

**1. Enhanced Call Center and/or Interactive Voice Response System Technology.**

**Purpose:** To meet the current needs of UI telephone systems. During periods of extraordinarily high unemployment many call centers have been unable to accommodate the increased workload volume. Some states have call center technology that is out-dated and in need of enhancements to provide quality service.

**Examples of the use of funds may include:**

1. Modifying call center systems to reroute calls in a virtual call center system,
2. Revising automated messages for claimants on the interactive voice response system,
3. Implementing enhanced security systems,
4. Linking call center systems to automated job listings,
5. Implementing enhanced technology that will handle increased workload volume,
6. Replacing out-of-date equipment for telephone claims taking, and
7. Implementing automated out-bound calling during off peak times for other UI activities like BPC overpayment recovery calls or job openings information for claimants.

**2. UI Appeals - Conversion from Tape to Digital Recordings of Appeal Hearings.**

**Purpose:** Clear and reliable audio recordings of hearings are crucial to the UI Appeals process. Recordings made from magnetic tape are not only cumbersome to store, but, more importantly, their quality deteriorates over time. The digital audio recording should be able to capture, maintain, index, share, and archive a clear and accurate recording of the Lower Authority Appeals (LAA) hearing. The system could also be used for Higher Authority Appeals proceedings including hearings, reviews, additional testimony, etc.

The transformation from tape to digital recordings may include hardware, software, sound integration and support. Proposed solutions need to integrate with the state's LAA processes, procedures, and policies.

**Examples of the use of funds may include:**

1. Developing and issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to procure a vendor to purchase hearing audio recording equipment necessary to implement the new system.
2. Purchasing and implementing a digital audio system for the state's appeals hearing proceedings including both the purchase of necessary equipment and the development of the automated system to meet the state's specific needs.
3. Training staff in the use of the automated equipment and writing procedures, as necessary, to use the equipment efficiently.

### **3. Document Management/Imaging/Optical Character Recognition (OCR)Systems.**

**Purpose:** Dealing with a large volume of documents that must be instantly retrievable by a large number of users is one of the most challenging aspects of any organization. Document Management/Imaging/OCR systems facilitate the capture, storage, organization and retrieval of data and/or image file formats. These systems capture data from faxes and forms, save copies of the documents as images, and store data and image files in the repository for security and quick retrieval. Additionally, they enhance the work flow by improving timeliness and accuracy of information.

#### **Examples of the use of funds may include:**

1. Developing an RFP for purchase of hardware/software for the development/upgrade of these systems,
2. Purchasing and implementing the system, and
3. Staff training in the use of these systems.

### **4. Smart Schedulers for Adjudication or Appeals.**

**Purpose:** UI Adjudication systems require access to information from employers and from claimants. Automated scheduling systems can provide a means of ensuring that the schedule of the interested parties is documented and that appointments have been scheduled with the full knowledge of the necessary parties. They provide a cost effective method of automating routine tasks and eliminate delays that occur due to mailing appointment notices.

UI Appeals hearings preparation activities in a state's LAA process are an important variable in achieving timeliness and meeting appeals performance standards. Assessments of the LAA preparation activities should include a review of the intake process; reviewing how a case file is created, what it contains, and how it is scheduled; as well as the mailing procedures and processes, and case management processes. Many of these functions can be automated. Posting appeals electronically, supporting documentations, and assigning docketing information should assist states in decreasing the time from when an appeal is first received to when the hearing is actually held. An automated docketing and scheduling system can allow states to better fill gaps in scheduling so hearing officers minimize lost time/downtime. States can also consider automating the issuance of hearing notices and LAA decisions.

#### **Examples of the use of funds may include:**

1. Issuing an RFP for an automated system of recordkeeping, filing procedures, case-flow processing, and scheduling orders.
2. Managing the contract with the vendor ensuring that all system needs are clearly identified and incorporated into the proposed system.
3. Implementing the case management software, hardware and peripherals, network and communications for in-house customization.

4. Training staff and writing operational procedures addressing the use of the new automated system.

#### **5. Unemployment Insurance (UI) Data Validation for Benefits.**

**Purpose:** To obtain an independent (third party) verification that the state’s data validation extract files meet Federal UI data validation requirements for benefits-related reports. The basic UI data validation design is for states to reconstruct the numbers/counts reported to USDOL’s Employment and Training Administration on UI required reports. To do this, states write computer programs that search their electronic databases and extract all transactions that should have been reported.

This SBR funding is for states to obtain an independent verification that their computer programs are extracting the correct transactions for each data validation “population.” States must submit a copy of the independent verification certification to their respective Regional Office upon completion. States that choose to obtain an independent verification may use any funds not needed for the verification to correct errors in data validation extract files, complete data validation implementation, train staff, and correct reporting errors discovered through data validation.

This funding is available for states that have not yet received full funding of \$100,000 (the amount that was made available in a previous year’s SBR opportunity) for this purpose.

#### **Examples of the use of funds may include:**

1. Developing an RFP for data validation services from an outside vendor.
2. Working with the selected vendor to provide information needed and to secure necessary data files including:
  - Writing programs to create the population 1-14 datasets,
  - Modifying existing computer systems to add new fields needed for data validation,
  - Updating the data validation Module 3 document – the state-specific set of instructions for the data validator, and
  - Correcting reporting errors and ensuring that the corrections pass data validation guidelines.

#### **6. Unemployment Insurance (UI) Data Validation for Tax.**

**Purpose:** To obtain independent (third party) verification that state’s data validation extract files meet Federal UI data validation requirements. The basic UI data validation design is for states to reconstruct the numbers/counts reported to the Employment and Training Administration on UI required reports. To do this, states write computer programs that search their electronic databases and extract all transactions that should have been reported.

The data on the ETA 581, Contributions Operations Report, is used for a variety of national and programmatic purposes, including: Tax Computed Measures for UI Performs, BLS statistical information, and workload measures for UI budget allocation. It is important for all states to report the ETA 581 data on a consistent and comparative basis. Data validation ensures that states report the same data elements by validating the logic used to identify the data elements. For this reason, states have been required to validate certain data on the ETA 581 for 5 tax data validation populations since 2006.

This funding is available for states that have not yet received full funding of \$100,000 (the amount that was made available in a previous year's SBR opportunity) for this purpose.

**Examples of the use of funds might include:**

1. Developing an RFP for data validation services from an outside vendor,
2. Working with the selected vendor to provide information needed and to secure necessary data files including:
  - Writing programs to create the population 1-5 datasets,
  - Modifying existing computer systems to add new fields needed for data validation,
  - Updating the data validation Module 3 document - the state specific set of instructions for the data validator, and
  - Correcting reporting errors and ensuring that the corrections pass data validation guidelines.

**7. Programming to Include Full Name in UI Wage Records.**

**Purpose:** To provide states with funds to upgrade their wage record systems to capture the employee's full name associated with UI quarterly wage records, and to transmit the full name to the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH). States may revise their wage record systems for capture, storage and transmission of wage record data. A wage record file that contains the full name for each wage record will allow the Social Security Administration to perform integrity related activities including a name match on the social security number, thereby improving the integrity of the wage record files.

**Examples of permissible uses for these funds include:**

1. Revising wage record data gathering systems, such as paper/Optical Character Recognition forms, internet reporting systems, and electronic wage formats.
2. Revising database structure to accommodate the full name.
3. Revising computer wage record system to process and display the full name.
4. Revising outbound wage record transmission to NDNH to include the full name.

**8. Automation to improve linkages for UI claimants to access re-employment services and provide feedback to the UI system.**

**Purpose:** To provide states with funds to link UI claimants to access re-employment services that meet their needs and an automated means of notifying the UI system of the results of the referral. States have implemented linkages for claimants to the automated job bank that provides timely information about available jobs. Linkages are also needed to notify UI staff of job referrals. These systems must also notify UI staff of subsequent refusals of jobs or refusals of referrals to jobs by UI claimants.

**Examples of the use of funds might include:**

1. Developing an RFP for systems revisions.
2. Developing, implementing and testing the new system.
3. Training staff to use the new system.

**9. Business Process Analysis and/or Re-engineering.**

**Purpose:** To provide states with funds to conduct an administrative and/or business process review to identify bottlenecks and the causes of poor performance in first payment timeliness and/or appeals timeliness. The review should be rigorous and thorough and should extend to those parts of UI program operations that ultimately affect first payment or appeals timeliness, such as how you manage nonmonetary adjudications. The outcome of this review should be clear recommendations that may inform additional corrective action steps.

**Examples of the use of funds might include:**

1. Purchase, installation, or training on a software package to conduct the administrative and/or business process review.
2. Engage a contractor for expert assistance or subject matter expert to support business process analysis and re-engineering, and develop recommendations for use in an action plan.