

## PRESS RELEASE

**Contact:**

John Courtney, President  
johnc@fullemployment.org  
800.562.7752

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### **American Institute for Full Employment Honors Georgia with 2020 Full Employment Award**

#### **Georgia initiatives overcome pandemic challenges to improve reemployment efforts**

The American Institute for Full Employment (AIFE) has given a Full Employment Award for 2020 to the Georgia Department of Labor for implementing effective reemployment policy and process initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Full Employment Award is given each year to one or more states or individuals demonstrating a commitment to excellence in helping job seekers become reemployed.

Despite having to handle an exponential increase in unemployment insurance (UI) claims amid the most devastating economic crisis since the Great Depression, Georgia was able to continue its reemployment efforts using innovative virtual processes, as well as pursue a broader set of initiatives and policies to minimize the economic impact of the pandemic, applying emergency rule changes where necessary.

Georgia's 2020 initiatives included:

- Maintaining, without interruption, the state Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program by fully and seamlessly shifting the process to a virtual environment
- Reinstating work search requirements in August, before many states
- Maximizing the impact of online employee recruitment services and rapid response—with virtual job fairs and job preparation workshops, scheduled RESEA appointments and a library of technical assistance instructional videos.
- Increasing the earnings exemption from \$50 to \$300, allowing UI claimants to make up to \$300 per week without reducing their weekly UI benefit amount. This encourages Georgians to continue working and makes it easier for employers to hire part-time workers.

For the year, Georgia achieved a 36% increase in the percentage of UI claimants who successfully completed RESEA activities. Additionally, Georgia was the only state in the nation to experience less than a 1% decline in personal income through the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2020.

“At a time when good news seems to be in short supply, it’s encouraging to see leading states like Georgia accomplish so much in the face of such difficult circumstances—aiding both struggling individuals and the broader economy,” says AIFE President John Courtney.

The Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations joins the Georgia Department of Labor as a recipient of the 2020 Full Employment award. Missouri’s accomplishments are highlighted in a separate press release.

To learn more about Georgia’s and Missouri’s award-winning initiatives, as well as previous award recipients, visit the American Institute for Full Employment [website](#).

**About the American Institute for Full Employment**

*The American Institute for Full Employment is a nonprofit consulting and research group, founded in 1994 to promote best practices in solving unemployment in America. Its mission is Full Employment in America. The Institute's team consists of former state agency executives, researchers and reemployment experts. Its team has designed best practices in workforce, unemployment and welfare programs for decades, working on policy design and implementation in more than 25 states.*