srains@ardmoreite.com

Rumors about essential paperwork to allow travel outside the home have been spreading fast

across southern Oklahoma. However, authorities want the public to know these statements are false.

Ardmore Police Department Cpt. Claude Henry said the City of Ardmore is not issuing permits for individuals to be outside of their homes and the police department will not be pulling people over to

ask for permits.

"We just want to dispel the rumor that essential paperwork is needed to commute during the stay in place resolution," Henry said. "The Ardmore Police Department is not going to be stopping citizens and requesting any type of essential paperwork

See RUMORS, A3

First-time jobless claims top 51K last week

Oklahoma Employment Security Commission phone systems overwhelmed by call volume

By Michael Smith
 msmith@ardmoreite.com

Initial unemployment claims last week again broke a record in Oklahoma, prompting state officials to hold a virtual town hall event on Friday afternoon. First-time unemployment benefit requests in the state reached 51,124 for the week ending April 4, according to unadjusted numbers from the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission on Thursday.

That is nearly 3,400 more claims than the previous record of 47,744 set the week before and follows an historic nationwide trend over the past three weeks. The OESC virtual town hall scheduled for 1 p.m. today is expected to help about 50,000 Oklahoma claimants with the filing process.

"Oklahomans are seeking relief for their families in the wake of

incomparable business closures and job losses," said OESC Executive Director Robin Roberson in a Thursday statement. "We have dramatically ramped up the number of employees available to assist callers. Our agency website is undergoing a significant transformation to improve the user-experience and simplify the claims filing process," he said.

Even unemployment data indicators meant to even out wild swings are starting to see the impact of COVID-19. The less volatile four-week average of initial claims also climbed last week, from 12,389 to 30,658.

Despite adding 100 claims agents and planning further expansion, the OESC phone systems have been overloaded with claims. The commission is now directing out-of-work Oklahomans to file initial claims online.

This afternoon's virtual town hall will be available to the general public and those interested can register online for free at <http://www.eventbrite.com/d/online/oesc/> and clicking on the town hall event.

Play grounded



Caution tape adorns playground equipment at Central Park on Thursday. A resolution passed by the Ardmore City Commission last week declared parks closed until further notice to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

[MICHAEL D. SMITH/THE ARDMOREITE]

Accepting a new reality

Coping with social distancing and staying at home

By Drew Butler
 drew.butler@ardmoreite.com

People across the country are feeling the stress from dealing with both the direct and indirect effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of fears of the virus, they may be worried about their financial security. This stress can then be easily intensified by the social distancing measures requiring people to stay at their homes.

Counselor Kristi Crutchfield-Cox, MED, MS, LPC said one of the most important things families can do to help deal with the stress is to keep the lines of communication between household members open.

"Families need to keep open fluid communication

amongst themselves and all household members so that everyone can feel they have a voice in discussing their feelings in the home," Crutchfield-Cox said. "We also have to accept that the timeline of when we get to go out and see other people or go have a meal at our favorite restaurant may not happen within the next few months – and we're going to be okay."

She said one of the other major problems people are facing is the lack of clear information about the situation combined with social media rumors and the over consumption of media.

"I've been hearing that people are confused by the information they've been given, and they don't completely understand how to apply the guidelines," Crutchfield-Cox

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