

## 2017 FULL EMPLOYMENT AWARD

Each year, the American Institute for Full Employment gives its Full Employment Award to a state that demonstrates exceptional commitment to 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 [Indiana Department of Workforce Development](#) implementing multiple reemployment services initiatives.

### Program Initiatives

Indiana implemented several reemployment initiatives recently that included:

1. Realigning job search policy and implementing needed updates that broaden job search activities
2. Modernizing the state's labor exchange system with automated job search registration and work search activities
3. Piloting a virtual job search skill system to boost job search skills and "nudge" claimants to take ownership of their job search
4. State-funding of a reemployment program for claimants not served under RESEA

#### 1. Realigning Job Search Policy

Due to the robust offering of services and reemployment support in Indiana's America's Job Centers (AJCs), Indiana realigned its UI work search policy in 2017 to encourage claimants to utilize those services. Prior to the issuance of the new policy, Indiana required claimants to complete three employment applications each week in order to meet mandatory work search requirements. Recognizing that employment applications are no longer the way that many unemployed individuals obtain jobs, Indiana broadened its policy to give claimants credit for:

1. Attending résumé workshops
2. Taking skills assessments and
3. Working with a counselor to find more effective paths to employment

This signals to claimants that the agency recognizes a variety of today's important job search activities beyond merely contacting employers.

#### 2. Modernizing the Labor Exchange System

Indiana launched a new job search and case management system in the fall of 2016 called Indiana Career Connect (ICC). ICC serves as the Indiana case management system for reemployment activities and leverages technology to jump start claimants' entry into its job search features.

First, it automatically registers claimants for its labor exchange system upon the claimant's filing of his or her initial claim. Because Indiana is a 100-percent online claim-filing state, Indiana was able to allow claimants to use their existing claim filing login credentials for its ICC labor exchange system.

Second, the system automatically creates and fleshes out a profile for claimants.

Third, the system requires claimants to complete several activities:

- Develop a résumé and post it on the job bank
- Complete a self-assessment
- Complete a veteran's self-attestation and
- Provide the last four weeks of job logs

The modernized ICC system allows regions and AJCs to serve their clients better through more efficient communication, online scheduling and passing along other pertinent jobs and reemployment assistance information.

Once the ICC system is accurately populated with UI claimant information, the field staff can serve the claimant better, as much of the required information to be completed in the computer matching system is already there. This reduces the time spent with each claimant and allows the case manager to more efficiently serve a greater number of claimants.

Another enhancement to the labor exchange system is the development of 10 microsites for various industry sectors or job seeker segments—the maximum number allowed by the National Labor Exchange. These microsites cover jobs supporting veterans, youth and persons with disabilities as well as focusing on manufacturing, healthcare, construction, apprenticeships, and STEM-related jobs. Since implementation, data has shown that the microsites have helped drive job postings. This in turn benefits job seekers in both the quantity and search-ability of relevant job opportunities.

### **3. Piloting a Virtual Job Search Skill System**

Indiana recently completed a pilot program of NextJob virtual training workshops as part of a grant from the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) Integrity Center. NextJob's system provided claimants flexibility and easy access to quality training from mobile devices, laptops and desktop systems. By completing the NextJob modules, claimants were able to improve in a variety of job search skills such as résumé writing, interviewing techniques and networking skills online.

The data showed that claimants improved their job search skills an average of 25 percent, moving from a D average to a B average—from near failure to competency. Proficiency in these skills has been proven to give job seekers an edge in securing reemployment or better employment opportunities.

Indiana's pilot program also showed a significant behavioral science "Nudge Effect," encouraging claimants to embrace beneficial behaviors. It required claimants to complete just four of eleven

job search modules. But, after completing the requirements, claimants voluntarily continued their job search skill training by completing an average of 38% more modules than required.

Indiana plans to expand the use of NextJob’s virtual workshops going forward to give UI claimants more options for resources to aid in their job search efforts.

#### **4. State-Funding of a Reemployment Program (“Jobs for Hoosiers”)**

Jobs for Hoosiers (JFH) is a state-funded program for UI claimants that was created in 2013 by the Indiana state legislature. It was an expansion of a state reemployment program that existed in prior years. It requires all UI claimants to 1) attend a reemployment orientation and 2) be assessed for appropriate reemployment services. JFH supplemented RES/REA until RESEA was created, and it ensured that every claimant applying for four or more weeks of benefits received reemployment assistance.

The program’s success led to Indiana being one of four states selected by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) in 2015 to participate in the Abt Study to determine which reemployment services helped UI claimants the most and to what degree. The study ends June 30, 2018.

Today, JFH works in tandem with RESEA and continues to provide reemployment assistance to claimants who are not job attached. For claimants who are not job attached and reside in Indiana, the program works as follows:

1. RESEA serves claimants most likely to exhaust
2. JFH serves all other selected claimants, if they claim four or more weeks of benefits, and requires them to visit an American Job Center (AJC) office by the sixth week of benefits to:
  - Attend an orientation session and
  - Complete an assessment interview with a case manager

By supplementing RESEA with a state program and triaging the in-person engagement at between four and six weeks, Indiana ensures that all UI claimants who don’t land a job early in a claim are strategically engaged with more intensive services. JFH also allows Indiana to more efficiently target resources to those claimants most in need of them.

### **Initiative Performance Measures and Results**

Despite the fact that Indiana’s initiatives have not reached their full implementation and impact maturity, they appear to be producing solid results, especially in exhaustion rates.

1. Exhaustion and Duration (in year one, ending 6/30/2017)
  - a. Exhaustion Reduction:
    - Indiana: 23.8% to 21.6% (a 9.2% decrease)
    - US: 37.1% to 36.6% (a 1.3% decrease)
  - b. Duration Reduction:
    - Indiana: 13.9 to 13.7 weeks (a 1.4% decrease)
    - US: 15.5 to 15.6 weeks (0.6% increase)

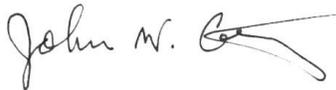
2. Use of Indiana's Job Search System (ICC) for years ending October 3rd
  - a. Claimants who were returning users:
    - 2016: 125,870
    - 2017: 140,851
    - Increase of 14,981 (10.6% increase)
    - Despite over 20,000 fewer initial claims during the year ending 10/3/2017
  - b. Employers' new job postings:
    - 2016: 108,540
    - 2017: 118,178
    - Increase of 9,638 (8.2% increase)
3. Savings
  - a. Estimated \$4.3 million to Indiana's UI Trust Fund
  - b. From lower duration rates for the year ending June 30, 2017

In sum, Indiana successfully and universally provided meaningful reemployment engagement for all of its nonexempt claimants and did so relatively early in their claims, which helps them navigate the job market and land a job as soon as possible.

Please join us in congratulating the Indiana Department of Workforce Development for their hard work and new initiatives that helps return UI claimants to employment and avoid long term unemployment. We encourage other states to consider their best practices and we welcome submissions for our 2018 Full Employment Award.

An overview of previous award-winning programs can be found on our website at [www.fullemployment.org](http://www.fullemployment.org).

Sincerely,  
American Institute for Full Employment



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