

# Montana

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

### OPPORTUNITY REPORT

Prepared by the American Institute for Full Employment • December 2022

**Montana** has the opportunity to save millions of dollars and promote the overall well-being of its unemployed workers by implementing additional best practices in its Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. UI is an often overlooked, yet critical program for employers and employees. UI policy decisions involve not only significant expenditures in the economy, affecting the business climate and economic development, but also the financial, mental, and physical well-being of the unemployed. In designing their UI programs, federal law allows states substantial flexibility that is rarely used. The American Institute for Full Employment has the resources and personnel to help you design and implement innovative UI and workforce programs that make impact. For a comprehensive review and analysis of how to make a difference, please contact us at (800) 562-7752 or info@fullemployment.org.

#### Unemployment Rate and Caseload

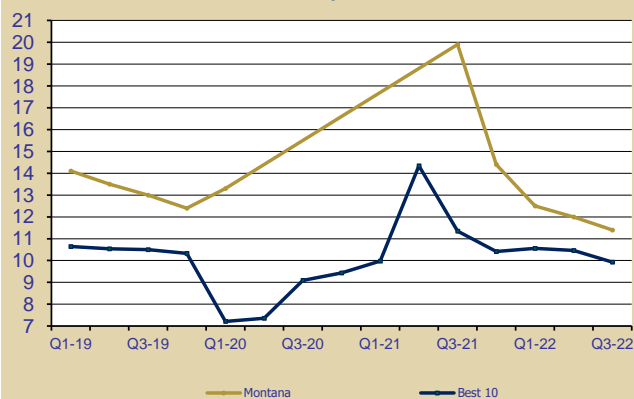
	Sep-21	Sep-22
Unemployment Rate *	3.20%	2.90%
Civilian Labor Force*	552,715	567,985
Unemployed*	17,603	16,407
Avg Paid Caseload during the Quarter**	2,576	1,930
Total Benefits Paid ***	\$121 mil	\$71 mil

\* Seasonally Adjusted \*\* Regular UI Claims \*\*\* Annual

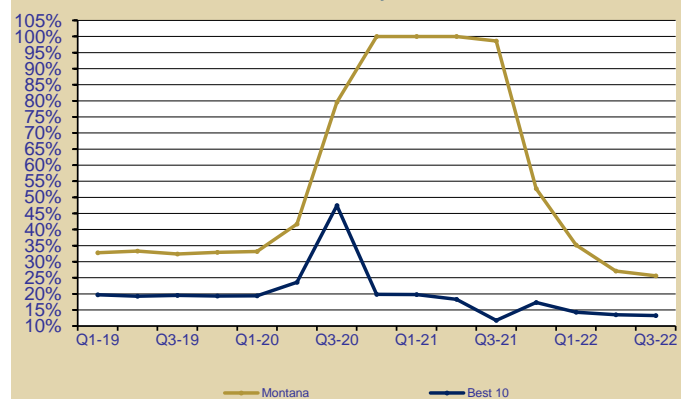
## Effectiveness

On average, UI claimants in Montana did not find their way off of unemployment insurance for over two and a half months, and over one quarter of all claimants exhausted their benefits. Eight states have < 26 weeks max. eligibility which may impact duration & exhaustion rates.

#### Claim Duration (weeks) Quarterly Data



#### Exhaustion Rate Quarterly Data



October 2021 - September 2022 Average	Best 5	Best 10	MT	MT Rank
<b>CLAIM DURATION</b>	9.0	9.9	11.4	12
The average number of weeks UI claimants received benefits				
<b>EXHAUSTION RATE</b>	10.8%	13.3%	25.6%	35
The average percentage of UI claimants who exhausted their benefits				

#### CLAIM DURATION

The average number of weeks UI claimants received benefits

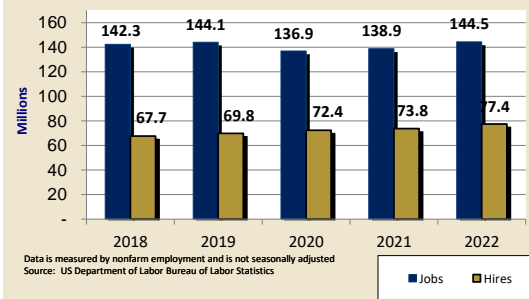
#### EXHAUSTION RATE

The average percentage of UI claimants who exhausted their benefits

#### US Total Jobs & Annual Hires Summary

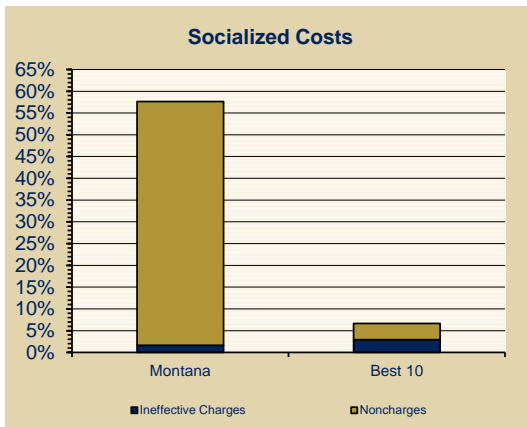
In an economy of approximately 145 million jobs, US employers made over 67 million hires - more than one hire for every three jobs. Common statistics track only net new jobs, but our dynamic economy creates many more opportunities than just those from net new jobs. Job openings and hiring activity come from a variety of sources normally, including: 1) quits, 2) retirement, 3) moves, 4) firing, 5) total new job creation and other causes

#### US Total Jobs & Annual Hires 2018-2022 (October - September)



# Efficiency

Compared with Montana, the average Best 10 state promoted more employment through a UI tax structure that had 769% less in socialized costs.



2021	Best 5	Best 10	MT	MT Rank
<b>SOCIALIZED COSTS *</b>				
	4%	7%	58%	21

The percentage of benefit costs not charged to responsible employers, but instead socialized as:

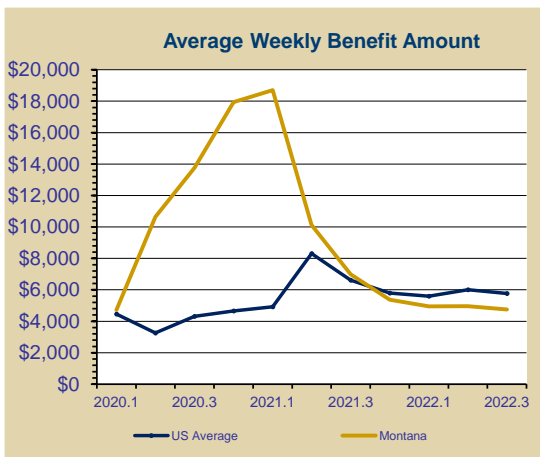
- 1) Noncharges - the total amount of benefit payments not charged to individual employer experience rating accounts. They often shift to the UI tax system social program costs; such as payments to workers who voluntarily quit, and
- 2) Ineffective Charges - the yearly amount of benefit charges assigned to individual employers that exceed the amount of contributions paid by those same employers in the following year. These charges tend to lessen some employers' responsibility to pay the full cost of their claims, due to e.g. a maximum tax rate that is too low or an otherwise less responsive tax structure.

The levels of both noncharges and ineffective charges are largely within the control of state policy makers and affect the state's unemployment rates by raising or lowering: 1) the cost of employing a worker and 2) the cost of laying off a worker.

\* Data from the 2021 Significant Measures Report - U.S. Department of Labor Office of Workforce Security

# Cost

The average UI claim cost in Montana was 18% less than the US average.



October 2021 - September 2022 Average	MT	US Average
<b>AVERAGE COST PER CLAIM</b>		
Benefits Paid for all weeks compensated divided by the number of first payments.	\$4,748	\$5,770
<b>WAGE REPLACEMENT RATE</b>		
The average amount of weekly UI benefits paid per claimant divided by the average amount of weekly wages earned.	46.0%	29.7%

## How We Can Assist Your State in Improving Performance

- Analysis of claimant information flow between agencies and job sources
- Evaluation of performance measures and incentives
- Examination of coordination of all agencies involved with UI claimant
- Integration of claimant work search rules, incentives and assistance
- Analysis of a subsidized wage program for employers willing to train UI claimants

For a more detailed evaluation contact our consultants at

**800-562-7752**

or visit us on the web at [fullemployment.org](http://fullemployment.org)

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