

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Employment and Training Administration Washington, D. C. 20210	CLASSIFICATION
	UI
	CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL
	OWS/DUIO
	ISSUE DATE
	May 9, 2001
RESCISSIONS	EXPIRATION DATE
None	May 31, 2002

DIRECTIVE : UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM LETTER NO. 30-01

TO : ALL STATE EMPLOYMENT SECURITY AGENCIES

FROM : GRACE A. KILBANE
Administrator
Office of Workforce Security

SUBJECT : State Readiness For Potential Workload Increases

1. **Purpose.** To assist States in capacity building and planning for potential workload increases.
2. **Background.** After a decade of economic prosperity, recent data indicate a slowdown in economic activity which has been accompanied by higher initial claims for unemployment benefits across the country. Because unemployment has been so low for so long, gearing up for higher workloads is a real challenge.

Since the last recession, states have taken advantage of available technology to make their systems more efficient and improve the delivery of UI services. Many of these technologies have not been tested in a cyclical slowdown, and their complexity makes planning for workload increases more complicated than in the past.

3. **Management Readiness Checklist for Workload increases.** Conversations between ETA Regional Office staff and state agencies earlier this year about readiness for higher workloads resulted in lots of good suggestions for "things to think about" in assessing system capacity and preparing for higher claims levels. We compiled many of those ideas into the attached "Management Readiness Checklist for Workload Increases" in order to give all states access to each other's ideas.

We hope that you will find the checklist helpful in identifying all the important considerations that must be taken into account as you assess your system's capacity and prepare for higher workloads.

4. **Action Required.** All State Employment Security Agencies are requested to ensure that a copy of the attached document is made available to appropriate staff.
5. **Inquiries.** Questions and comments concerning this UIPL should be directed to the appropriate Regional Office.
6. **Attachment.** [Management Readiness Checklist For Workload Increases.](#)

**MANAGEMENT READINESS CHECKLIST
FOR WORKLOAD INCREASES
Ideas to Consider**



ENVIRONMENTAL OUTLOOK

1. ___ The State and local economic environment is continuously reviewed to identify potential unemployment insurance (UI) workload increases and large layoffs.
2. ___ Forecasts for new employment creation have been reviewed to determine what occupations in which industries will be in demand in order to properly direct re-employment efforts.
3. ___ Types of employment in the State have been analyzed (e.g., industry type and size of firm) to predict layoffs.
4. ___ Information regarding changes in claimant population composition/characteristics and anticipated service needs has been reviewed.
5. ___ An assessment of One-Stop system capacity to effectively and promptly provide needed services has been made.
6. ___ An assessment of changing claimant needs and expectations and its impact on the delivery of services has been made.
7. ___ An assessment of Trust Fund adequacy has been made.

HUMAN RESOURCES

1. ___ An assessment of capabilities to quickly hire additional staff has been made and actions to address problems have been initiated.
2. ___ A roster of candidates for rapid employment of additional staff is readily available.
3. ___ Whether/how existing staffing requirements can be modified (e.g., part-time to full-time) has been determined.
4. ___ Amending labor-management staffing agreements, if necessary, to accommodate an increasing workload has been considered.
5. ___ “Outsourcing” opportunities consistent with merit system requirements have been

considered.

6. ___ The adequacy of employee handbooks, policy and procedural manuals to guide new staff has been reviewed.
7. ___ Options related to redeployment of staff from other areas have been weighed and considered to minimize disruption of ongoing work.
8. ___ A plan for necessary training for redeployed staff has been considered/developed.
9. ___ Staff potential to address workloads and training needs in all areas (adjudication, appeals, employer services, blocked claims, and other services) has been assessed.
10. ___ Training includes all venues where services are provided (e.g., local offices, call centers and Internet).
11. ___ Recruiting retired annuitants to handle workload increases has been considered
12. ___ A strategy has been developed to educate and inform appropriate State officials of the unique funding process for UI positions to avert any impact of State-wide hiring freezes, shutdowns, furloughs, or other similar personnel actions.
13. ___ A system to share “fast track” information/guidance among all offices and staff is in place.
14. ___ A succession plan to counteract the loss of program, managerial and administrative expertise has been developed.

OPERATIONS

1. ___ Changes in the days and hours of operation to accommodate increased workloads have been evaluated.
2. ___ Different claims filing methods/options have been assessed for most effective results (depending on size and scope of workload).
3. ___ A plan is in place for UI participation on all Rapid Response teams.
4. ___ Distribution of UI workload activities has been re-examined (e.g., experienced staff get most complex claims).

5. Consideration has been given to a flextime program for hours of work or to changing mandatory reporting time frames.
6. Scheduling of appointments rather than accepting only walk-ins has been considered.
7. A media strategy has been developed to announce (for example) location and hours of services.
8. An assessment has been made concerning additional staff who can handle general UI information calls.
9. The State Web Site contains a *Frequently Asked Questions* section for claimants and employers.
10. Service partners are ready to support workload increases (i.e., Job Service, One-Stop Centers, etc.).
11. Lead time to obtain supplies, such as, resupply of paper documents, forms, check stock, etc. has been assessed.
12. Potential workload expansion has been discussed with the organization(s) responsible for producing and mailing benefit payment checks.
13. An analysis regarding employer report delinquency and its impact on UI claims (e.g., blocked claims/missing wage issues) has been conducted.
14. An analysis/evaluation of operational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats has been completed.
15. On-line guides have been developed/considered for use in adjudication activities.
16. Arrangements with employers planning for large layoffs have been pursued to quickly obtain verification of separation information, etc.

TECHNOLOGICAL CAPACITY

1. Expansion of existing technological capability has been planned to address workload increases (e.g., trunk lines, PBX switches, IVR ports, servers and desktop software and hardware).
2. Consideration has been given to expanding staff to handle all types of calls.

3. ___ A policy has been developed to respond to claimant/employer e-mail inquiries (security/confidentiality concerns, etc., have been reviewed).
4. ___ An automated message system exists or is planned to provide information on how to file, where to file , and where to find job search assistance, etc.
5. ___ Lag time for procuring additional hardware, software and other technology infrastructure has been assessed.

FACILITIES

1. ___ Options for expansion to accommodate an increased workload have been developed.
2. ___ Flexible work hours and tele-commuting for staff have been considered.
3. ___ Opening new work sites has been considered.
4. ___ Space/Facility acquisition process has been assessed in order to determine lead time.

PROGRAMMATIC AREAS

INCOME TAX WITHHOLDING

1. ___ Procedures are in place to ensure deposit of withheld income tax from a claimant's benefits on a daily basis, rather than bi-weekly or monthly, to comply with the \$100,000 IRS rule. (Reference UIPL No. 35-00 - dated September 29, 2000).

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)

1. ___ Procedures to handle significant DUA and additional UI claims workloads resulting from the possible occurrence of a disaster are in place.

Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA)

1. ___ Procedures are in place to handle increased TRA claims workloads.

APPEALS

1. ___ The need for additional support staff and equipment to address increases in UI appeals workloads has been assessed.
2. ___ Scheduling of telephone hearings instead of in-person hearings has been assessed.
3. ___ Outsourcing of appeals decision typing activities has been considered.