

Jobless Rate Rises; Suburbs Not Hard Hit

By DENNIS PAJOT
Suburban offices of the Michigan Unemployment Security Commission (MESC) are feeling the effect of the highest unemployment rate since

1961, although suburbanites in general are not the hardest hit.

"Most who can afford to live in the suburbs have enough seniority to protect them," explained 24-year MESC employee and Redford office manager Edward Dowling.

He and managers of the Plymouth and Wayne MESC offices reported that their total claims are running at triple the number of last year at this time, which is the same as the statewide MESC experience.

DOWLING'S OFFICE at

2444 W. Seven Mile Road, currently has "a little over 3,500" persons drawing unemployment checks. The number has been increasing at a rate of 500 to 600 a week since before Christmas.

In Plymouth, where Dowling was manager for five years and Lou Belanger now holds the claim load is currently 1,300 compared to 400 at this time last year. New claims were filed by 307 persons last week. The Plymouth office is at 987 Mill Street.

Edward Sawyer, manager of the Wayne office at 3328

Sims, said his claims total about 3,000 and "growing" with 1,000 new claims this past week.

ONLY LARGE EMPLOYER in the vicinity contributing to the layoff surge is General Motors Hydra-Matic in Willow Run, which laid off all 4,500 employees for one week.

Some of these applied through the Wayne office and others went to Ypsilanti.

This is the pattern. Dowling in Redford said many of the applicants there are from downtown Detroit seeking to escape the long wait at down-

town offices. Some are down from Pontiac, also.

All reported that the unusually long periods of very cold weather this winter have contributed to the rolls of the unemployed as construction workers have been forced to stop abnormally long without work. Many are beginning to return to work now, however.

ALTHOUGH THE RATE is the highest in a decade, at 5.27 statewide in January, compared to 3.5 in November, it's nowhere near the record-setting 1961 rate, managers assured Observer Newspapers.

Detroit area unemployment is reported at 4.9% in January compared to 3.2% in November. Nationally the jobless rate was 3.9% compared to 3.4.

Detroit area unemployed number 55,000 of 127,000 out of work statewide.


Big Three auto makers, suffering from the slowest sales period in post-war history plus the normal changeover shut down periods, plus auto industry suppliers hit by the dip account for much of the current unemployment crop.

THE STATE HAS A \$562 million fund to meet unemployment claims.

Redford and Wayne offices both issued about \$250,000 in January. Plymouth's payments totaled \$38,000 last week, or the equivalent of \$144,000 for a month.

Additional office staff has been required in all three offices. Some increase is normal for this time of year.

Redford is up to seven extra clerks. Wayne doubled its force to 15 and Plymouth added two temporary helpers.



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SEEKING HELP -- This lineup at a Michigan Employment Security Commission office reflects current auto industry and suppliers layoffs. Suburban applicants aren't as numerous, proportionately, as those in the central city, but suburban MESC offices are plenty busy. (Observer photo by Dennis Pajot)

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A new series of classes for diabetics and their families will begin March 7, 7 p.m., at the Wayne County Health Center, Merriman Road, Elioise. The instruction is under the direction of the public health nurse division.

The education by professional staff covers topics which explain the condition of diabetes mellitus, its control and treatment and the relationship of diet. The importance of the diabetic's cooperation with his physician is stressed along with the patient's responsibility in caring for himself in order to lead an active, normal life.

All diabetics regardless of age may attend with written approval from their physicians. Children under 13 should be accompanied by a parent.

The series consists of two-hour classes on five consecutive Monday evenings. Interested persons may register by telephoning the Wayne County Department of Health, PA 1-0200 or CR 4-2800, ext. 6901.

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