

2015 FULL EMPLOYMENT AWARD

Each year, the American Institute for Full Employment gives its Full Employment Award to a state that demonstrates exceptional commitment and innovation in helping Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants more effectively and efficiently return to work and avoid long-term unemployment.

In the past few years, many states have developed an organizational focus on the reemployment of UI claimants and instituted notable policies and initiatives for the active, early and meaningful engagement of UI claimants in reemployment strategies. This year, the Institute is proud to present its Full Employment Award to the **Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development** for their Re-employment Services System Enhancement.

Program Initiative – Reemployment Services System Enhancement

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (“DWD”) historically did not have the full capacity to deliver Worker Profiling and Re-employment Services, Re-employment Services or Reemployment Eligibility Assistance (WPRS/RES/REA) programming to all of its UI claimants with work search requirements. It also realized its reemployment services were only available by an in-person visit to a Job Center. This was not in line with their vision and DWD explored potential solutions to improve and expand their services to claimants to assist them in moving to new employment more quickly through early intervention and enhanced self-service.

In exploring other models, Wisconsin had the following themes in mind:

- Service delivery to all UI claimants with work-search requirements.
- Leverage 21st century technology to maximize efficiency and optimize self-service.
- Automate our triage system to assign the appropriate service level to each UI claimant based on his or her needs.
- Ensure UI claimants with specific barriers to employment have access to the appropriate services to achieve employment goals and move toward greater independence.
- Help UI claimants who are required to search for work return to work more quickly, reducing the draw on the state's UI Trust Fund.

Key Initiative Objectives

To meet its vision for claimant reemployment services, the Department established the following primary objectives:

- Connect with all UI claimants who are required to search for work
- Have workforce services available 24/7 to optimize self-service
- Update triaging methodologies to identify proper service levels for each customer.
- Enable customers to self-schedule in-person services
- Enhance alignment between employment and training and UI systems to improve communication and data cross-matching and strengthen program integrity
- Increase customer awareness of all workforce services available to them

- Improve its overall focus on talent development to help claimants develop skills that are in demand.
- Assist claimants in moving to new employment more quickly through early intervention and enhanced self-service

Initiative Design

Orientation. Initiated in March 2015, the Wisconsin initiative is focused on a complete online orientation and assessment for every UI claimant who is required to search for work. The orientation gives a brief overview of the services available both online and at local job centers. The assessment is comprised of 31 questions to assist in evaluating any barriers to employment the job seeker may have. The questions range from work search, work readiness, career/skill, technology and employment resources. The assessment gives each customer a required prioritized level of service, either in-person or online.

Workshops and Accessibility. Newly developed online workshops include: a) Networking, b) Job Searching with Technology, c) Resume and Job Application, d) Interviewing and e) Your Workplace Skills. Each is available from home computers, mobile devices and the nearest Job Center. Local Job Centers target in-person sessions to individuals who require more intensive services than can be delivered online. Also, at any time, claimants can schedule their own in-person sessions based on availability of services.

Work Search Requirements. Wisconsin statute requires that claimants conduct at least four work search actions for each week of their claim. The online systems track claimant participation in work search requirements to ensure that they are complying with reemployment services requirements.

Initiative Performance Measures and Results

Wisconsin's DWD developed the following performance measures for its initiative with the following results for the period from early March through late November 2015:

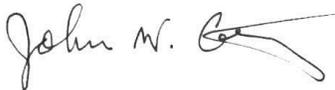
1. **Engagement.** Increase the percentage of UI claimants complying with the requirement to report in-person. Previously 52% to 55% of claimants who were required to report for in-person did so. Since implementation of DWD's new initiative, in-person compliance has increased to 80%, largely due to the online calendar and self-scheduling option.
2. **Compliance Rates.** In 2013 a majority of UI claimants who were assigned RES services became compliant within 15 days of notification by UI that the claimant was not in compliance. In 2015, preliminary data shows UI claimants are achieving compliance within two days of notification by UI, reflecting a dramatic reduction in time.
3. **Speed of Service Completion.** Reduce the time for UI claimants to complete assigned RES services. Claimants completing required services within 0-4 days climbed 60-fold from 0.5% in 2014 to 30% in 2015. Those completing in 10 days or less more than doubled from 23.96% in 2014 to 59.17% in 2015.
4. **Voluntary Online Participation.** Of the 3,315 claimants participating in online workshops, approximately 31% were not required to participate but did so voluntarily.
5. **Placement and Earnings.** Increase in placement and earnings in quarter following reemployment services. Preliminary data suggest an upward trend in the percentage of

- RES participants who are employed in the quarter following RES services. Preliminary data also suggest an upward trend in median quarterly earnings of RES participants over time. Average quarterly earnings are \$791 higher in the quarter after completing required RES services.
6. **Low Dropout Rates.** Overall, since implementation, 32,584 participants have received reemployment services (53% WPRS and 47% RES) with about 10.2% of the total (3,315) completing at least one online workshop. Approximately 6% of participants failed to complete the required WPRS services.

Please join us in congratulating the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development for their tremendous engagement of returning UI claimants to employment. We encourage other states to implement this model program to address their own long-term unemployment challenges.

An overview of previous award winners can be found on our website at www.fullemployment.org.

Sincerely,
American Institute for Full Employment



John W. Courtney
President