

## PRESS RELEASE

**Contact:**

John Courtney  
johnc@fullemployment.org

Date: February 10, 2023

### **American Institute for Full Employment Honors Iowa with 2022 Full Employment Award**

#### *Iowa engages and equips unemployed to shorten unemployment and counter labor shortage*

**The American Institute for Full Employment (AIFE) has given its 2022 Full Employment Award to Iowa Workforce Development for implementing effective reemployment policy and process initiatives.**

The Full Employment Award is given each year to one or more states or individuals demonstrating leading solutions to help job-seekers become reemployed.

The United States experienced historic labor shortages following the COVID-19 pandemic, yet workforce participation remained low, unemployment insurance (UI) claim duration persisted over three months, and nearly one in three UI claimants (31% in Q3 2022) were running out of benefits before finding work.

Facing the dual challenge of longer-than-expected claimant unemployment and employers' desperate need for workers, Iowa initiated meaningful enhancements to its reemployment services in 2022.

Adding to the department's use of the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program Iowa's initiatives included:

- Launching its ground-breaking Reemployment Case Management (RCM) program, which engages unemployment claim applicants earlier and more regularly than its RESEA program can, thereby serving more unemployed workers. The program leverages 18 new career planners who conduct weekly meetings with UI claimants, with most starting in the week after they file a claim. The meetings (both virtual and in-person) provide direct employment assistance and connect claimants to resources.
- Increasing the weekly work search activity expectations from two to four, increasing the requirement to engage with employers and re-focusing the list of acceptable reemployment activities that UI claimants must complete and document each week to maintain benefits.

The impact was immediate and clear. Attendance at reemployment workshops nearly tripled, despite the state's claims caseload dropping more than 50%. With more engaged and better prepared job seekers, Iowa reduced the percentage of claimants who exhausted benefits for the 12 months ending September 30, 2022 to the second-lowest rate in the nation at 13.7% (compared to 24.6% prior to the pandemic).

"It's impressive to see Iowa emerge from the depths of the pandemic with new strategies that both boost reemployment outcomes for our unemployed and stabilize the economy," said AIFE President John Courtney. "Iowa's innovations provide timely insights for all states as they engage and equip more workers in coming years as RESEA programs grow and evolve."

To read the full details of Iowa's award-winning initiative (as well as previous award write-ups) and for a copy of the press release, visit the AIFE [Awards Page](#).

**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. 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.*