

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 31-09
	DATE March 11, 2010

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
CHAIRS/DIRECTORS
ONE-STOP CENTER SYSTEM LEADS
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE LEADS

FROM: JANE OATES *Jane Oates*
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Cross-Program Collaboration for Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) Grants

1. **Purpose.** To encourage coordination between the State Workforce Agency, State Unemployment Insurance (UI) Agency (if different), Local Workforce Investment Boards, and One-Stop Career Centers when implementing REA programs.
2. **References.** Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) No. 05-10, FY 2010 UI Reemployment and Eligibility Assessments (REA) Grants; Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 14-08, Guidance for Implementation of the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act Funding in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and State Planning Requirements for Program Year 2009; Employment & Training Administration Occasional Paper (ETAOP) 2008-02, REA Study; REA Webinar, <http://www.workforce3one.org/view/5001002247077825152/info>
3. **Background.** The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is focused on connecting UI claimants with reemployment and training services delivered through the workforce system broadly, and specifically through the One-Stop Career Center system. The intent is to ensure that claimants have access to the full array of reemployment and training services available at One-Stop Centers, while also ensuring that claimants comply with all legal requirements governing the receipt of UI benefits.

**EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210**

The REA initiative addresses both goals, promoting the reemployment of UI beneficiaries and the reduction of erroneous payments. The program promotes getting claimants into One-Stop Career Centers for two key purposes: 1) to review their eligibility for unemployment compensation; and 2) to develop a reemployment plan that includes connecting them to One-Stop Career Center services provided by other Federal program, including WIA programs, Wagner-Peyser funded employment and reemployment services, and others. Eighteen states have operated a REA initiative since FY 2005, and 16 additional states received funds in FY 2009 to implement a REA. States have used different models for implementing REA initiatives and are not required to implement their REA initiative statewide. Some state use UI staff exclusively to carry out REA activities while other states fund and train One-Stop staff to carry out the key REA activities.

Approximately sixty million dollars has been appropriated for REAs in FY 2010. The REA guidance for FY 2010 contains new provisions designed to strengthen the connection to One-Stop services for UI claimants served through the program. States receiving REA grants are now required to ensure that connection as a condition of receiving grant funds. The purpose of this Notice is to ensure all key workforce system partners are familiar with the new guidance and to promote strong cross-program collaboration to ensure that REA investments result in strong employment outcomes for the UI claimants being served.

REA grant funds are specifically targeted to REA activities described below. While they cannot be used for many direct workforce services, there are some areas where there is flexibility. For example, in addition to supporting UI eligibility reviews, REA funds may be used to support providing labor market and career information, orientation to One-Stop services, and the development of a reemployment plan, as well as other REA activities, as outlined in UIPL No. 05-10. Funds may also be used to upgrade information technology and improve linkages, communication, and data transfer between UI and workforce information and data systems.

4. **New Roles for State Workforce Agencies and One-Stop Centers for REA Grants.** The full requirements for the FY 2010 REAs are detailed in UIPL No. 05-10, and were discussed during an REA Webinar hosted on Workforce3 One (www.workforce3one.org) on January 28, 2010. The FY 2010 guidance reinforces the need for more integrated connections between the UI delivery system, which is predominantly remote, and One-Stop Career Centers as the primary delivery mechanism for workforce service. In making this stronger connection, states are strongly encouraged to leverage regular Wagner-Peyser funding, WIA funding, and UI funding, as well as funding made available

through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, including Reemployment Services funds, as part of the REA initiative. Similarly, states are encouraged to leverage REA funding in the context of their strategies to promote reemployment of unemployed workers broadly.

Below is a description of the activities that must be provided to UI claimants targeted by the state's REA initiative. As discussed above, in developing their REA models to carry out these activities, states have flexibility in how they integrate the use of One-Stop staff, including the extent to which REA funds support staff to carry out these activities.

There are five basic components that must be included in a state's REA model:

1. The claimant must receive a UI eligibility assessment;
2. The claimant must be required to physically report to the One-Stop Career Center;
3. The claimant must receive labor market information; and
4. The claimant must receive assistance in developing a reemployment plan that includes work search activities; and
5. There needs to be a feedback loop from the One-Stop back to the UI system regarding the claimant's receipt of services, which are a condition of their UI eligibility.

The minimum services that the claimant should receive at the One-Stop are more clearly defined in the FY 2010 guidance. The claimant must receive, at a minimum, the following:

- An orientation to facilitate the claimants' access to self-service core services offered at the One-Stop Center or virtually, with particular emphasis on accessing available labor market and career information;
- Registration with the state's job bank;
- Referrals to appropriate services offered through the One-Stop Center; and
- Support in the development of a reemployment plan, which must include work search activities and that should include, as appropriate, workshops, and/or approved training.

As states develop the processes for referring claimants to One-Stops, it is important to identify processes for dealing with "no shows." Because participation in this process is a condition of UI eligibility, states are encouraged to develop processes to reschedule "no show" claimants at least once.

The guidance asks states to work collaboratively with One-Stops to shape the process for serving REA claimants and to memorialize in writing the issues related to roles and responsibilities, funding, and new business processes being put in place as part of the state's REA model.

5. **Opportunities.** REA grants provide states with several opportunities. Specifically, REA grants provide resources to improve communication and collaboration between One-Stop Centers and the UI program to provide effective reemployment services and foster the development of efficient strategies for serving UI claimants.

A strong communication system is necessary to operate a REA program and improve service delivery to UI claimants. As described above, REA funds may be used to pay for technology and information linkages between UI and workforce information and data systems that support the REA process. REA provides states with the opportunity to enhance their information systems for serving and tracking services to UI claimants.

The REA program also fosters the development of efficient strategies for serving UI claimants. The core principles of the REA program—reviewing claimants' UI eligibility, identifying their needs, and referring them to reemployment services—have been proven effective. A 2008 study stated that REAs are likely to be an effective strategy to speed the reemployment of unemployed workers, reduce overpayments, and realize cost savings for the UI trust fund. The full report, ETAOP 2008-02, can be downloaded on ETA's Web site:

http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_resultDetails&pub_id=2349.

6. **Action requested.** State Administrators are encouraged to provide this advisory to appropriate staff.
7. **Inquiries.** Direct questions to the appropriate Regional Office.