**Technical Assistance and Resources for States
Regarding Equitable Access and the UI Program**

The Department is available to provide technical assistance to states regarding equitable access to UI benefits and services. The national office has recently added additional technical assistance staff and training capacity to assist states in implementing this program letter and related equity initiatives. States should contact their regional office to express interest in technical assistance to help implement any of the suggestions made in this guidance. In addition, the Department's focus on equitable access at the time of publishing this UIPL currently includes the following initiatives for states to secure funding and other supportive resources:

   i.   ***Grants to States to Participate in a Tiger Team Engagement.*** The Department is sponsoring consultative assessments that leverage a multi-disciplinary team of experts (*i.e.*, Tiger Teams) that work with states to recommend and fund grant projects to improve services across the three ARPA pillars – equitable access, timeliness and backlogs, and fraud detection and prevention. As states participate, the Tiger Teams document recommendations and promising practices that will benefit the state's UI program. See UIPL No. 02-22 and Section 4.e. of UIPL No. 11-23. Examples of the equitable access recommendations include Simplified Communications (plain language), Standardized Translation Services, Building Pathways to Equity and Access, Proactive Status Updates, Web Content Accessibility Guideline Reviews, Establishing Equitability and Accessibility Data and Metrics, Community Engagement, and Building Feedback Loops. See https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/pdf/TigerTeamCohortTrendsJune_2022.pdf.

  ii.   ***Grants to States to Promote Equitable Access.*** The Department provided around $220 million to over 45 states in grants that promote equitable access to UI Programs. The grants have been awarded for projects aimed at eliminating administrative barriers to benefit applications, reducing state workload backlogs, improving the timeliness of UI payments to eligible individuals, and ensuring equity in fraud prevention, detection, and recovery activities. See UIPL No. 23-21. Trends from across the states' equity applications can be viewed here: https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/pdf/AIR_ARPA_StateEquityGrantsSummaryMemo_Final.pdf.

 iii.   ***Grants to States to Participate in the UI Navigator Program.*** The Department selected seven states to partner with community-based organizations experienced in assisting UI claimants and unemployed job seekers to engage in activities that include outreach, training, education, and general assistance with completing applications for unemployment benefits, especially individuals in groups that are historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. The Department provided over $18 million dollars to the selected states. At this time no new funding for navigator grants is available. See UIPL No. 11-22.

iv. ***Equity Data Working Group***. The Department's Chief Evaluation Office is working with selected state partners and conducting descriptive analyses of UI program data to help understand demographic and geographic patterns in UI applications, benefit receipt, and benefit denials to improve equity in the UI program. State partners will benefit from national technical experts in UI who will use advanced analytics to conduct a detailed equity analysis, as well as lay the groundwork for future state-driven data analysis to help improve UI policies and operations, especially as they relate to equity issues.

   In the context of federal regulations, some states have conducted such demographic UI analyses in partnership with public higher education institutions. Public higher education institutions can also leverage other data sources, such as those collected by the U.S. Census Bureau, to give state agencies a broader understanding of unemployment insurance recipiency and application rates among historically marginalized communities. The Department's Equity Data Partnership initiative can also assist in this type of data analysis.

v. ***Workforce GPS.*** The Department maintains resources, such as the UI Equitable Access Toolkit, for state agencies on the Unemployment Insurance Community of Practice on Workforce GPS available at: https://ui.workforcegps.org/. The Department will continue to post additional supportive materials related to equitable access.

vi. ***Office of Unemployment Insurance Modernization.*** The Department's Office of Unemployment Insurance is developing services to assist states with equitable practices, including plain language conversions, analyses of customer experiences and assistance with design of frictionless digital experiences. States can contact their regional office to inquire about assistance in implementing these best practices. The Department has also made available a reference site where promising practices and materials related to IT modernization and updates from Department-sponsored engagements are housed. It is located at https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/ui-modernization.