



REA Impact Study: Implementation Report

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1. Introduction

The Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) grant program of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) supports states in providing assistance to Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants to speed their return to work and shorten the length of time they are receiving UI benefits. Specifically, the REA program requires that a subset of UI claimants attend an in-person REA meeting at an American Job Center (AJC). During the meeting they participate in a UI eligibility review and orientation to AJC services, as well as receiving labor market information and an individual reemployment plan, which includes a referral to an appropriate reemployment service.

Earlier studies showed that the REA program does shorten the duration of UI receipt (Benus et al. 2008; Michaelides et al. 2012; Poe-Yamagata et al. 2011). These studies, however, were not designed to determine which components of the REA program drive that claimant outcome. To help determine this, DOL contracted with Abt Associates to conduct an impact study—*Impact Evaluation of the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment Program* (REA2 Impact Study). The evaluation randomly assigned claimants to one of several distinct treatment groups, each group emphasizing different components of the REA program. The design allowed the analysis to compare claimant outcomes based on the treatment they received.

This document is the *Implementation Report* for the REA2 Impact Study. As a precursor to the impact study analysis, it describes the implementation of the REA program in the four states in which the evaluation study was conducted: Indiana, New York, Washington, and Wisconsin.

This *Implementation Report* and its analysis support the broader impact evaluation in two distinct ways:

- Most important, this report describes in detail the REA program as it was implemented across the four participating states during the study period.¹ The description includes a review of study eligibility requirements and exclusions, provision of REA-specific services, as well as general reemployment services, claimant compliance with the program, and penalties for noncompliance.
- This report also discusses how a rigorous impact evaluation design was integrated into these diverse service delivery systems in a way that maintained the integrity of the study while preserving the state-specific characteristics of the REA programs already operating in each state.

The balance of this opening chapter is organized as follows. The first section briefly overviews the REA program. The second section offers a high level description of the evaluation's research design, including the role of this *Implementation Report* in the context of other evaluation reports for the project. The third section introduces the methods used to conduct the implementation evaluation. The last previews the structure of the remainder of this document.

¹ The primary emphasis of this report concerns how the program was implemented during the study period. To provide context for the ways in which this was different from how the states implemented REA prior to the study, Chapter 2 briefly describes each study state's preexisting REA program model.

1.1 Policy Context and Overview of the REA Program

Income protection for workers who become involuntarily unemployed is a standard feature of the social safety net of advanced industrial nations. The primary purpose of UI is to provide temporary income support for a fixed period of job search. In the ideal, the support allows claimants to be appropriately selective about accepting job offers. That selectivity, in turn, should result in better matches between workers' skills and a job's requirements, thereby raising overall economic productivity. At the macroeconomic level, UI also acts as an automatic stabilizer, injecting additional income into the economy during economic downturns (Chimerine, Black, and Coffey 1999; Dunson, Maurice, and Dyer 1991; Eilbott 1966; Gruber 1997; Vroman 2010).

The fundamental challenge in designing a UI program is to reconcile or balance two countervailing tendencies. On the one hand, the more generous are UI benefits, the better will they cushion the hardship of unemployment. In addition, more generous UI benefits could support longer and perhaps more-productive job search leading to better job matches. On the other hand, more generous UI benefits might reduce the incentive for claimants to search for a job or accept a job offer, thus increasing program cost.

One policy response to these longer periods of UI receipt is to provide information and services that are designed to improve claimants' job search, with a goal of helping them return to work more quickly (Boone, Fredriksson, and Holmlund 2007; Fredriksson and Holmlund 2006a, 2006b; Klerman 2012). Particularly, when some portions of the services are mandatory, the pursuit of employment may become more attractive and less burdensome than remaining on UI.

In 2005, DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) launched the REA grant program to help support states to reconnect UI claimants with the workforce system in order to expedite their return to work, and thereby to lower UI benefit payments. Since then, the REA program has grown substantially. As of 2014, it operates in 38 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. Over this 10-year period, federal expenditures increased from \$18 million to \$68.7 million (DOL 2014b).²

1.1.1 REA's "Assistance" Components

Under DOL's standard REA grant program guidelines, shortly after beginning to receive benefits, some number of UI claimants must be selected and required to attend an initial in-person REA meeting at an American Job Center.³ The initial REA meeting consists of a UI eligibility review (typically including a

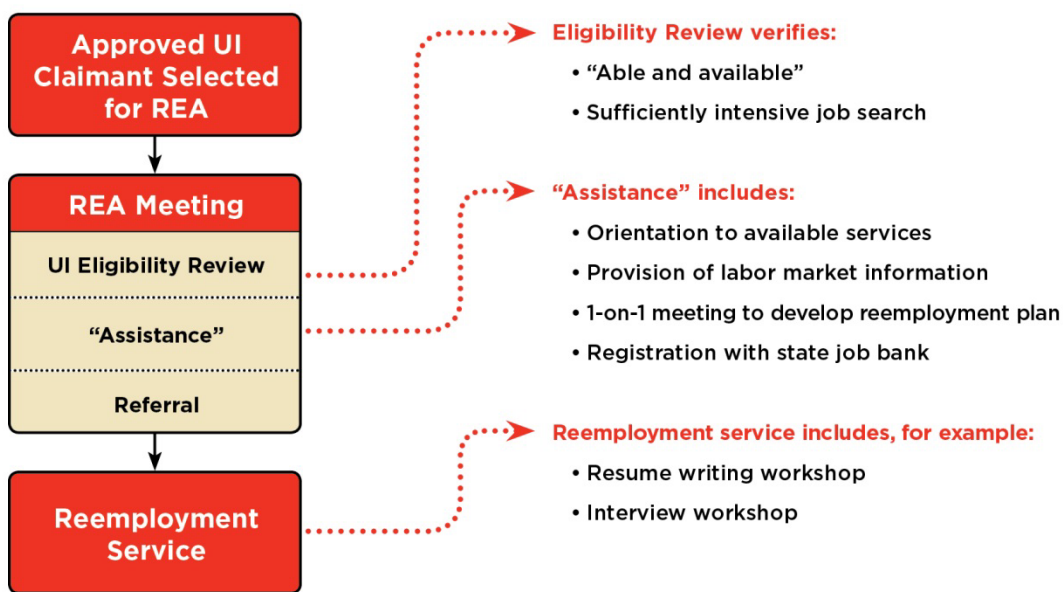
² In FY2015, DOL's Office of Unemployment Insurance (OUI) released Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) No. 13-15, which introduced guidance and funding for a new Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) grant program. RESEA was designed to replace REA, and its structure incorporates many elements of the REA program. The REA program as implemented under the study is no longer funded by DOL. States not already participating in the REA2 Impact Study began implementing RESEA in 2015. The four states participating in the study continued to deliver the REA program as outlined in UIPL No. 10-14 (FY2014 guidance), then transitioned to RESEA once random assignment was complete (approximately April 2016). Despite the change, this report refers to the REA program in the present tense to help readers stay oriented to what was occurring during study implementation.

³ OUI dictates which claimants must be excluded from the REA program. Examples include claimants with a definitive return-to-work date and claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their benefits; the latter must be served under the state's Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) program. DOL's guidance, however, allows states flexibility in determining how to target the program to those who are eligible (e.g., target

verification of required work search activities) and “assistance.” This assistance takes the form of an orientation to AJC services, provision of labor market information (LMI), and development of an individual reemployment plan (e.g., resume review, job referrals, ongoing employment coaching, training), as well as registration with the state’s job bank.⁴ In addition, during the REA meeting, the UI claimant is referred to a reemployment service at an AJC, which the claimant is then required to attend. (These reemployment services are funded not by the REA grant but by other workforce funds.)

Federal guidelines also allow states to conduct up to two additional REA meetings. Not all states require them, and rules concerning which claimants are scheduled to receive them vary across states. Such subsequent REA meetings are typically shorter, since no AJC orientation is provided. However, they generally include a second (or third) eligibility review, provision of LMI, and an update to the claimant’s individual reemployment plan. Claimants can attend subsequent REA meetings in person or by phone, depending on the state.

Exhibit 1.1: Overview of the REA Program



1.1.2 REA’s “Enforcement” Components

Whether in person or by phone, attendance at REA meetings is mandatory for claimants. States must refer claimants who fail to attend meetings to state UI adjudication; delayed payments or denial of UI benefits are possible penalties.⁵ Policies and procedures guiding determinations of program noncompliance and

those next hardest to serve, target those with minimal barriers). See Chapter 3 for additional information on REA eligibility requirements and the resulting state policies.

⁴ See UIPL No. 10-14 for what official program guidance was in place at the start of the REA2 Impact Study, including these components of an REA meeting.

⁵ UIPL No. 10-14 states the following: “Failure to report or participate in any aspect of the UI REA must result in referral to adjudication of these issues under applicable state law. Claimants who contact the appropriate agency

denials of benefits vary across states and across offices within a state; procedures across caseworkers within local offices also vary to some degree.

Possible penalties for program noncompliance include—in increasing severity: no penalty, withholding benefits until the claimant complies (e.g., until the REA meeting is attended), and withholding the claimant’s benefits for up to a fixed number of weeks (e.g., four weeks in New York). In most cases, the claimant’s full period of eligibility is retained (i.e., the individual can claim the denied benefits at the end of his/her benefit period). Chapter 7 provides additional details on states’ noncompliance policies.

1.2 Overview of the Research Design

Previous random assignment **evaluations** of the REA program established that it lowers both how long claimants receive UI benefits (weeks) and how much they receive (dollars paid) (Benus et al. 2008; Michaelides et al. 2012; Poe-Yamagata et al. 2011). Though not an official goal of the REA program, previous studies also explored whether REA results in increased earnings. Evidence on whether REA affects earnings is mixed, however.

Understanding the pattern of earnings, particularly in the intermediate term, has potential implications for how REA works, and therefore how each state might shape its REA program to increase that program’s impact. Looking at the time after workers could have been collecting UI, if earnings are higher in the non-control, treatment groups, it might mean that REA led to better job matches (i.e., jobs with higher wages). Conversely, if earnings are lower, it might mean that REA rushed workers to take a job offer too soon, leading to less desirable job matches (e.g., jobs with lower wages).

1.2.1 Five Study Hypotheses

In 2013, DOL’s Chief Evaluation Office contracted with Abt Associates for a random assignment evaluation of the REA program, with a focus on understanding the effects of its various components. The foundation for the study design is a series of underlying (and competing) hypotheses about the REA model and its capacity to expedite claimants’ return to work, and thus decrease UI benefits paid.⁶ The hypotheses were:

1. The assistance provided has the potential to improve the efficiency of the claimant’s job search, leading to faster reemployment.
2. More-intensive service models (e.g., more services at the initial REA meeting, more REA meetings) have the potential to strengthen employment outcomes, although they may result in extended periods of benefits receipt.
3. The requirements to appear and undergo eligibility review, including review of the claimant’s job search, potentially induce a more intensive job search (above and beyond any assistance received during REA meetings).

before their UI REA appointment and request to change the scheduled UI REA date or time for good reasons, such as scheduled job interviews, may be accommodated.”

⁶ The REA program also includes an eligibility review. If that eligibility review identifies the worker’s initial claim as invalid, not only would no future benefits be paid, but the state would attempt to recover benefits already paid in error.

4. The requirement to participate may, in and of itself, induce the claimant to stop filing for benefits or to not comply, which reduces benefits receipt.
5. REA participation may lead to the identification of eligibility issues, which may cut the number of weeks paid and thereby cut benefits paid.

1.2.2 Four Treatment Conditions

To gauge the overall impact of the REA program and the relative importance of its various components, Abt Associates designed and is implementing a comprehensive evaluation of REA. In each of four participating states (Indiana, New York, Washington, and Wisconsin), the study coordinated with state representatives to have their state-level data systems randomly assign UI claimants to one of up to four carefully crafted treatment/control groups that varied in service mix and intensity:

- **Control Group:** Claimants assigned to this group were not selected by the state for the REA program, not required to come into the AJC for an initial REA meeting (no eligibility review or “assistance”), and not referred for reemployment services.⁷
- **Partial REA Group:** Claimants assigned to this group were required by the state to come into the AJC for an eligibility review; some also received an orientation to the services available at the AJC (and sometimes in the broader community). Most did not receive a substantive one-on-one meeting. In states where one-on-one meetings did occur, they were used to check UI eligibility. No Partial REA participants were to receive a reemployment plan.
- **Full-Single REA Group:** Claimants assigned to this group were required to come into the AJC; attend an orientation session; and meet with REA staff for an eligibility review, review of labor market information, and creation of an individual employment plan. The plan was to include a referral to at least one reemployment service.
- **Full-Multiple REA Group:** Claimants assigned to this group were required to do everything the Full-Single REA Group did. In addition, if they were not employed within a certain time period after that initial meeting, they were required to attend one or more additional REA meetings to review and update their individual reemployment plan, labor market information, and referrals to reemployment services. At these additional meetings, their eligibility again was reviewed.

States participating in the study were required to implement at least three treatment conditions—(1) either Full-Single REA or Full-Multiple REA, (2) Partial REA, and (3) Control. (For additional information on the services provided to each treatment group see Chapters 4 and 5.)

1.2.3 Two Complementary Evaluation Studies

This four-arm service strategy provided the foundation for conducting two complementary evaluation studies.

⁷ Under REA program guidance (UIPL 10-14) (DOL 2014a), all states were required to have a comparison group built into their REA program. The states were required to create a comparison group of otherwise similar individuals and encouraged to use random assignment. All four of the states in this study were using random assignment. Abt built upon these existing systems, revising as needed to meet the needs of the study (see Chapter 3 for additional information).

The **Implementation Evaluation** (contained in this report) examined the design and operation of the REA model. It addressed the following research questions:⁸

- How do states implement REA? (For example: Who is eligible for the program? When do the REA meetings occur? What services are provided under each treatment condition? How many REA sessions are offered to each claimant?)
- What are levels of compliance with program requirements? (For example: To what extent do claimants attend their scheduled REA meetings? Do they follow through and complete the mandatory reemployment service referral?)
- How do states respond to noncompliance? (For example: Do they suspend benefits? If so, for how long? At what point do they deny benefits for noncompliance?)

The **Impact Evaluation** (results to be released in two stages, in 2017 and 2019) measured and analyzed the outcomes and impacts of the REA program on claimants. It addressed the following research questions:

- What is the impact of REA on outcomes such as UI duration, benefits claimed, and claimant earnings following their spell of unemployment?
- For whom does REA have the largest impact? In particular, how does impact vary with expected likelihood of UI exhaustion?
- What is the separate impact of the complete REA package, including the REA meeting(s) and the assistance provided (at the REA meeting and at the mandatory reemployment services)?
- What is the relative contribution of the services that comprise the Multiple REA condition versus those of the Single REA?

By randomly assigning claimants to the study's four arms, (three treatment, one control), the study could estimate the causal impact of the various components of the REA package. Exhibit 1.2 depicts how UI claimants might have been assigned to three of the study's treatment conditions (Multiple REA is suppressed for simplicity) and what analysis comparisons will be possible. For example, in this design:

- Comparing outcomes for Control versus Single REA primarily examines the impact of a single REA meeting versus no REA involvement.
- Comparing outcomes for Control versus Partial REA primarily examines the impact of “enforcement” (a meeting with minimal services) without “assistance.”
- Comparing outcomes for Partial REA versus Single REA primarily examines the impact of “assistance” above and beyond “enforcement” (or at least a meeting, with minimal services).⁹

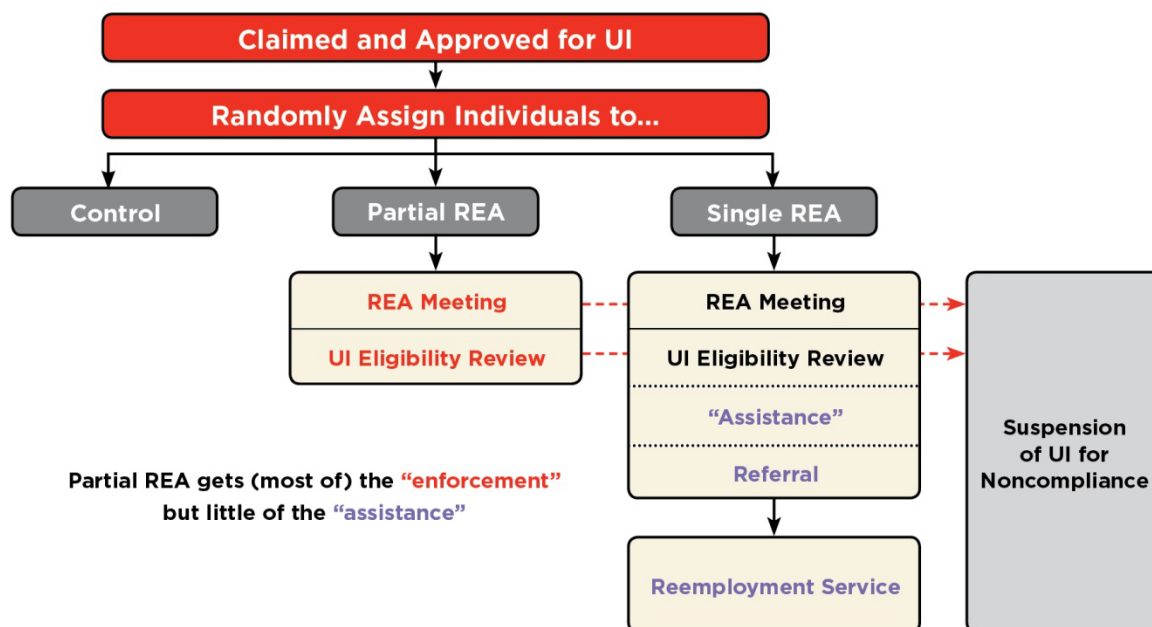
⁸ Appendix A provides a list of the full research questions that guided the design of the implementation analysis.

⁹ To gain power for some purposes, the analysis pooled Single REA and Multiple REA into a composite “Full REA.” This Full REA group was used to estimate the impact of (Full) REA versus no REA (the control group) and to estimate differential impacts for claimants with different characteristics.

- Comparing outcomes for Single REA versus Multiple REA (not shown in Exhibit 1.2) primarily examines the impact of multiple REA meetings versus a single REA meeting.
- Comparing outcomes for UI claimants who have different characteristics (in particular, different worker profiling scores; i.e., state-computed scores estimating claimant likelihood to exhaust UI benefits) primarily examines for whom the impact of REA is larger (not shown in Exhibit 1.2).

These impact estimates will help DOL make decisions on how to optimally deploy program resources to motivate UI claimants to return to employment sooner.

Exhibit 1.2: Multi-Arm Random Assignment Design



Note: Though suspension of a claimant’s UI benefits for noncompliance can occur at any point, it is expected to occur primarily for not attending the initial REA meeting—whether it be a Partial, Single, or Multiple REA condition.

1.3 Overview and Organization of the Implementation Evaluation

This report contains findings from the implementation evaluation. Its analysis, conducted in the spring of 2016, was based on extensive qualitative fieldwork augmented by analyses of administrative data. This document describes how the REA program has been implemented in each of the study states during the study period, focusing on the way that UI claimants flowed through random assignment and the REA program model.

The analysis drew on three complementary data sources:

- **Review of Federal and State Program Documents:** The documents included all relevant policies and regulations, as well as state applications for REA grants and progress reports to DOL.
- **Conduct of Extensive On-Site Fieldwork:** This included in-depth site visits before and after randomization began at several sites in each state. These site visits combined key informant interviews, focus groups with program staff, and systematic observation of REA orientation and

individual counseling sessions that supported each treatment arm. (See Appendix B for a short summary of the data collection methods.)

- ***Analysis of States Management Information Systems:*** This included the monitoring of intake processes, including random assignment, as well as the tracking of referrals, service receipt, and noncompliance/enforcement activities.

1.4 About This Report

The balance of this document proceeds in eight chapters. Chapter 2 describes the process for selecting states to participate in the evaluation, and summarizes each state’s REA program model prior to study implementation. Chapter 3 provides a more detailed description of the evaluation’s design and the methods the Abt team used to implement it, including technical assistance and the details of randomization. The core of the report—Chapters 4 through 7—discusses the individual components of the REA program as implemented during the study: initial REA meeting, subsequent REA meetings, reemployment services, and responses to noncompliance. The final chapter provides some cross-chapter observations and discusses next steps. The report also has a number of appendices, where much of the detailed material is reported:

- Appendix A: Implementation Study Research Questions.
- Appendix B: Qualitative Data Collection.
- Appendix C: Random Assignment Processes by State.
- Appendix D: Data and Samples.
- Appendix E: Detailed Descriptions – Initial REA Meeting Content and Procedures.
- Appendix F: Detailed Service Receipt Exhibits.
- Appendix G: Compliance and Duration-Related Text Used in Notification Letters.

To highlight the similarities and differences between states’ implementation models, Chapters 4–7 each begin with a description of the relevant details of the annual Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL). The UIPL announces the availability of new funds, provides relevant policy and program directives, and solicits grant applications from states.

Following this introduction, each chapter discusses implementation in the four states. Each chapter ends by discussing any implications for the impact evaluation. Tabulations of state administrative data are included where relevant to the topic of the chapter.

1.4.1 Terminology

This report uses several language conventions. The term *treatment conditions* refers to the sets of services that claimants receive. In the context of this analysis (unless otherwise noted), the term *treatment conditions* includes not just the three treatment groups but also the control group, who by definition receive no eligibility assessment or referrals to reemployment services.

Throughout the report, unless specifically noted otherwise, we use *claimant*, *participant*, and *individual* interchangeably to refer to those persons randomized. In particular, the term “REA participant” refers to a UI claimant who was required by the state, under UI and REA program rules, to participate in REA. In fact, noncompliance is common (see Chapters 4 and 5). Thus, many of the UI claimants referred to as

“REA participants” in the report do not actually participate in every required activity and sometimes do not participate in any.

Beginning in FY 2015, states began to replace their existing REA programs with the new Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program model. With the end of study implementation, the REA programs in each of the four study states were fully phased out. This document, nevertheless, describes the REA program in the present tense, as it was implemented during the study period.

1.4.2 Disclaimers

Finally, no statement in this document should be taken as stating an official interpretation of any federal or state statute or guideline, nor should any statement in this document be taken as stating an official DOL or state policy. Readers desiring information on statutes and guidelines should consult the appropriate legal documents.¹⁰

Furthermore, descriptions of state REA policies and implementation procedures in this report were based on information state REA staff provided to Abt Associates and on the study team’s field observations. In some cases, it is possible that state implementation does not completely align with federal REA program guidance. Deliberately, this report makes no comments about any misalignment, instead documenting only Abt’s understanding and observation of states’ implementation activities.

¹⁰ The pertinent Unemployment Insurance Program Letter is UIPL No. 10-14, “Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Unemployment Insurance (UI) Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment Grants” (DOL 2014a) available at http://www.workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/dmstree/uipl/uipl2k14/uipl_1014.pdf.

2. Overview of the Four Participating State Grantees

This chapter begins with a description of the process leading to the selection of the four study states (Section 2.1). The following section (Section 2.2) then discusses each state's program model as it was implemented prior to any changes made for the REA2 Impact Study. For each state, the text discusses the state's history with the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) grant program, the extent to which REA is integrated into other services provided in local American Job Centers (AJCs), and the involvement of the state's Unemployment Insurance (UI) staff in the design and implementation of its REA program. These descriptions also review each state's Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) program in varying degrees, depending on how integrated WPRS was with the state's REA model prior to the start of the REA2 Impact Study.¹¹

The final section in the chapter (Section 2.3) describes economic conditions in the four study states during the study period.

As mentioned above, this chapter focuses primarily on what services states provided to UI claimants prior to the study. Chapter 3 describes the changes states made in their practice for the study, including which claimants are randomized and which treatment conditions the states adopt. And Chapters 4 through 7 describe the REA program as implemented under the REA2 Impact Study.

2.1 State Selection

Participation by REA grantee states in the study was voluntary. Thus, the selection of state grantees had to balance the needs of the study with the interest and willingness of the states to participate. With these considerations in mind, selection began with the Abt team and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) specifying a set of broad criteria that would ensure a sufficiently large and diverse number of states from which to choose. These criteria were:

- Comparatively large UI caseloads.
- Prior experience and success with REA.
- Credible implementation of REA's (pre-evaluation) requirement to assign claimants to a comparison group.¹²
- General receptivity to participating in a research study.
- Geographic, economic, and demographic balance across states.

¹¹ WPRS is a federally required, state-funded program to identify and serve UI claimants who are most likely to exhaust their benefits. Each state may decide the size of its WPRS program. Anyone classified by a state's policies as eligible for WPRS is to be served under the WPRS program rather than the REA program.

¹² Again, under REA program guidance, all states were required to have a comparison group built into their REA program UIPL 14-10 and random assignment was encouraged. Based on feedback from DOL and our own observations, it was clear that states implemented this requirement with varying degrees of success.

Abt reviewed REA grant applications and state performance data provided by DOL and then met with DOL's REA program manager. Applying these criteria yielded nine possible states. Each had relatively large UI caseloads and appeared to meet at least two of the other selection criteria.

With DOL's support, the Abt team contacted each of the nine states and interviewed its staff to further assess interest, willingness, and viability. These extended discussions focused on a variety of issues including the quality of the state's preexisting random assignment procedures and REA program structure, its flexibility to adapt to the evaluation design, the quality of its data systems, and its interest in participating in the study.

These discussions occurred during a series of phone calls in late 2013 and early 2014. Based on the results of these phone calls, Abt chose to visit the five largest states for further discussions—Indiana, New Jersey, New York, Washington, and Wisconsin. All but New Jersey took the necessary steps to participate in the study.

2.2 Pre-Study Program Models

Once the states were selected, the Abt study team worked to understand each selected state's preexisting programmatic and policy context. This enhanced our ability to effectively integrate the evaluation into their existing efforts. The remainder of this section provides a description of each state's pre-study REA program model, as well as context on how the REA program fit into the state's larger UI and workforce programs.

2.2.1 Indiana

The state of Indiana has been participating in the REA program since it began in 2005. Indiana's REA program must be viewed in the context of the state's commitment to connect (nearly) all UI claimants to the state's workforce development system.¹³ It is state policy that after UI claimants receive three weeks of benefits, they are assigned to one of the state's three connector programs: WPRS, REA, or Jobs for Hoosiers (JFH).

Exhibit 2.1 summarizes each of these programs as it operated prior to the start of the REA2 Impact Study. Claimants most likely to exhaust their UI benefits, based on the state's profiling model, were placed in the WPRS program. The remaining claimants were sorted into an ordered list based on their likelihood to exhaust benefits, and then randomly placed in REA or in a control group until all available REA spots were filled. Any claimants remaining on the list after all spots were filled were placed in the JFH group.

During the study period, the content of Indiana's REA and JFH programs remains nearly unchanged, but the selection criteria are modified to ensure random assignment. The main modification is that once the appropriate number of claimants are assigned to WPRS, the remaining claimants are randomly divided into three groups—Single REA, JFH/Partial REA, and Control—based on agreed-upon size allocations for each group (see Chapter 3 for additional discussion). The WPRS program is not included in the REA2 Impact Study and continues to operate as originally designed.

¹³ Members of a union hiring hall are assigned to Jobs for Hoosiers. Claimants with a defined return-to-work date, living more than 50 miles from a site offering REA, who live out of state, or who already are involved in an accepted job training program are excluded from being assigned to any program.

Exhibit 2.1: Indiana Programs for UI Claimants Prior to the REA2 Impact Study

	Selection Criteria	Content	Funding
WPRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those most likely to exhaust their UI benefits Selected 20% of claimants each week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation to reemployment services One-on-one session to develop individual reemployment plan No required follow-up 	State
REA ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those next most likely to exhaust their UI benefits, after the WPRS participants have been selected Number selected was constrained by REA staff capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation to reemployment services One-on-one session to develop individual reemployment plan Required follow-up (e.g., two biweekly logs, two workshops) 	Federal
JFH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those ineligible for the REA program (e.g., union attached) Any REA-eligible claimants after REA staff capacity was exceeded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation to reemployment services No one-on-one session to develop individual reemployment plan No required follow-up 	State

^a A small number of REA-eligible claimants were assigned to a control group instead of to REA. These control group members were permitted to access AJC services but not encouraged or required to do so. They did have to comply with all UI program requirements, including certifying weekly that they had been searching for work and submitting to random work search audits.

Integration of REA into the State’s Workforce Development System

These three programs all are operated by staff collocated at AJC sites. At the start of the study, the REA program operates in all of the full-service AJCs spread throughout the state (27 of the state’s nearly 70 AJCs).¹⁴ The state’s JFH program operates more broadly, including occasionally at some smaller, “Express” AJCs. (To be included in this study, offices needed to offer both REA and JFH.)

Indiana’s AJCs are managed by the state’s 12 Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), which contract out service delivery and staff management to Regional Operators (i.e., private companies equipped to perform these roles). Regional Operators vary in how they manage programs such as REA and JFH that operate within the AJC setting but technically are not under the Regional Operators’ jurisdiction. In some AJCs, REA services are delivered solely by the state REA staff, who administer the program with minimal local oversight. In other AJCs, the Regional Operator is more involved in monitoring service delivery, and the REA staff have two de facto managers—the State’s REA program director and the Regional Operator’s local office manager.

Regardless of the supervisory structure, a high level of respect and collaboration seems to exist between the state’s REA staff and the Regional Operators’ local workforce development staff. REA staff are responsible for delivering the grant-specific services, whereas the Operators’ local workforce staff provide complementary reemployment services provided after the one-on-one meeting that develops the claimant’s individual reemployment plan (e.g., resume review, job referrals, ongoing employment coaching, training).

¹⁴ Indiana’s AJCs, called WorkOne Centers, are full-service offices, providing the complete range of reemployment services, including REA and JFH, and services provided by the Regional Operator. The state also has WorkOne Express offices, which are satellite AJC locations that offer a limited range of reemployment services, some in-person and some virtual.

UI Involvement in and Support of the REA Program

During development of the state's REA grant proposal, Indiana's UI leadership was actively engaged in establishing the content of its proposed REA program, as well as in helping to set its overall tone. They were involved in defining what actions would be required of REA participants and in reviewing the content of the REA orientation related to compliance and penalties. Once the program began operating, however, they interact little with the state workforce staff who run the REA program and the UI staff who assist claimants with benefits questions and investigate UI compliance issues.

Locally, the REA program is staffed by state Employment Service representatives, who introduce UI claimants to local reemployment services. These staff are collocated with state UI staff, who are available to help claimants file claims, answer questions about benefits, and discuss individual circumstances. UI staff do not deliver any portion of the REA services, nor are they involved with eligibility review. Those two activities are handled entirely by REA program staff. Though the two teams have distinct responsibilities, a collegial relationship exists between the REA program and UI staff, with some UI staff even working the UI desk part of the week and then helping out with REA program logistics at other times.

Eligibility, compliance, and adjudication issues are handled separately. As noncompliance with REA requirements occurs and/or eligibility issues are uncovered, they are forwarded to UI adjudication staff at the central claims center located in Fort Wayne.¹⁵ That claims center team then pursues additional information, as needed, in order to make a determination.

State-Specific Implementation Issues

Several state-specific issues—some identified early on and others during study implementation itself—had the potential to shape both the implementation of the REA2 Impact Study and its findings:

- **Preexisting “Partial” Program:** The state's JFH program is quite similar to what the study team envisioned as the Partial REA treatment arm. (When Indiana agreed to participate in the Impact Study, it made minor modifications to its JFH design so JFH could serve the Partial REA role.)
- **Prevalence of Union Hiring Halls:** That many claimants are attached to union hiring halls seemingly should not affect the REA program, because union-attached workers are exempt from REA participation. However, many workers in Indiana are not in good standing with their union; that is, they are not current on their union dues such that their union membership has lapsed. (Some of these claimants were randomized to participate in Single REA and subsequently waived from REA program requirements once their dues were paid up.)
- **Diverse Regional Economies:** Variation in the health of regional labor markets had the potential to affect the volume of REA activities and demand for related services. During the study period, in some parts of the state, the labor market was strong, with relatively high-paying jobs and large numbers of employment opportunities. In other parts of the state, the local economy was depressed, with neither.

¹⁵ At the start of the study, adjudication actually was occurring at the local level. This changed during the study period, though, when the state implemented a new approach in late September and early October 2015 and moved all adjudication responsibilities to the central location in Fort Wayne.

- **Control Group:** Participants in the control group were able to receive services upon request, but they had to request them independently without any marketing or prompting from the workforce system.

2.2.2 New York

The REA program in the state of New York began with the national REA program in 2005. In 2015 and 2016 it operates in 64 locations across all 33 of the state’s local workforce investment areas. In those offices, REA operates alongside two other statewide programs for UI claimants: Career Center Customer Engagement (C3E; New York’s WPRS program) and Jobs for Veterans (JFV).

Exhibit 2.2 summarizes each of these programs as it operated prior to the start of the REA2 Impact Study in those areas of the state where the REA program operates.¹⁶ Despite differences in selection criteria, the three programs share many of the same components (e.g., one-on-one meetings, similar meeting content).

Exhibit 2.2: New York Programs for UI Claimants Prior to the REA2 Impact Study

	Selection Criteria	Content	Funding
C3E (WPRS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those likely to exhaust their UI benefits (profile model scores of 51–100) • Number selected was constrained by AJC staff capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one session to provide job search support • Two required follow-up meetings 	Combination federal and state
REA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those less likely to exhaust their UI benefits (profile model scores of 1–50) • Selected 80% of eligible claimants each week^a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to reemployment services • One-on-one session to develop individual reemployment plan and provide job search support • Two required follow-up meetings 	Federal
JFV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Served Disabled Veterans Outreach Program—eligible veterans (veterans with significant barriers to employment) • Those likely to exhaust their UI benefits (profile model scores of 51–100) • Number selected was constrained by AJC staff capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one session to provide job search support • Two required follow-up meetings • Between-meeting contacts 	Combination federal and state

^a Prior to the start of the study, 20 percent of REA-eligible claimants were assigned to a control group instead of to REA. These control group members were permitted to access AJC services but not required to do so. They did have to comply with all UI program requirements, including certifying weekly that they have been searching for work and submitting to random work search audits.

For New York claimants selected for one of its three programs, participation is mandatory. However, each month some claimants are not selected for any of the groups listed above, nor for the state’s preexisting comparison group. These claimants are required to actively search for work, as New York State requires of all UI claimants, and they are scheduled for a meeting through the state’s WPRS program (C3E).

¹⁶ REA is not offered in the remainder of the state’s locations. Where REA does not operate, UI claimants are served by either the C3E program or the JFV program.

During the study, the REA program's design remains fairly constant, but the eligibility criteria are expanded. New York's program had served otherwise eligible claimants with profile scores from 1 to 50. For the study, the acceptable range of profile scores is expanded to include claimants with scores of 1–69, thereby including claimants who are more likely to exhaust their UI benefits (according to the state's profiling model). Additionally, the random assignment procedures are uniform across sites, as explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

Integration of REA into the State's Workforce Development System

New York's REA program operates out of the state's AJCs, known as New York Career Centers. Some of these AJCs are operated by third parties, such as nonprofit organizations or local governments; others are operated directly by the New York State Department of Labor. Regardless, REA program activities are located in the same office space as other workforce development services.

At each local AJC, the state employs a supervisor to manage local REA staff and any other state staff at the center. This supervisor reports, in turn, to the local AJC manager, who is responsible for all services offered at the center, including Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)-funded staff and services.

For this study, 10 existing REA locations were chosen to implement the evaluation's four-arm treatment approach (Partial REA, Single REA, Multiple REA, Control). These locations were carefully selected to ensure a mix of large/urban offices and small/rural offices while optimizing the size of the sample for the analysis. The rest of New York's existing REA locations offer a two-arm treatment approach (Multiple REA, Control), and data from these locations are included throughout this report, where noted.

UI Involvement in and Support of the REA Program

In New York, there is limited direct interaction between the state's REA staff and the UI staff at the local level. However, representatives of both systems agree that the REA grant facilitates greater communication and interaction between the workforce development and UI programs. The state-level REA staff hold monthly meetings with UI staff to maintain ongoing communication as well as ensure that the grant operates consistently with all UI-related policies and procedures. The state's UI staff also help train local REA staff on UI policies related to the eligibility review. Similarly, UI staff review training materials developed by the REA central office, and even occasionally attend REA staff training sessions to field any UI-related questions.

Typically, UI staff are only directly involved with REA program implementation when an eligibility issue is referred to them. In those cases, the associated REA staff member may communicate with a UI adjudicator during the investigation. For UI staff, REA is a priority program, which means that these issues are adjudicated immediately. UI staff also are involved with the REA program when a claimant applies for an exemption for approved training, continuing to monitor eligibility while the claimant is enrolled.

State-Specific Implementation Issues

Several state-specific issues—some identified early on and others during study implementation—had the potential to shape both the implementation of the REA Impact Study and its findings:

- ***Creation of a "Partial" Program:*** When New York agreed to participate in the Impact Study, numerous conversations were held to identify the components of its existing REA program that could be used to create a Partial REA for the study. The state agreed to a component that required claimants

to come to the job center one time for a session to review eligibility and lasting no more than 30 minutes.

- **Mix of Study Locations:** New York is a state where regional economies vary dramatically in size and density. The impact study operates in both the heavily urbanized areas of New York City and the less-populated parts of upstate New York. This intra-state variation had implications for the choice of study sites. Because the state sought to focus implementation of the study’s four-arm treatment approach in only 10 of the state’s 70 locations, the final selection of sites required considerable negotiation and balancing to ensure the necessary volume and representation of the sample. In the remainder of the locations, the state implemented a two-arm treatment approach, with a Multiple REA group and a control group. In all 70 locations, participants in the control group were not precluded from receiving services if they requested them.

2.2.3 Washington

The State of Washington historically has sought to connect as many UI claimants to the state’s workforce system as possible, and the system regularly serves more than 80 percent of eligible claimants. Immediately prior to and independent of the impact study, this emphasis shifted slightly when the state implemented a new set of process changes and management improvements (its “Lean Management” approach). One of them was a commitment to connect *all* eligible UI claimants to the state’s workforce system.¹⁷ This shift did not substantively change the REA program services, however, which have been operating in the state since 2005. Exhibit 2.3 summarizes each of the state’s programs as it operated prior to the start of the REA Impact Study.

Exhibit 2.3: Washington Programs for UI Claimants Prior to the REA2 Impact Study

	Selection Criteria	Content	Funding
WPRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those most likely to exhaust their UI benefits • Selected 5% of claimants each week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to reemployment services • Review of UI eligibility requirements and claimant responsibilities • No one-on-one session or required follow-up 	State
REA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The remainder of claimants (95%), after WPRS participants had been selected • Prior to implementation of Lean Management, some offices were constrained by staff capacity in scheduling claimants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to reemployment services • Review of UI eligibility requirements and claimant responsibilities • One-on-one session to develop individual reemployment action plan • Up to two follow-up phone meetings 	Federal

¹⁷ Claimants who are in an approved training program, on “full union referral,” in the Pacific Maritime Association, on standby, in the Shared Work program, partially employed by their previous employer, working with a future employer, on strike, in lockout, or a victim of domestic violence are exempted from participation.

Once the study began, the WPRS program, called Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Orientation (UIRO), is considered by the study team to be the state's Partial REA treatment arm.¹⁸ Beyond this re-designation, the content of Washington's WPRS and REA programs remains unchanged. The state did modify the participant selection criteria, the assignment process, and follow-up procedures, however, to ensure random selection (see Chapter 3 for additional information). Claimants selected for the WPRS program continue to not be included in the REA2 Impact Study.

Integration of REA into the State's Workforce Development System

The state's REA program operates within its AJC network, called the WorkSource system, which comprises three kinds of AJCs: Centers (28), Affiliate offices (27), and Connection offices (21).

- Centers are full-service AJCs, which have been designated by the state's Workforce Board as the focal point for a given Washington county or region. They offer the full range of reemployment services, provided by state staff.
- Affiliate offices operate within the jurisdiction of a WorkSource Center location. They may function similarly to a Center, offering the same full range of reemployment services, or they may be locations such as community colleges that offer specialized partner services.
- Connection offices are sometimes small AJCs, but generally are nonprofit partners that provide some limited reemployment services, or have remote connection capabilities for services at nearby Centers or Affiliates.

For the REA2 Impact Study, the REA program is implemented in 17 of the state's 55 Center and Affiliate office AJCs.¹⁹ The specific 17 offices that implement the study are geographically distributed across all major population centers in the state. They were selected by state REA leaders to participate in the study for a couple of important reasons: They provide all reemployment services (WPRS and REA) and services provided by the Workforce Board partners, and they serve a high volume of claimants (about 80 percent of the state total). Among the offices participating in the study, no substantive difference exists between Center and Affiliate AJCs.

State REA program staff centrally manage all local staff providing either WPRS or REA services. Despite this central oversight, the local REA staff operate within the context of regional partners, which are hired contractors of the state's 12 Workforce Development Councils. REA staff coordinate staffing and service delivery with the appropriate Council's regional manager and its partnership staff.

Within this supervisory structure, a clear understanding exists that REA staff serve as an important early conduit for UI claimants to understand and access reemployment services. Throughout the initial

¹⁸ The 5 percent of eligible claimants with the highest profiling score are placed in the WPRS group before treatment arms are assigned. That group is then combined with the randomly assigned Partial REA group in the service delivery phase. The two distinct groups receive exactly the same services, at the same time, and staff delivering the services cannot differentiate the two during the orientation. Only those individuals randomized into the Partial REA group are included in the REA2 Impact Study sample.

¹⁹ Washington had 17 participating AJCs at the start of the study (5 Affiliates and 13 Centers), but at the end of December 2015, one Affiliate (Lakewood) was closed and all claimants were absorbed into a neighboring Center (Pierce).

orientation meeting (and follow-up meetings, when applicable), REA staff emphasize to claimants the value of their relying on local partner staff to help them complete their reemployment plans, and more broadly, to access resources to help them get back to work.

UI Involvement in and Support of the REA Program

In Washington, interaction is limited between the state workforce staff who implement the WPRS and REA programs and the UI staff who assist claimants with benefits questions and adjudicate UI issues. Their supportive efforts occur in tandem, but generally are unconnected. The local REA program staff introduce claimants to the rules and requirements of the UI program. REA staff generally avoid answering all but the most basic eligibility or compliance questions, instead referring claimants to the state's UI informational hotline for questions about their claim.

With regard to UI eligibility and adjudication issues, REA staff generally view their role as that of a guide for claimants, to ensure that claimants are aware of their responsibilities, remain in compliance, and avoid penalties should they get audited by UI during their work search.²⁰ To that end, local REA staff tend to emphasize providing all claimants with detailed information about ways they could potentially lose benefits, rather than scrutinizing individual claimants to actually identify eligibility issues.

UI staff charged with answering technical questions on UI eligibility operate out of a central adjudication center in Olympia. They are not directly involved with the local delivery of reemployment services. State UI leadership in Olympia, however, did help to craft guidance for local REA staff responsible for referring noncompliance issues to the state. Leaders also helped to develop content for portions of the REA orientation related to compliance and penalties and a short video used statewide on the proper completion of the job search log.

State-Specific Implementation Issues

Several issues—some identified early on and others during study implementation—had the potential to shape both the implementation of the REA2 Impact Study and its findings:

- ***Multiple Systemwide Changes during an Overlapping Time Period:*** Formal training on procedure modifications to support the REA2 Impact Study occurred simultaneous with staff training on the statewide Lean Management approach. This meant that the state REA leadership was introducing a study design that emphasized multiple treatment options while simultaneously communicating the state's shift to a more universal level of service. Communicating the two changes simultaneously required the coordination of training and highly customized follow-up training to ensure that neither initiative was inadvertently creating confusion or sending mixed messages.
- ***State's Decreased Emphasis on Monitoring Eligibility:*** Historically, Employment Services staff reviewed upwards of 10 weeks of job search logs. However, prior to and independent of the study, the state decided to reduce the number of weeks that REA staff would review during the one-on-one REA session. As a result, some long-time REA staff needed to transition into a service delivery approach

²⁰ The Washington State Job Search Review (JSR) program randomly selects 5 percent of claimants for an audit of job search logs. Selection was independent of REA Evaluation treatment condition. Furthermore, the review was not affected by the change in the number of weeks of job search logs checked that is discussed in body of the document.

that de-emphasized eligibility and instead emphasized early introduction of claimants to reemployment resources.

- **Widely Varying Local Labor Markets:** Washington’s economic hub in the Seattle–King County area has a strong base of highly skilled, high-wage workers in the service, aerospace, and technology sectors and a tight labor market overall. Outside of the Seattle area in Western Washington, the labor force is more mixed, with lower- and middle-skill occupations in the extraction industries playing a prominent role. In Eastern Washington, particularly outside of the more economically diverse hub of Spokane, the economy is predominantly rural, with a large seasonally influenced agricultural workforce.
- **Services to the Control Group:** Participants in the control group were able to receive services upon request; however, they had to request those services independently, without any marketing or prompting from the workforce system.

2.2.4 Wisconsin

Since the state began participating in the REA program in 2010, Wisconsin has sought to connect nearly all UI claimants to its workforce development system through either the WPRS or the REA program. Exhibit 2.4 summarizes each of these programs as it operated at the start of the REA2 Impact Study.

Exhibit 2.4: Wisconsin Programs for UI Claimants Prior to the REA2 Impact Study

	Selection Criteria	Content	Funding
WPRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those most likely to exhaust their UI benefits • Selected 5% of claimants each week • Remainder of REA-eligible claimants not selected for the REA program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claimants triaged based on responses to online assessment: (1) work-ready group receives no additional services, (2) group who completes online self-service workshops, and (3) in-person services group • In-person services group receives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Orientation to reemployment services ○ One-on-one session with an REA representative to develop individual reemployment plan ○ Up to two required follow-up meetings for those deemed not ready for work 	State
REA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible claimants from geographic areas served by the REA program • Number selected was constrained by REA staff capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to reemployment services • Review of UI eligibility requirements and claimant responsibilities • One-on-one session with both an REA and a UI representative to develop individual reemployment plan • Up to two required follow-up meetings for those deemed not ready for work 	Federal

We do not provide a historical look at Wisconsin’s pre-study service delivery. Wisconsin significantly redesigned its WPRS and REA programs just prior to implementation of the REA2 Impact Study. It introduced an online scheduling system and a required online orientation for all claimants. It also implemented an online assessment to triage WPRS claimants into one of three service tracks. Claimants residing in areas of the state that conduct the REA program either are assigned to one of the three WPRS service intensity levels (including in-person services for a small number of claimants deemed most likely to exhaust benefits) or are randomly assigned to the Full REA (Single and Multiple combined), Partial

REA, or Control treatment condition. In the rest of the state, claimants are considered participants in the WPRS program and assigned to the appropriate service track based on their online assessment scores.

Integration of REA into the State's Workforce Development System

In Wisconsin, there are two types of AJCs, both known as "Job Centers." The 26 comprehensive AJCs are full-service offices that collocate all mandatory WIOA partners. The state also operates 36 affiliated locations, which offer a more limited set of services and do not collocate all WIOA partners. Prior to the start of the study, Wisconsin's REA program operated in 8 of the 26 comprehensive AJCs. The state added 3 more AJCs to the REA program during the study, bringing the total number of REA locations to 11.

The REA program is run by the state's Bureau of Job Service, which is housed in the Division of Employment and Training within the Department of Workforce Development. At the state level, a program coordinator manages both the REA and WPRS programs, communicating directly with local management.

In general, staffing at the local office level consists of a district director who oversees all programming at the AJC (including REA programming) and dedicated staff who deliver REA services. Every REA-affiliated office also has a designated UI adjudicator. In four locations (Green Bay, Madison, and two offices in Milwaukee), a Job Service supervisor oversees the local staff and supports the district director.

UI Involvement in and Support of the REA Program

Wisconsin's REA program design allows for extensive involvement by UI staff. They deliver a portion of the group orientation sessions and typically attend the individual meetings that REA staff hold with participating claimants. In this capacity, UI staff conduct eligibility reviews and provide participants with technical assistance in the UI claims process.

Typically, each of the REA-affiliated AJCs is assigned a single UI adjudicator, who has volunteered for the temporary assignment at a conveniently located AJC. Thus, the selection of AJCs to operate the REA program is in part determined by the proximity of an adjudicator able to regularly attend REA meetings.

This staffing model allows UI representatives to communicate claims information directly to REA participants. This also limits the need to train REA staff on UI-related policies and procedures.

State-Specific Implementation Issues

Several state-specific issues identified had the potential to shape both the implementation of the REA2 Impact Study and its findings:

- **Limited Sample Size:** During study implementation, the study team determined that the state's number of new REA cases had fallen substantially below their initial projections. After a series of conversations about options to expand the sample, Wisconsin identified three additional AJCs that could begin implementing REA, bringing the total number of REA locations to 11 (as mentioned above). The REA program coordinator visited each of these offices to train staff on REA's procedures. The three offices started to conduct REA meetings in mid-October 2015 (nearly seven months after the late-March start of the other offices).
- **Creation of a "Partial" Program:** Prior to the evaluation, the state did not operate any sort of program comparable to the Partial REA treatment arm envisioned by the study team. When Wisconsin agreed to participate in the Impact Study, it took numerous conversations to identify the

components of the state's existing REA program that could be used to create a Partial REA intervention. Ultimately, the state constructed a new service track to fit the role.

- ***Effect of New Policy for Job-Attached Claimants:*** When the study began, monitoring reports indicated that between 40 and 50 percent of REA participants who attend their initial REA meeting were scheduled for a follow-up meeting. During the study, that rate consistently declined. Wisconsin's program coordinator attributed the decline in large part to a new state policy put into effect during the study period that requires job-attached claimants with a return-to-work date more than 60 days in the future to participate in reemployment service activities. These seasonal workers are being randomly assigned into the study, but REA staff are less likely to refer them for a follow-up REA meeting because they will be returning to their former employer at some point in the future. The policy took effect in June 2015, but the numbers didn't decline until about November 2015, when Wisconsin's seasonal workers are more likely to file for UI benefits.
- ***Services to the Control Group:*** Participants in the control group were able to receive services upon request; however, they had to request them independently, without any marketing or prompting from the workforce system.

2.3 Economic Backdrop for Implementing the Impact Study

Across the four study states, enrollment in the REA2 Impact Study spanned late March 2015 to late April 2016. During this period, the labor market and overall economy were continuing to recover from the recession of 2008–2009. The economic indicators discussed below, both at the national level and at the state level, point to an improving economy both immediately prior to and during the study enrollment period.²¹

The national average unemployment rate was 5.2 percent during study enrollment, a full 4.8 percentage points below the seasonally adjusted peak in October 2009 of 10.0 percent. Just relative to the previous year (March 2014–February 2015), the rate fell 0.8 percentage points (from 6.0 to 5.2 percent).²²

During the enrollment period, a national average of about 273,000 initial UI claims were filed per week. As a share of UI-covered employment, that corresponds to a UI claim rate of about 0.20 percent.^{23,24} Compared with the prior year, the average had fallen by about 27,000 claims (from 300,000 to 273,000) and the UI claim rate had fallen 0.03 percentage points (from 0.23 to 0.20). Initial claims activity for the

²¹ The time period chosen for the tabulations reported in this section is the most recent 12 months of data available from the Current Population Survey when this report was drafted: March 2015–February 2016. The exception is UI claim duration, for which the most recent data available are calendar year 2015.

²² The national unemployment rate was calculated using the not seasonally adjusted number of unemployed and the labor force available from the Current Population Survey. The seasonally adjusted 2009 peak was reported from this same source (<http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm>).

²³ The UI claim rate is calculated by dividing the weekly number of initial UI claims by the corresponding level of covered employment.

²⁴ For both the nation and each state, the average weekly initial claims and average UI claim rate were calculated using Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims data (<http://www.oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims.asp>).

last two years had been well below the most recent peak in January 2009, when weekly initial claims reached more than 950,000 claims, for a claim rate of 0.71 percent.

The insured unemployment rate (IUR) and average duration of a paid UI claim during study enrollment followed a similar pattern. Compared with the prior year, the IUR had fallen 0.2 percentage points (from 1.9 to 1.7), and the current rate is well below the recessionary peak of 4.8 percent of early 2009. For the calendar year 2015, the average duration of a paid UI claim was about 15.5 weeks, nearly 1 week less than the previous year's average of 16.4 weeks and well below the 2010 peak of 18.9 weeks.²⁵

Exhibit 2.5: Labor Market Indicators during Study Enrollment for the Study States

	Annual Average for Year Prior to Study Period ^a	Annual Average for Study Enrollment Period ^b
National		
Unemployment rate ^c	6.0%	5.2%
Weekly initial UI claims ^d	300,233	273,483
UI claim rate ^e	0.23%	0.20%
Insured unemployment rate ^f	1.9%	1.7%
Average claim duration ^g	16.4	15.5
Indiana		
Unemployment rate ^c	5.8%	4.7%
Weekly initial UI claims ^d	4,753	3,972
UI claim rate ^e	0.17%	0.14%
Insured unemployment rate ^f	1.2%	0.9%
Average claim duration ^g	15.3	13.9
New York		
Unemployment rate ^c	6.1%	5.1%
Weekly initial UI claims ^d	21,250	19,509
UI claim rate ^e	0.25%	0.22%
Insured unemployment rate ^f	2.2%	1.9%
Average claim duration ^g	18.3	17.3
Washington		
Unemployment rate ^c	6.0%	5.7%
Weekly initial UI claims ^d	7,944	7,372
UI claim rate ^e	0.27%	0.25%
Insured unemployment rate ^f	2.0%	1.8%
Average claim duration ^g	15.5	14.9
Wisconsin		
Unemployment rate ^c	5.2%	4.6%
Weekly initial UI claims ^d	9,237	7,929

²⁵ Average duration includes all weeks claimed for which regular state UI benefits were paid. This excludes weeks fully compensated with federal funds (e.g., Emergency Unemployment Compensation).

	Annual Average for Year Prior to Study Period ^a	Annual Average for Study Enrollment Period ^b
UI claim rate ^e	0.34%	0.29%
Insured unemployment rate ^f	2.2%	1.8%
Average claim duration ^g	15.3	14.1

^a The "year prior to study period" as defined for the unemployment rate, average UI claims, UI claim rate, and IUR is March 2014 through February 2015. For the claims data, the "year prior to the study period" spans the week ending 3/8/14 through the week ending 2/28/15. The average claim duration is reported for calendar year 2014.

^b The "study enrollment period" as defined for the unemployment rate, average UI claims, UI claim rate, and IUR is March 2015 through February 2016. For the claims data, the "study enrollment period" spans the week ending 3/7/15 through the week ending 2/27/16. The average claim duration is reported for calendar year 2015.

^c Calculated by dividing the not seasonally adjusted number of unemployed by the labor force, available for the nation from the Current Population Survey (<http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm>) and for each state from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program (<http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm>).

^d Calculated as the average number of not seasonally adjusted initial claims per week. Available at <http://www.oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims.asp>.

^e The average UI claim rate is calculated by dividing the total not seasonally adjusted weekly initial UI claims by total covered employment for the periods reported in this table. Available at <http://www.oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims.asp>.

^f The average insured unemployment rate (IUR) claim rate is calculated by dividing the total not seasonally adjusted weekly continuing UI claims by total covered employment for the periods reported in this table. Available at <http://www.oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims.asp>.

^g For both the nation and each state, average duration of a UI claim is reported in the quarterly Unemployment Insurance Data Summary reports (<http://workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/unemploy/content/data.asp>). Average duration for calendar years 2014 and 2015 are available in the reports for the fourth quarter of 2014 and 2015, respectively.

The improvement in the economy, relative to both the 2009 lows of the recession and the most recent year, has implications for the REA impact analysis. First, the study sample is drawn from weekly initial UI claims, so steady decline in the volume of claims results in a smaller sample available for the study. This smaller sample marginally reduces the study's potential to detect impacts of the REA program and differences in impacts between the various REA treatment conditions. Second, the results of the impact analysis should be interpreted within the context of the labor market at the time of study enrollment. Based on the indicators discussed above, this study is estimating the impact of the REA program over a period of steady improvement in the labor market and in a relatively good economy.

Broadly speaking, though, the labor market in the four study states followed a similar pattern of improvement. In all four states, the annual average unemployment rate, the average claim duration, and the average number of weekly claims decreased year-over-year.²⁶ Relative to the change at the national level, unemployment rates decreased slightly faster in Indiana and New York, whereas average claim duration and the level of weekly claims decreased faster in Indiana and Wisconsin. During the study period itself, only Washington's unemployment rate was higher than the national average. At the same time, however, only Indiana's insured unemployment rate was lower than the nation's. During calendar year 2015, only New York's average claim duration exceeded the national average.

²⁶ For each state, the unemployment rate was calculated using the not seasonally adjusted number of unemployed and the labor force available from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (<http://www.bls.gov/lau/data.htm>).

3. Implementing the Research Design across Four States

The previous chapter describes the criteria used to select participating states, as well as the varied economic and policy environments in which they are operating their Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) programs. Implementing a common evaluation design across this diverse landscape is inherently challenging. Further complicating the challenge is the decentralized nature of the REA grant awards. Though each state grant recipient must operate within a broad set of federal guidelines (specific details of these guidelines are outlined in the remaining chapters of this report), states have some degree of flexibility in designing and implementing the REA program in the context of their established UI philosophy and delivery system.

This chapter focuses on how the study team worked with each state to understand its policies and procedures and how they were adapted to incorporate the study. Section 3.1 describes (1) how treatment conditions were defined across states in a way that retained the essence of their established REA foundation while encouraging sufficient similarity that treatment conditions—and the resulting impacts—could be compared across states and (2) how preexisting random assignment processes were adapted to incorporate the evaluation. Section 3.2 provides a more detailed account of the study’s random assignment rules and procedures implemented in each state. Section 3.3 describes the study team’s ongoing monitoring and efforts to maximize treatment fidelity, and Section 3.4 describes the benefits of technical assistance and monitoring.

3.1 Integrating State Variation into a Single Evaluation Design

To a great extent, this study is intended as an effectiveness trial; that is, one of the main purposes of this study is to determine what the impacts of REA programs are as these programs are usually implemented.²⁷ Consistent with that intention, the REA evaluation team has approached working with the states with the goal of preserving as much of their original service models as possible. At the same time, the study team had to balance this objective with the need to ensure sufficient consistency across and within treatment conditions and states in order to confidently interpret observed impacts.

In pursuit of this balance, the Abt study team focused on a small number of program components that required adaptation in order to successfully implement the study. The Abt team worked with state staff to understand their current service delivery and random assignment activities. With this understanding, the study team worked collaboratively with each state to identify the best way to integrate the evaluation treatment conditions into its program operations. This required negotiation of temporary modifications to each state’s core REA activities in order to consistently accommodate the evaluation design across the four states. The following section describes these steps and the key insights gained along the way.

3.1.1 Refinement of States’ Treatment Conditions

Abt Associates held a series of phone calls with each state to clarify (1) which of the four treatment conditions the state would implement and (2) what package of services would be provided to claimants

²⁷ An effectiveness trial should evaluate the program “as implemented,” including its natural variation between and within states whenever possible. The primary exception is when the variation undermines the study’s ability to evaluate differences among treatment conditions.

assigned to each treatment condition. The study team provided states with guidance on the core components to be included in each treatment condition and then allowed the states to propose the specific services to be included in their treatments, the length of these services, and exactly when they would be offered. (States grounded their proposals in their preexisting service models and UI requirements.) The study team then reviewed the states' proposals and negotiated, as needed, to ensure a minimum level of consistency across states on core aspects of each treatment condition. For example, the study team ensured that in each state claimants who were assigned to the Partial REA group were not allowed to receive a reemployment plan, referrals to services, or substantive assistance beyond the American Job Center (AJC) orientation. Other examples included ensuring that states were not marketing AJC services to control group members and that all individuals assigned to the Single REA and Multiple REA groups were provided with one-on-one meetings with REA staff.

Once the state and Abt site liaisons were in agreement, Abt drafted a document detailing the package of services associated with each treatment condition in that state. This document was then reviewed and approved by state staff and the U.S. Department of Labor. Exhibit 3.1 summarizes the number of treatment arms implemented in each state.²⁸ (See Chapters 4 and 5 for descriptions of the specific services provided under each of the study's treatment conditions.)

Exhibit 3.1: State-Specific Randomization Procedures

	Number of Treatment Arms	Treatment Type			
		Control	Partial REA	Full Single REA	Full Multiple REA
Indiana	3	✓	✓	✓	
New York ^a					
Four-Arm Cohort (10 sites)	4	✓	✓	✓	✓
Two-Arm Cohort (54 sites)	2	✓			✓
Washington	4	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wisconsin	3	✓	✓		✓

^a Of New York's office locations, 10 implemented a four-arm treatment approach and 54 offered a two-arm treatment approach.

3.1.2 Overview of States' Program Eligibility Rules

The federal guidelines issued in conjunction with the REA program specify a number of conditions under which UI claimants should be excluded from REA participation. These restrictions exclude claimants who are:

- Job-attached, with a definite return-to-work date.
- Hired exclusively through a union hiring hall.
- Enrolled in an approved training program.

²⁸ New York selected to implement the full study in a cohort of 10 offices (4-Arm Cohort) and a more narrow set of treatment conditions in the remaining AJCs that offered REA prior to the start of the study (2-Arm Cohort).

- Temporarily laid off or have an anticipated return-to-work date (states vary in how soon the recall must be).

These exclusions often correspond to those claimants who are excluded from the states' UI-related work search requirements and represent a group of claimants who are less likely to benefit from traditional workforce development activities.

Beyond these narrow restrictions, federal guidance for the REA program provides states with broad discretion to determine their own program eligibility rules. Interestingly, all four of the study states also exempt claimants who:

- Live within the state but outside the REA service delivery area or have an out-of-state claim.
- Recently received similar services.
- Are required to participate in Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) or another special program (i.e., programs that provide benefits when regular UI is not normally payable²⁹).

The study states also instituted several additional state-specific exemptions. These are noted in Exhibit 3.2. The exhibit also includes the exclusion details that states used for deciding which claimants will be assigned to their WPRS programs.

Exhibit 3.2: Exemptions from REA Eligibility

State	State-Specific Exemptions
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claimants with the highest 5% of profiling scores in a given week (assigned to WPRS)^a
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal worker with two-year prior attachment to the same employer • Any claimants with a profiling score between 70 and 100 (assigned to WPRS)
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maritime association members • Standby, strike, and lockout claimants • Domestic violence victims • Open or unresolved claim issues • Claimants with a profiling score above 53.4 (assigned to WPRS)
Wisconsin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working part-time for a primary employer • On active military duty • Having three weeks of reported wages or not claiming UI for three weeks at any time after random assignment • Claimants with the highest 5% (reduced to 3% as of September 2015) of profiling scores in a given week (assigned to WPRS)

^a As explained in Section 3.2.1 (and Appendix C) Indiana's assignment algorithm selects claimants based on a yearly goal distributed by the number of claimants per office and available staff. Therefore, the exact percentage assigned varied slightly week to week.

²⁹ Programs include Trade Readjustment Allowances, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Short-Time Compensation, Self-Employment Assistance, special federal extension programs, and state additional benefit programs.

3.1.2 Adaptation of States' Random Assignment Processes

Once these program refinements had been discussed and agreed upon, the challenge was to implement a set of random assignment procedures that would support the integrity and consistency of the evaluation. This had to be done without interfering with each state's responsibility to meet its obligations under its REA grant.

Well before the current evaluation, federal guidance has required that states use random assignment or some other methodologically sound means to create two groups of UI claimants—those referred to the REA program to receive services and those assigned to a control (comparison) group who receive no REA-related services. As a result, most states had existing mechanisms in place for random assignment—three states conducted random assignment via a computer algorithm at the state level, and one state, New York, had staff implement random assignment at the American Job Center level. Since most of the states' random assignment procedures were quite well established and the processes were deeply integrated within their UI and Employment Services data systems, the study team decided to work with the states to refine these existing random assignment mechanisms, rather than ask states to adopt a new external centralized random assignment system that was developed just for this study.

To this end, our technical assistance to states was twofold: (1) helping states make changes to their existing random assignment algorithms in order to incorporate random assignment to additional treatment groups and (2) modifying existing procedures to ensure appropriate random assignment ratios between treatment groups, offices, and demographic groups.³⁰ In general, the study team began its state-specific random assignment technical assistance efforts by hosting several phone calls with state representatives. During these calls, state staff and the study team discussed the state's current algorithm, the changes that would be needed to accommodate the study, and strategies for incorporating changes that would be minimally disruptive to program operations while maintaining an even balance across treatment conditions. It was particularly challenging to ensure that the random assignment mechanisms were flexible enough to maintain random assignment protocols for a dynamic caseload. For example, the study team worked with states to address returning study participants who came back through the assessment process because of either a subsequent or a reinitiated UI claim during the study period, as well as participants with multiple claims and those who receive services across multiple sites.

Once a state changed its algorithm to accommodate the evaluation, state staff sent Abt (1) input data files that included all the data elements that would be used to conduct random assignment and (2) output data files that indicated each claimant's random assignment status according to the state's revised algorithm. Abt then attempted to replicate each state's output file by running its input file through a simulation of the revised algorithm. Abt followed up with state programmers, as needed, to address any unexpected results, including imbalances in ratios across treatment arms, sites, or demographic groups and inclusion of claimants who met exclusion criteria.

³⁰ Prior to the study, some states were keeping claimants in the random assignment pool for several weeks, until they were selected or moved beyond the point of eligibility. This practice undermined the randomness of the selection process. In response, Abt worked with the states to adjust their RA process to remove this practice and develop mechanisms to accommodate fluctuating staff capacity, which was a primary driver in the multi-week process.

Random assignment technical assistance involved weekly or biweekly calls in the lead-up to the start of the evaluation period in each state; random assignment was then monitored weekly through the duration of the study. Additionally, in Indiana, the study team spent considerable time during the random assignment period discussing and reviewing needed revisions to the random assignment algorithm to address ratio imbalance at smaller sites.

3.2 Implementing Random Assignment during the Evaluation

The discussion that follows highlights key similarities and differences in random assignment procedures across states. We also carefully review the timing of random assignment and the specific point at which it has been integrated into the claims process for each state.

3.2.1 Random Assignment Procedures across States

Similarities in the randomization processes exist across states, but there are also some important differences. Throughout the study, randomization occurred weekly and included eligible UI claimants who had initiated their claim at least one week prior.

Once the pool of eligible REA participants was defined, each of the four states began assigning a small percentage (3 percent to 5 percent) of REA-eligible claimants with the highest WPRS profiling scores to its WPRS program. After the WPRS cases were removed, each of the states used a computer algorithm to randomly assign the remaining REA-eligible claimants to one of the treatment arms or to the control group.³¹ Exhibit 3.3 summarizes the unique random assignment distribution ratios adopted by each of the states.

Exhibit 3.3: State-Specific Random Assignment Ratios

	Number of Treatment Arms	Treatment/Control Ratio			
		Control	Partial REA	Full Single REA	Full Multiple REA
Indiana	3	Varies ^a	Varies ^a	Varies ^a	
New York					
4-Arm Cohort (10 sites)	4	25%	25%	25%	25%
2-Arm Cohort (54 sites)	2	20%			80%
Washington	4	22%	26%	26%	26%
Wisconsin	3	33.3%	33.3%		33.3%

Note: Appendix C provides a more detailed description of each state's random assignment algorithm and process.

^a Varies by office and week; dependent on office capacity.

It was this randomization process that in turn triggered the preparation and distribution of a customized letter notifying the claimant of his or her specific upcoming REA orientation. Because it was possible (although not common) for claimants to file more than one claim during the study period, the study team also worked with the states to implement safeguards preventing any individual claimant from being

³¹ In New York and Wisconsin, there were some weeks where there were more REA-eligible UI claimants than there were REA slots to be filled across the four treatment arms. In these weeks, any claimants left unassigned were placed into the state's WPRS program.

randomly assigned more than once.³² Either claimants with multiple claims were reassigned to their original group, or if they could not be reliably reassigned to their original group, they were flagged for exclusion from the relevant analyses. Overall, less than 5 percent of the study sample was excluded for this reason ($n=1,464$ in New York, and less than 50 participants in Washington and in Wisconsin).

The study team carefully monitored the random assignment process for the duration of the study enrollment period to ensure states adhered to all established study procedures and the proper buildup of the sample.

3.2.2 Timing of Random Assignment

To understand the timing of random assignment in each state, it is crucial to first examine the general flow of a UI claim. A UI claim begins when an unemployed worker completes an “initial filing” for UI benefits. The first week of the individual’s claim is a *waiting week*, when no payment is made to the claimant.³³ After the waiting week, claimants are paid weekly for each week they certify for benefits (i.e., each week they tell UI, either online, by phone, or in person, that they are unemployed and actively seeking work). A claimant’s *claim weeks* are counted from the date of initial filing. *Pay weeks* are counted for each week benefits are paid. The two (claim weeks and pay weeks) may be very similar if a claimant continuously files for benefits. If a claimant has gaps in filing for benefits within the benefit year, the two numbers can be very different.³⁴

Within this context, federal guidance dictates that “states must contact UI REA participants no later than the fifth week of the claim and promptly schedule them for a UI REA. The fifth week in the claim means the fourth week after the week in which the claimant files an initial claim” (DOL 2014a, p. 6).

In adhering to this guidance, states have structured the sequence and timing of activities in different ways, both prior to and during the study. The specific timing for assigning a claimant to a suite of services can be categorized into two groups: those states that conduct random assignment based on a specific claim week (New York) and those that conduct random assignment once UI claimants have been paid a set number of weeks of UI benefits (Indiana, Washington, Wisconsin).

New York is the only state in the REA2 Impact Study that bases random assignment on a claimant’s claim week. New York randomly assigns claimants on the Friday after they complete their waiting week, which is almost always the second week of their claim.

In contrast, Indiana, Washington, and Wisconsin base their random assignment schedules on a claimant’s receipt of UI payments.

³² To illustrate, an individual could file a claim for unemployment, become employed and then get laid off. When they claim again after a gap of several weeks (for employment), that claim will be in the same benefit year, but will nevertheless be considered a “new claim.”

³³ The UI program in each of the four study states includes a waiting week.

³⁴ For example, if a claimant certified for benefits in weeks one and two and then traveled out of state for two weeks of vacation and then began certifying for benefits again, the person’s third pay week would be his sixth claim week—a waiting week, two pay weeks, two weeks not filing, and then a pay week.

In Wisconsin, claimants are randomized in the week for which they receive their first UI payment. Therefore, those claimants who continuously certify (i.e., file for UI benefits in week 1 and then certify for benefits in subsequent weeks) are assigned on the Friday of their second claim week; those who do not certify in week 2 are randomly assigned once they receive their first payment. Because the state uses a payment week that occurs early in participants' claims, most Wisconsin claimants are randomly assigned by week 3 of their claim.

Exhibit 3.4 summarizes the timing and scheduling of random assignment in the four study states. Washington randomly assigns individuals on the Monday of their second pay week (three days later than Wisconsin). Indiana assigns individuals once they have been paid three weeks of UI benefits. Because of this later selection date, it is somewhat common for claimants in Indiana to be randomly assigned later in their claim than the UIPL suggests.

Exhibit 3.4: Timing of Random Assignment, Ordered by Claim Week

State	Time Period of Random Assignment (Sample Enrollment Period)	Weekly Timing of Random Assignment (Expected Claim Week Based on Policy)
New York	April 24, 2015–April 22, 2016	Friday after completed waiting week (claim week 2)
Wisconsin	March 28, 2015–April 2, 2016	Friday of 1st pay week (claim week 2 or later)
Washington	April 20, 2015–April 25, 2016	Monday of 2nd pay week (claim week 3 or later)
Indiana	April 5, 2015–March 27, 2016	Saturday of 3rd pay week (claim week 4 or later)

3.2.3 Size and Composition of the Sample

During the enrollment period discussed above, the four states randomly assigned a total of 299,905 claimants. Excluding individuals with multiple claims during the random assignment period or with random assignment concerns, the study's full analytic sample is 288,071 claimants.³⁵

As can be seen in Exhibit 3.5, the largest enrollment volume was in New York, which accounted for 58 percent of the sample. Focusing on sites that included at least three arms (i.e., Control, Partial REA, and either Single or Multiple REA), Indiana, New York, and Washington all had similar-sized cohorts, ranging from 45,289 in Washington to 62,423 in New York. Wisconsin randomized the fewest claimants, with 26,146 included in the analytic sample.

³⁵ Random assignment concerns include instances where it was impossible to determine, for one reason or another, the office assignment at the time of randomization and when a manual random assignment process was used rather than the automated algorithm.

Exhibit 3.5: Study Sample

	Indiana (3-Arm)	New York (2-Arm)	New York (4-Arm)	Washington (4-Arm)	Wisconsin (3-Arm)
UI claimants randomly assigned to a treatment group	51,455	105,533	70,124	46,626	26,167
Analytic sample	51,121	103,092	62,423	45,289	26,146
Unweighted analytic sample with long follow-up	25,423	46,304	26,921	20,991	12,888
Weighted analytic sample with long follow-up	76,269	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

For the purposes of this report, we performed our analyses—of participant characteristics (Exhibit 3.6), REA meeting attendance (Sections 4.4 and 5.2), and service completion (Section 6.2)—using a subset of claimants who filed a UI claim in one of the study states during the study period, excluding claimants:

- Exempted from randomization into the REA study.
- With post-randomization anomalies.
- Randomized later in the study period and did not yet have enough follow-up data to assess whether they completed the program requirements.³⁶

This subset is the *analytic sample with long follow-up*. The size of the sample in each state is presented in Exhibit 3.5. For the state of Indiana, the exhibit presents the absolute size of the sample group (*unweighted analytic sample with long follow-up*) and the weighted *N* (i.e., sample size). The weighted *N* is included as a reference point for the additional analyses throughout this report that required the weighted values.³⁷

The tabulations presented in Exhibit 3.6 and Exhibit 3.7 use baseline data received from the study states to report on demographic and UI claim characteristics of study participants included in this report.

Gender, Age, Race/Ethnicity: Overall, the gender distribution of study participants was fairly balanced; however, both Indiana and particularly Washington tend to enroll and randomly assign a greater proportion of men. In each state, these claimants are approximately 40 years of age, on average. Though the majority of study enrollees in each state are classified as White, the mix of racial and ethnic minorities

³⁶ To be included in the file, a claimant must have at least 19 post-randomization weeks, though the exact number varied by state (see Appendix D, Exhibit D.2 for additional details). Since the analysis file was drawn approximately 48 weeks after the start of randomization (which ran for approximately 52 weeks), and there was a limitation on the minimum number of post-randomization weeks needed, the long follow-up file includes about 64 percent of those eventually randomized. This is a sizable fraction, but incomplete. We will update these quantitative analyses using the full data file in a later report. More detail on each type of exclusion is provided in Appendix D (Data and Samples).

³⁷ In Indiana, the distribution of claimants across treatment groups within a given week fluctuated depending on the number of claimants who qualified for REA and the number of available REA staff. To adjust for this variation, we weighted the data within each week so that participants in each group have equal consideration in the analyses. Please see Appendix D for a detailed discussion of weighting methodology.

varies by state. For instance, more than a quarter (27 percent) of participants in Wisconsin identify themselves as Black, whereas the comparable figure in Washington is 7 percent. Similarly, approximately 1 out of 6 enrollees in New York and Washington identify themselves as Hispanic, whereas 1 out of 20 do in Indiana and Wisconsin. This variation at least partly reflects the composition of each state’s underlying population and labor force.

Occupation, Wages, Benefits: The occupation with the greatest representation among study participants is Office and Administrative Support (16 percent in Indiana, 17 percent in New York and Wisconsin, and 11 percent in Washington), followed by Management (about 10 percent in each state). In Indiana and Washington, nearly one in five participants work in Production (16 percent and 17 percent, respectively), an occupation that is slightly less common for participants in New York (7 percent) or Wisconsin (11 percent). Across all occupations, participants report base wages (which typically covers four quarters) of approximately \$35,000 in Indiana (mean=\$33,766) and New York (mean=\$36,548). Average base wages are highest in Washington (mean=\$43,606) and lowest in Wisconsin (mean=\$20,216). The weekly UI benefit amount, which is based in part on base wages, is between \$250 and \$300 per week. Claimants also are limited in the amount of UI benefits they are eligible to receive within a particular benefit year (“maximum benefit amount”). Participants in Indiana report the lowest maximum benefit amount (mean=\$6,545) on average, and participants in Washington report the highest (mean=\$9,707).

Profile Score: Finally, we present information on the average profile score, which is a method to help identify claimants who may be at risk for long-term unemployment. The algorithms used to calculate the profile scores are state specific. As such, the scores are not comparable at face value, but are presented for reference for each state in Exhibit 3.7.

Exhibit 3.6: Size and Composition of the Implementation Report Sample (N=288,071)

Characteristic	Indiana (N=76,269) ^a	New York (N=73,225)	Washington (N=20,991)	Wisconsin (N=12,888)
U.S. Citizen				
Yes	99%	94%	93%	99%
No	1%	6%	7%	1%
Missing (not included in valid %'s)	0%	5%	4%	2%
Gender				
Male	54%	50%	59%	49%
Female	46%	50%	41%	51%
Unknown	0%	0%	0%	0%
Missing (not included in valid %'s)	0%	5%	4%	2%
Veteran				
Yes	8%	4%	11%	5%
No	92%	96%	89%	95%
Missing (not included in valid %'s)	0%	5%	4%	2%
Disabled				
Yes	2%	3%	2%	3%
No	98%	81%	98%	94%
Unknown	0%	16%	0%	3%
Missing (not included in valid %'s)	0%	5%	4%	2%

Characteristic	Indiana (N=76,269) ^a	New York (N=73,225)	Washington (N=20,991)	Wisconsin (N=12,888)
Race/Ethnicity				
Black, non-Hispanic	19%	15%	7%	27%
White, non-Hispanic	73%	50%	64%	62%
Hispanic	5%	16%	14%	6%
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic	1%	3%	8%	2%
American Indian/Alaskan Native Non- Hispanic	0%	1%	2%	1%
Other, non-Hispanic	1%	16%	0%	0%
Unknown	1%	0%	5%	2%
<i>Missing (not included in valid %'s)</i>	0%	5%	4%	2%
Occupation				
Management	12%	13%	12%	10%
Business and financial operations	4%	4%	4%	6%
Computer and mathematical	2%	2%	6%	4%
Architecture and engineering	2%	1%	2%	2%
Life, physical, and social science	1%	1%	1%	1%
Community and social service	1%	2%	1%	1%
Legal	1%	1%	1%	1%
Education, training, and library	2%	4%	2%	3%
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	2%	4%	3%	2%
Healthcare practitioners and technical	4%	2%	1%	3%
Healthcare support	4%	3%	1%	4%
Protective service	1%	2%	1%	1%
Food preparation and serving related	2%	8%	5%	5%
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	2%	3%	2%	2%
Personal care and service	1%	3%	3%	3%
Sales and related	5%	10%	5%	10%
Office and administrative support	16%	17%	11%	17%
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0%	0%	5%	0%
Construction and extraction	7%	3%	9%	2%
Installation, maintenance, and repair	6%	3%	4%	3%
Production	16%	7%	11%	17%
Transportation and material moving	11%	6%	8%	5%
Military specific	0%	0%	1%	0%
<i>Missing (not included in valid %'s)</i>	<1%	5%	4%	2%

Note: Valid percentages are reported.

^a We present the weighted N of the Indiana sample as a reference point for the additional analyses throughout this report that required the weighted values. See Appendix D for a detailed discussion of weighting methodology, as well as a comparison of the weighted and unweighted sample in Indiana.

Exhibit 3.7: Additional Descriptive Information about the Implementation Report Sample (N=288,071)

		Indiana (N=76,269)	New York (N=73,225)	Washington (N=20,991)	Wisconsin (N=12,888)
Age	Mean	43.05	39.94	43.29	41.64
Missing	%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Weekly benefit amount	Mean	\$252	\$302	\$288	\$290
Missing	%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Maximum benefit amount	Mean	\$6,545	\$7,844	\$9,707	\$7,110
Missing	%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Base wages	Mean	\$33,766	\$36,548	\$43,606	\$20,216
Missing	%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Profile score ^a	Mean	48	52	32	10
Missing	%	5%	0%	8%	2%

^a The profile score was calculated using state-specific models. Because each state uses different factors and methods to compute the profiling score, as well as includes a different range of scores in determining REA eligibility, the average scores are not comparable across states and are only useful when compared with other individuals within the same state.

3.3 Monitoring REA Service Receipt

Carefully structuring and monitoring the random assignment process was essential to ensure the proper size and composition of the study sample. Once those assignments to a unique treatment arm were made, the more critical challenge facing the study team was to carefully track the specific services (REA and related) that claimants subsequently received. To ensure the integrity and validity of the evaluation, it was essential to confirm that claimants were receiving only the package of services associated with their random assignment status.

Developing the capability to implement this monitoring required the study team to work with each of the four states, securing its cooperation to share its administrative data records. Of particular importance was micro-level data on each activity (e.g., referrals, services received) in a claimant's record. Abt site liaisons worked closely with states to understand how these services were defined, classified, coded, and stored within each state's administrative data system. The goal was to develop a series of monitoring reports that would allow the evaluation to precisely track service receipt across treatment arms for each state as a whole, as well as for each local office in that state. Developing this monitoring capability required a protracted set of discussions with state data staff. The study team initially sent state staff a record layout template, so the study team could understand data variables, formats, and possible values. The states then sent the study team test administrative services data files, so the study team could group specific service codes into treatment condition packages.³⁸

Once the study team had built a monitoring template and states began random assignment, states sent the study team weekly services data and random assignment data. Abt merged these files to verify that

³⁸ In most states, there are hundreds of possible service codes that claimants participating in the study could have received as a part of the REA program.

claimants were receiving the expected package of services based on their random assignment status. The study team would then provide a weekly file of unusual cases that Abt site liaisons and state study liaisons would discuss on regular check-in calls. States would use these weekly files to address treatment fidelity issues at the site level and to strengthen program implementation.

Ongoing services monitoring required a substantial effort. Initial conversations between the study team and state liaisons to understand state data were iterative and progressed throughout the study. It often took the study team several calls to fully understand nuances of the data. SAS programs generating monitoring reports had to be highly tailored to each state's data and then revised when changes to the data occurred, which happened frequently (approximately one change per state per month). Random assignment data and services data from four states had to be downloaded, read-in, merged, cleaned, and analyzed weekly through the duration of the study. Study team site liaisons had to prepare to discuss individual cases every week and follow up with REA program staff and state data staff to understand trends that the study team saw in the data.

The study team had planned to monitor services weekly for only the first two months, with biweekly and then monthly calls following. In practice, the study team found that weekly calls were necessary through the first six months of random assignment in most states (and biweekly through the final six months of the random assignment period).

In summary, it appears that states were successful in implementing the study's treatment conditions. Individuals assigned to the Multiple REA group received the most services; the level of services received by the other groups steadily decreased, with those in the control group receiving very minimal services. Appendix F provides additional details on service receipt by treatment condition and by state.

3.4 Benefits of Technical Assistance and Monitoring

The design, technical assistance, and monitoring activities described in the previous sections were primarily intended to ensure the fidelity and methodological rigor of the evaluation design. It is equally important to point out, however, that the close collaboration between the states and the site liaison teams also resulted in program and system improvements. Making some of these improvements pushed the research from a pure effectiveness study in the direction of an efficacy study (i.e., toward ideal rather than actual participation). The study team worked hard to minimize such shifts, but some were inevitable as the team attempted to understand the data and to maintain strong contrasts between treatment arms.

In particular, procedure modifications, particularly related to improving data quality, often affected service delivery in unexpected ways. For example, prior to the study's technical assistance efforts, as many as 20 percent of participants in one state were never scheduled for an initial REA orientation. In this state, staff did not have an easy way to track claimants' progression through the scheduling process, and therefore did not discover that services were never delivered until weeks and sometimes months after initial random assignment. With the study's weekly monitoring efforts, the state was able to quickly identify such claimants and follow up with the pertinent offices to ensure timely notification and service delivery. This study intervention improved the fidelity of the program, bringing it more in line with the federal vision of program implementation in ways that would not have occurred without the study's monitoring.

Such changes to program operation induced by monitoring should be kept in mind in considering the study results. Other examples of how the study's monitoring and technical assistance generated program-related benefits include:

- ***Nearly all claimants within a state were called into the AJC at about the same time in their claim.*** The study’s monitoring efforts decreased the likelihood that participants would be lost in transfers between offices or between data systems. (In more than one state, participants would sometimes be randomized and then not transferred to the service delivery system.) When transfer mishaps did occur, they were resolved much more quickly. The result is that compliant participants received services within a more consistent time window (e.g., most claimants received some level of service between weeks 4 and 6 of their claim).
- ***Random assignment was truly random.*** Previously, some states created a control or comparison group without substantial guidance or external oversight of their procedures. Because states were often inexperienced with designing such procedures, the processes they put in place often yielded control or comparison groups that were systematically different from their treatment groups. The study’s technical assistance revised the selection process so that it was truly random.
- ***More claimants received services that were consistent with their random assignment status.*** The study’s monitoring reports tracked service receipt by office and by treatment condition. The study team was able to use these reports to help identify offices where participants were receiving too many or too few services. As such issues were detected, the study asked the state staff to coordinate with the local office to improve compliance with the study conditions. In some instances, state staff discovered that local office staff were not following protocols, and this was changed going forward. In other instances, the state was able to confirm that local staff were providing services as required but recording it inconsistently across offices. Local staff were asked to change their data entry procedures, and Abt noted the variation to ensure service data could be accurately interpreted in this report.
- ***Noncompliance was investigated more consistently because the study team tracked when claimants did not comply and were not referred to UI for adjudication.*** The study’s weekly reports helped states implement their compliance policies more consistently.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter described how the REA2 Impact Study team worked carefully with states to minimize disruption to existing state REA programs while still ensuring consistent implementation of and random selection for the study’s four treatment conditions.

The next four “core” chapters of the report describe how the REA program model was implemented in the four states throughout the study period. Chapter 4 describes the initial REA meeting, highlighting variation between the initial REA meetings provided to participants in the Full REA treatment groups (both Single and Multiple REA) and in the Partial REA treatment group. Chapter 5 compares and contrasts the different state philosophies for implementing subsequent REA meetings for those participants assigned to the Full Multiple REA treatment condition. Chapter 6 summarizes the services participants received after their initial REA meetings, as well as the services received by control group members after the point of random assignment. Chapter 7 describes states’ penalty policies for noncompliance with REA activities.

4. The Initial REA Meeting

The standard initial REA meeting is designed to achieve two objectives:

1. Introduce UI claimants to the resources available in the American Job Centers system early in their claim. The expectation is that this early connection to reemployment assistance will expose UI claimants to the workforce services available, increase uptake of these services, and (for most services) increase the speed with which they return to work.
2. Reduce the number of individuals inappropriately claiming UI or claiming benefits when they could immediately become employed. The underlying theory is that a mandatory, in-person meeting increases the burden of filing for UI and the likelihood that any “able and available” (A&A) issues might be detected. These realities may result in an accelerated return to work by some and a reduction in inappropriate claims (e.g., under someone else’s name or with an A&A issue) by others.

To support the REA2 Impact Study, all states implemented the standard initial REA meeting with the dual focus on reemployment services and personal accountability intended by the federal REA guidance published in Unemployment Insurance Program Letters (UIPLs).

Study participants assigned to either the Single REA or the Multiple REA treatment condition were required to attend this standard REA meeting. In this report, this treatment is labeled as “Full” REA (as described in Section 4.2). States also implemented a Partial REA initial meeting treatment. Claimants assigned to the Partial REA group were required to come into the AJC for an in-person meeting, but the services provided by states were minimal (as described in Section 4.3).

As noted briefly in Chapter 2, this Partial REA treatment was new in two of the study states (New York³⁹ and Wisconsin) and was a modified version of existing REA programs in the other two states (Indiana and Washington).

4.1 Scheduling and Timing Policies

Each of the four study states had preexisting policies and procedures for the timing and scheduling of the initial REA meeting. This section starts with a description of their approaches to scheduling, followed by an explanation of the timing for scheduling of the initial REA meeting. The section ends with a discussion of common reasons why claimants participated in the REA program later in their claims period than expected.

4.1.1 Scheduling Process

States historically have sent letters to selected UI claimants with precise instructions regarding when they need to come into the AJC to complete their initial REA meeting. The exact process of scheduling varies slightly between states, but the end result is that letters are generated and mailed to claimants with an

³⁹ New York implemented the Multiple REA meeting in all 64 AJC offices, but the Single REA and Partial REA meetings in only 10 of the 64 offices. Descriptions of New York’s implementation approach included in Chapters 4 to 7 are from the study team’s observations at 9 of the 10 sites implementing all four of the study’s treatment arms. The team did not visit any sites that assigned participants to only Multiple REA or Control.

exact date and time they need to arrive. The timing parameters and data systems used by each state to support its scheduling process during the study are summarized below.

Indiana

Indiana generates assignment lists for each treatment arm through the state's UI database using methods described in Appendix C. Lists of study participants then are transferred to the state's workforce services data system, TrackOne. There is one list for the claimants assigned to Partial REA and another list for those assigned to Single REA. The lists are sent to local offices, which in turn conduct a mail merge and send out the state's standard notification letter to participants. Partial and Single REA study participants receive uniquely formatted letters, both of which contain a customized field specifying the date and time of the initial REA meeting to which the participant is assigned.

New York

Once AJC staff have conducted random assignment, the REA staff schedule study participants for available appointments in the state's Re-Employment Operating System (REOS) scheduling system (these appointments were created in the system by REA staff at an earlier date). In REOS, the local staff member also creates a letter for each participant that is consistent with the study participant's assignment status. (There were three unique letters, one for participants in the Multiple or Single REA group, one for participants in the Partial REA group, and one for participants in the Control group.) The templates for the letters are consistent across the state and were developed by the central office. Local offices then mail each letter.

Washington

Washington creates a list of study participants in the state's UI Data Warehouse system. The participant list is then transferred to the state's central REA system (SKIES) and sorted by treatment arm and office. The central office prints and mails all notification letters, which include the date and time when the participant is required to attend. The Partial REA, Single REA, and Multiple REA groups receive nearly identical notification letters.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin has taken a different approach to scheduling than the other states. This approach allows participants to self-schedule for their REA and WPRS meetings. Wisconsin adopted this new scheduling approach (along with a complete redesign of its reemployment services approach) simultaneously with the start of the study. Once participants are randomly assigned, they are quickly sent a letter instructing them to complete an online orientation and assessment through the Job Center of Wisconsin (JCW) website. That letter is the same for all study groups, and participants have 14 days to complete both online components. Then they immediately are prompted by the online system to self-schedule for an in-person initial REA session. The scheduling system presents participants with open scheduling slots for the next 21 days, and participants choose their preferred day and time.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Wisconsin's REA staff are tasked with creating future orientation slots in the data system to ensure that sufficient appointments are available for those randomized to receive a Partial REA or Full REA session.

4.1.2 Timing of the Initial REA Meeting

The UIPL indicates that “states must contact UI REA participants no later than the fifth week of the claim and promptly schedule them for a UI REA” (DOL 2014a, p. 6). It offers no explicit guidance on what “promptly” means. Therefore, states have latitude to define this timeline themselves (see Exhibit 4.1 for official state policies).

The four study states have used this flexibility rather consistently and have tied the timing of REA services directly to their random assignment schedules. Indiana, New York, and Washington schedule REA study participants for meeting dates one to two and a half weeks after claimants’ random assignment date. The goal is to bring everyone in within the first week and a half whenever possible. (REA staff only schedule participants for the second week when the number of UI claimants is higher than the number of initial REA meeting spots available in the first week and a half.) Thus, participants typically attend their initial REA meeting between the fourth and seventh weeks of their claim, depending on the timing of their state’s random assignment.

Exhibit 4.1: Timing of Random Assignment and Service Delivery

State	Random Assignment Date	Earliest Service Delivery Date
Indiana	Saturday of 3 rd pay week (claim week 4 or later)	1½ to 2½ weeks after RA date (week 6 or 7)
New York	Friday after completed waiting week (claim week 2)	1½ to 2½ weeks after RA date (week 4 or 5)
Washington	Monday of 2 nd pay week (claim week 3 or later)	1 to 2 weeks after RA date (week 4 or 5)
Wisconsin	Friday of 1 st pay week (claim week 2 or later)	Self-scheduled; must be within 35 days of random assignment, often is much sooner (by week 7)

RA is random assignment.

Wisconsin, with its self-scheduling procedures, allows more flexibility in the timing of the initial REA meeting. Its official policy is that REA study participants have 14 days to complete the state’s required online orientation and assessment and then another 21 days to schedule and attend their initial REA meeting. If participants take all of the time allowed them, they will complete their initial REA meeting within seven weeks, similar to Indiana. Monitoring data shows, though, that most Wisconsin REA participants complete the initial meeting within six weeks of random assignment.

Chapter 6 provides additional details about how these policies translate into actual timing of service receipt in each of the four study states.

4.2 Content of Initial Meeting—Full REA

This section describes guidance from DOL’s Office of Unemployment Insurance (OUI) for the content of the initial REA meeting for the Full REA treatment group (i.e., the combination of the Single REA and Multiple REA groups). Specifically, this was the guidance in the absence of the evaluation. The section then provides a series of comparative summaries examining the broad similarities and differences in how each state approaches the specific components of the initial REA meeting. Appendix E provides additional details on the service delivery approaches of each study state.

4.2.1 Federal Guidance to States

OUI’s Unemployment Insurance Program Letter 10-14 provides guidance for nationwide implementation of what, in this study, is labeled Full REA.⁴¹ The letter indicates:

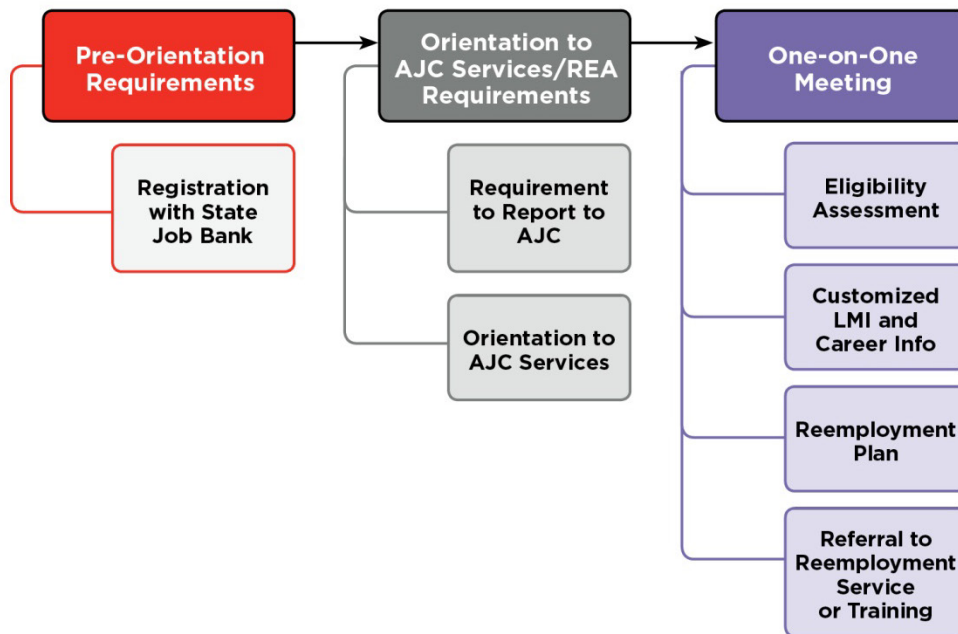
Each UI REA must include the following minimum core components:

- *UI eligibility assessment and referral to adjudication, as appropriate, if a potential issue is identified;*
- *Requirement for the claimant to report to an AJC to receive services...;*
- *The provision of labor market and career information that is specific to the claimant’s needs;*
- *Registration with the state’s job bank;*
- *Orientation to AJC services;*
- *Development or review of an individual reemployment plan that includes work search activities, accessing services provided through an AJC or using self-service tools, and/or approved training; and*
- *Referral to at least one reemployment service and/or training.*

States must provide each UI REA participant one-on-one service for the eligibility review and the development of an individual reemployment plan during the initial UI REA and any subsequent UI REA. (DOL 2014a, p. 5)

How states implement these requirements falls into three broad categories: (1) pre-orientation requirements, (2) orientation to AJC services and REA program requirements, and (3) one-on-one meeting between REA staff and the claimant (Exhibit 4.2).

Exhibit 4.2: Federal Guidance on Core Components of the REA Initial Meeting



⁴¹ As is described in Section 4.3, OUI allowed states to deviate from these services when implementing the Partial REA treatment condition.

4.2.2 Cross-State Summaries

Each state implements the federal guidelines in ways appropriate to its existing program structure and goals. As a result, while there are many similarities between states, there are also differences worth noting.

Pre-Orientation

The process begins with a notification letter from the state, which provides guidance on participants' required action steps to begin REA. All states require that study participants (1) register with the state's job bank⁴² and (2) complete pre-orientation paperwork for staff to review. This paperwork always involves completion of an assessment or questionnaire, primarily to identify possible eligibility issues and determine the claimant's readiness for work. The exact nature and intensity of this pre-orientation component varies considerably, from a pure UI eligibility questionnaire in New York to a multi-faceted assessment of job search preparedness and readiness for work in Wisconsin.

Three states (Indiana, Washington, and Wisconsin) require submission of a resume to the state's job bank before the orientation can occur. New York allows participants to work on their resume during the REA meeting and upload it at that time.⁴³ Participants in Indiana and Wisconsin are also required to bring in historical work search records (four weeks of records in Indiana, one week in Wisconsin); New York and Washington do not review work search records during the initial REA meeting.

Orientation

In all study states, participants arrive on-site and receive an orientation to the AJC's services. Excepting New York, the orientation is provided in a group setting and ranges between 45 minutes and three hours (Exhibit 4.3). In New York, eight AJCs meet with the claimant one-on-one, providing orientation information simultaneous with customized reemployment assistance. The other two sites use the group approach to manage their high claimant volume.

In all study states, the REA orientation includes the following standard topics:

- UI rules and requirements.
- AJC reemployment services.
- Externally available resources.
- Details on where to find customized labor market information.

The Indiana, Washington, and Wisconsin orientations also incorporate supplemental content. The Indiana and Washington orientations include details on how to complete job search logs, and Washington includes time for participants to fill out an initial version of their individual reemployment plan. The second half of the Wisconsin orientation is formatted like a work search readiness workshop. All

⁴² This registration is typically through the state's labor exchange website; though NY also has a supplemental paper form to capture any information claimants did not provide during the registration process.

⁴³ Indiana staff will help claimants upload their resume to the WorkOne website on the day of the orientation if they were not able to do so previously. Unlike New York, Indiana will not help them create a resume during the one-on-one session.

Wisconsin REA participants engage in this workshop, except during the 10–15 minutes when they are pulled out for their one-on-one meeting (see Appendix E for additional details).

Exhibit 4.3: Core Details on States’ Orientation to AJC Services—Full REA

	Format	Duration	Unique Program Elements
Indiana	Group	45–60 minutes	Heavy emphasis on REA program requirements
New York	Group (2 offices) Individual (8 offices)	Group: 20 minutes Individual: unclear, built into longer meeting	Reliance on standardized state-issued videos
Washington	Group	60-90 minutes	Use of video covering how to properly fill out job search logs
Wisconsin	Group	2-3 hours	Combination of REA and UI staff to deliver portions of the orientation

One-on-One Assessment Meeting

The final activity in the initial REA meeting is a one-on-one conversation between REA staff and the study participant; in Wisconsin, the assigned UI adjudicator also is present. The meeting builds from the assessment form(s) the participant completed beforehand during Pre-Orientation. Each state’s form is uniquely branded and has a slightly different emphasis (e.g., Washington’s form is framed as an eligibility review form; Wisconsin’s is a work readiness assessment). Still, all the forms cover very similar topics. They ask about participants’ availability for work, past work history, and future employment hopes. Each state uses its assessment form to guide the process of learning about participants and deciding what services they should receive going forward.

Drawing on this input, REA staff engage the claimants in a series of reemployment-related discussions and activities (Exhibit 4.4).⁴⁴ Exactly what is covered and in how much depth seem to be closely related to the amount of time allocated for the one-on-one meeting. All states include some discussion of barriers to the participant finding employment, a resume review, and the development of a reemployment plan. The amount of time spent on these activities varies, with New York staff spending the most one-on-one time with participants. All states but Indiana offer some degree of customized labor market information (LMI) during the one-on-one meetings.⁴⁵

Based on our site visit observations, LMI in this context is most often information about trends in the local labor market, either broadly or for the participant’s preferred occupation specifically. In Washington and Wisconsin, REA staff periodically speak with participants about their employment or occupational interests and then share relevant pieces of information about the local job market. New York’s one-on-one meeting includes the most systematic discussion of labor markets, including a demonstration of the state’s

⁴⁴ REA staff also assess UI eligibility during the one-on-one meeting. The next section summarizes the content of each state’s eligibility review.

⁴⁵ A small number of Indiana REA coordinators were observed talking with participants about local employers that might be hiring.

online reemployment service resources and it provides every participant with at least one job referral.⁴⁶ Washington staff also frequently provide job referrals, but not connected with a search of the state’s labor market information system.

Exhibit 4.4: Core Details on States’ One-on-One Meeting—Full REA

	Duration	Reemployment Service Content					
		Discuss Barriers	Online Resource Demo	Resume Review	Customized Labor Market Information	Job Referral	Reemployment Plan
Indiana	5–10 minutes	O		O			O
New York	40–50 minutes	X	X	X	X	X	X
Washington	5–15 minutes	O		O	O ^a		X
Wisconsin	10–15 minutes	O		O	O		X ^b

O means occurs at a cursory level. X means occurs at a more in-depth level.

^a REA staff discuss customized labor market information with a subset of participants during their one-on-one sessions. Based on study observations, we estimate that this occurs with about 25 percent of the REA participants who attend a one-on-one meeting. Staff also conduct an in-depth demonstration of the state’s labor market information website during the REA orientation.

^b Reemployment plans are developed for participants whom staff decide to call back for a second REA meeting. Other participants are deemed “work ready” and do not receive a plan or mandatory reemployment service referral.

Each one-on-one meeting ends with the development of a personalized reemployment plan. The only exception is Wisconsin, where reemployment plans are not developed for participants whom REA staff determine to be work ready and do not need to be called back for a second REA meeting.

The content of the reemployment plans varies by state, as does whether the action steps in the plan are treated as mandatory (see Chapter 7 for a discussion of states’ compliance policies). The most common types of referrals are to AJC workshops and other supportive services such as vocational rehabilitation resources or housing assistance. Exhibit 4.5 summarizes the most common referrals; Chapter 6 summarizes the services that study participants received during the study period.) Staff determine the content of the reemployment plan by considering each participant’s needs and interests and the availability of local resources. The relative importance of each of these considerations varies by state, by local office, and even by REA worker.

Though the study team observed staff in every state who thoughtfully considered which services a participant might benefit from most, we also observed staff in every state who simply asked participants to self-select their required next step(s). In some instances, their selections were based on convenience (e.g., activity occurred on the same day as their next REA meeting, activity was the only one available

⁴⁶ The Washington and Wisconsin orientations both provide an in-depth demonstration of the state’s labor exchange website. Staff ask participants to name their occupations and then pick one to show the group how to search for, and find, labor market information on an occupation.

during allowable time period). Based on our somewhat limited observations, staff in New York seemed the most likely to customize recommendations based on a participant's need; staff in Indiana seemed the most likely to have participants self-select.

REA staff in Indiana, Washington, and Wisconsin consistently tell participants that they must comply with the action steps laid out in their reemployment plans. However, enforcement varies by state. Indiana staff systematically track whether services are completed and notify UI that participants have “failed to participate” if the services are not completed within 30 days of the initial REA meeting. Wisconsin and Washington staff use the second (and third) REA meeting as a form of accountability for participants. If Washington participants do not have an acceptable reason for not completing their required activities by the time of their subsequent REA meeting, REA staff notify UI to create an issue. Staff will also schedule the participants for a third REA session if activities are not completed, regardless of the reason. In Wisconsin, there are no penalties for not completing activities between participants' first and second meetings, other than being scheduled for a follow-up meeting. However, if Wisconsin participants have not completed their required activities by their third meeting, REA staff notify UI that they have “failed to participate,” and the investigation process is begun. (See Chapter 7 for additional information on noncompliance policies.)

New York staff do not generally describe the action steps in a participant's reemployment plan as mandatory. That approach may have evolved, in part, because all participants, prior to the Impact Study were required to participate in three REA meetings (as long as they remained unemployed and continued to file for weekly benefits). The state may have viewed these meetings as the ongoing mandatory engagement, with the follow-up REA meetings being used to check on participants' progress toward implementing their plans. In the study, this approach is used for participants in the Multiple REA group. For those in the Single REA group,⁴⁷ though, no additional meetings are required, and therefore no mandatory action steps after the initial REA meeting.

⁴⁷ The Single REA treatment condition was implemented in only 10 of New York's AJCs.

Exhibit 4.5: States’ Approaches to Reemployment Service Referrals—Full REA

	Most Common Referrals						Referrals Mandatory?
	AJC Workshops	Jobs/Job Fairs	Applications to Specific Jobs	Other Supportive Services	WIOA	Mock Interviews	
Indiana	X			X	X		Yes, must attend two workshops within 30 days
New York	X	X			X ^a	X	Rarely; staff told to use discretion
Washington	X		X	X			Yes, one mandatory referral is made; enforcement occurs inconsistently
Wisconsin	X	X		X		X	Yes, one mandatory referral is made; enforcement occurs only after third REA meeting

^a All Full REA participants in New York are enrolled in WIOA, though they do not necessarily receive a lot of services under WIOA.

UI Eligibility Assessment

The study states take very different approaches to integrating the UIPL directive to include a UI eligibility assessment into the initial REA meeting. Wisconsin is the most direct. Its REA program has created a partnership with the state's UI division, so that a UI adjudicator is present at all initial REA meetings. The other states have integrated discussion of UI eligibility into their initial REA meeting, but have not made use of UI staff.

Three topics are most commonly addressed:

- Discussion of UI rules and eligibility.
- Review of claimants' eligibility, including a discussion of whether participants are able and available for suitable work.⁴⁸
- Review of weekly work search activities.

All states discuss UI rules and eligibility during either the REA orientation or the one-on-one session (Exhibit 4.6). States' approaches to reviewing claimants' eligibility and their weekly work search activities are more individualized. Key aspects of these approaches are outlined in Exhibit 4.6 and discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

⁴⁸ For additional information on UI eligibility regulations pertaining to claimants being "able and available" for work, see 20 CFR 604.

Exhibit 4.6: States' UI Rules and Eligibility—Full REA

	UI Staff Present During One-on-One Meeting?	UI Rules and Eligibility	Able and Available		Work Search			
		When Discussed?	Identify and Discuss Issues?	Report Issues to UI?	Is Work Search Reviewed?	What Is Reviewed?	Who Completes Review?	Inadequate Referred to UI?
Indiana	No	During orientation	Rarely	Rarely ^a	Yes	4 weeks of previous work search	REA staff	Infrequently
New York	No	During one-on-one meeting	Carefully discussed	Rarely ^b	No ^c			
Washington	No	During orientation	As needed, based on responses to A&A questions on assessment form	Rarely ^b	No			
Wisconsin	Yes	During orientation (presented by adjudicator)	As needed, based on adjudicator observations	As identified by adjudicator	Yes	1 week of previous work search and a job posting to which the participant recently applied	UI adjudicator	As needed

^a Issues are rarely identified and therefore rarely reported.

^b Issues are rarely reported because staff try to educate participants on A&A regulations. If participants clearly cannot work or are unwilling to change their work search based on REA guidance, their cases may be reported to UI.

^c New York staff review participants' work search activities during the second and third REA meetings.

4.3 Content of the Initial Meeting—Partial REA

The previous section described how states implemented the conventional Full REA initial meeting. As described in Section 1.2, states also created a less intensive Partial REA treatment to independently gauge the effect on the claimant of simply being called in for a brief introduction to the AJC and an eligibility review. This section briefly describes the guidance the study team provided to states, and then describes how states implemented that Partial REA treatment condition.

4.3.1 Study Guidance to States

Because the Partial REA treatment condition was designed specifically for the REA2 Impact Study, there is no federal guidance for such meetings. Instead, the Abt study team outlined core elements of the treatment condition—based loosely on the DOL Employment and Training Administration’s former Eligibility Review Program (DOL 1982)—expected from all states participating in the study:

- UI eligibility assessment and referral to adjudication, as appropriate, if a potential issue is identified.
- Requirement for the claimant to report to an AJC to receive services.
- No development of an individual reemployment plan.
- No referral to a reemployment service and/or training.

With these criteria and limitations in mind, the states each proposed an approach to the Partial REA that fit with its overall approach to the REA program and its existing state workforce structure. The study team reviewed the states’ proposals and followed up, as needed, to ensure that the elements above would be implemented. The study team also worked to ensure there would be sufficient differences to viably test the Full REA and Partial REA treatment conditions as distinct.

4.3.2 Cross-State Summaries

The Partial REA treatment conditions in New York and Wisconsin were developed exclusively for this Impact Study. New York designed its Partial REA condition (implemented in 10 AJCs) by starting with its Full REA program and eliminating select individualized elements (e.g., resume review, customized labor market information, individual reemployment plan).⁴⁹ The result is a program that delivers a basic orientation to AJC services and a minimal review of participants’ UI eligibility. Wisconsin drew on an old program model that it had not used in many years—its version of the Eligibility Review Program (ERP). Wisconsin’s Partial REA primarily focuses on reviewing participants’ work search activities.

As was discussed in Chapter 2, Indiana and Washington used existing state programs for their Partial REA treatment conditions. Both of these programs provide an orientation to AJCs and a brief primer on UI eligibility. Indiana’s emphasis is on the participants’ most recent work search activities; Washington’s is on how to complete the work search logs.

⁴⁹ New York selected to implement the Partial REA treatment in a cohort of 10 offices (four-arm cohort). The remaining offices in the study implemented a narrower set of treatment conditions, just control and Multiple REA (two-arm cohort). As a result, Section 4.3 only describes implementation in the 10 offices where Partial REA was offered.

The following subsections compare and contrast the study states’ Partial REA treatment conditions.

Pre-Orientation

Like the Full REA process, the Partial REA process begins with the notification letter from the state, which tells the claimant what actions steps are required to begin REA. These pre-orientation requirements for participants in the Partial REA treatment group are similar to those for the Full REA. Participants must (1) register with the state’s AJC system and (2) complete pre-orientation paperwork for staff to review. The paperwork required by the states is identical to that required of the Full REA group except that Indiana’s Partial REA participants do not need to complete the *WIN Career Readiness Assessment*, an in-depth assessment that lays the groundwork for this proprietary career readiness coursework.

Orientation

In Indiana, New York, and Washington, Partial REA participants must attend an in-person orientation to the AJC’s services. The content of these orientations is similar to the Full REA’s, with several important differences:

- Indiana’s Partial REA participants are not told about the REA program requirements, and there is less emphasis on UI eligibility.
- In four of New York’s AJCs, Partial REA participants receive their orientation material via state-provided videos (instead of the one-on-one orientations conducted by REA staff with Full REA participants in these offices). In the remaining six AJC sites, Full and Partial REA participants watch the same AJC orientation videos.
- Washington Partial REA participants are not told how to complete a reemployment action plan or given time during the orientation to create one.

In Wisconsin, there is no orientation to AJC services for Partial REA participants.

One-on-One Assessment Meeting

To maintain the integrity of the impact evaluation design, each of the four study states agreed to provide no or minimal one-on-one services to participants assigned to the Partial REA treatment group. Exhibits 4.7 and 4.8 describe the differences between the Full REA and Partial REA group one-on-one meetings.

Exhibit 4.7: Contrasting Full REA and Partial REA One-on-One Meetings—Duration

	Full REA	Partial REA
Indiana	5–10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some offices, 5–10 minutes; in others, no one-on-one meeting • Staff review work searches quickly before/after orientation, in group setting
New York	40–50 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some offices, 5–10 minutes; in others, no one-on-one meeting • Staff review forms during orientation videos; follow up after orientation, if needed, in group setting)
Washington	5–15 minutes	No one-on-one meeting
Wisconsin	10–15 minutes	10–15 minutes

Exhibit 4.8: Contrasting Full REA and Partial REA One-on-One Meetings—Content

	Full REA	Partial REA
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers discussion • Resume review 	Review work search activities for completeness
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor market information • Reemployment plan 	Review UI eligibility form for eligibility issues
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of online resources (New York only) • Job referral (New York only) 	No one-on-one meeting
Wisconsin		Review work search activities for completeness

In contrast to the Full REA, the Partial REA one-on-one meetings, when they occur, focus exclusively on aspects of UI eligibility rather than on providing reemployment assistance. In New York, the discussion focuses on A&A issues. In Indiana and Wisconsin, the discussion focuses on the participants’ work search activities. For the study, staff in all states were trained to provide no additional reemployment services or substantive guidance to claimants. If Partial REA participants ask the REA staff for additional assistance, the staff was instructed refer the participants to the Resource Room or the Front Desk where a different, non-REA staff member might help them.

The contrast between the Full REA and Partial REA treatment arms is most pronounced in the New York AJCs that implement both models:

- Full REA participants receive an intensive one-on-one session with REA staff, whereas the Partial REA participants receive either no one-on-one assistance or only a UI eligibility review.

In Washington and Wisconsin, the treatment contrast is less distinct but still present:

- In Washington, Partial REA participants receive no one-on-one assistance, though they do receive a full orientation to the AJC’s services.
- The opposite is true in Wisconsin, where Partial REA participants must complete a one-on-one meeting with REA staff to discuss their past work search activities, but they receive no orientation to the AJC’s services and no reemployment-related guidance or feedback during the meeting.

The treatment contrast in Indiana is the least distinct:

- Partial REA participants attend an AJC orientation and must complete a one-on-one meeting. The content of this meeting, though, is substantively different for Partial REA and Single REA participants, with the latter receiving some reemployment guidance from REA staff and a referral and mandatory follow-up for additional reemployment activities.

UI Eligibility Assessment

The states take similar approaches to integrating the UIPL directive to include UI eligibility assessment for Full REA and Partial REA participants. Still, they use a somewhat “lighter touch” for the latter since staff spend less time with Partial REA participants and have fewer opportunities to hear or observe potential A&A issues.

Exhibit 4.9 summarizes each state’s assessment approach for Partial REA participants. Additional detail is provided in Chapter 7. See Exhibit 4.6 for the corresponding information for Full REA.

Exhibit 4.9: States’ UI Rules and Eligibility—Partial REA

	UI Staff Present During One-on-One Meeting?	UI Rules and Eligibility	Able and Available		Work Search			
		When Discussed?	Identify and Discuss Issues?	Report Issues to UI?	Is Work Search Reviewed?	What Is Reviewed?	Who Completes Review?	Inadequate Referred to UI?
Indiana	No	During orientation	Almost never	Almost never	Yes	4 weeks of previous work search	REA staff	Infrequently
New York	No	During one-on-one meeting	Discussed	Rarely ^a	No			
Washington	No	During orientation	Almost never	Almost never	No			
Wisconsin	No	During orientation	Almost never	Almost never	Yes	1 week of previous work search	REA staff	Infrequently

^a Issues are rarely reported because staff try to educate participants on A&A regulations. If participants clearly cannot work or are unwilling to change their work search based on REA guidance, their cases may be reported to UI.

4.4 Attendance Rates

This section describes attendance patterns for the initial REA meeting for study participants assigned to the Single REA and Multiple REA treatment conditions (grouped as “Full REA”) and the Partial REA condition.⁵⁰ After describing the Full REA participation rates, we describe the experiences of those assigned to Partial REA. (Chapter 5 describes the additional services provided to those assigned to the Multiple REA treatment condition, and also considers participation patterns for subsequent REA meetings for those participants.)

To complete this analysis, we combined state administrative records used to monitor randomization and receipt of employment and training services. Each state provided Abt with raw and comprehensive service data pulled directly from its centralized state reemployment services database. The data are accurate to the extent that state and local staff entered all services delivered to REA participants. Based on conversations with state REA staff, it is likely that there is some underreporting of services. This is because local staff often track workshop participation in their local scheduling system rather than in the centralized database, and because staff are very busy and do not always enter every service provided.

4.4.1 Full REA (Single and Multiple) Initial REA Meetings

This analysis grouped participants assigned to Single REA and Multiple REA into a “Full REA” group because their REA experience is virtually identical until the end of their initial REA meeting. The difference is that Multiple REA participants are asked to return for a subsequent meeting and Single REA participants are not.⁵¹

Exhibit 4.10 shows how participants flow through the initial steps of the REA program: random assignment, scheduling the first meeting, and then attending the first meeting, which is equivalent to completing it.

In Indiana, New York, and Washington, nearly all participants (at least 99 percent) who were randomized into the Full REA treatment groups (Single and Multiple) were scheduled for an initial REA meeting. Reasons why a participant might not have been scheduled for a meeting in these states include post-randomization exemptions and reemployment. The situation in Wisconsin, however, is different. Only 81 percent of participants were scheduled for an initial REA meeting. The difference likely is related to how meetings are scheduled in each state. As

How to Read Exhibit 4.10

This and similar exhibits in several places in this report present completion rates alongside the average duration to completion. These illustrative exhibits are based on actual enrollment and participation levels.

For each state, the “100” in the top section of the graphic represents all participants (i.e., 100 percent) who were randomized to the named treatment arm. Each subsequent section reports the figurative number of participants who moved from one step to the next. For instance, in Indiana, 99 out of 100 participants randomized were scheduled for a first meeting; 63 of those 99 actually attended it.

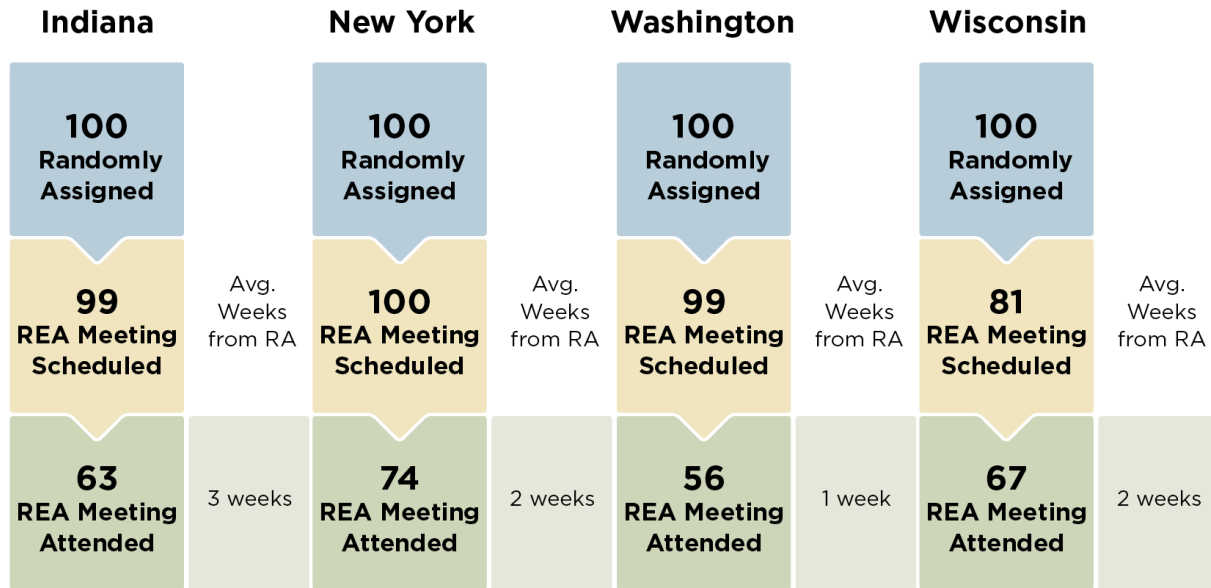
The average time between random assignment and meeting completion, for those who completed, is presented in the text box to the right of each graphic (e.g., “3 weeks” for Indiana).

⁵⁰ Participation is reported for the specified follow-up periods discussed in Chapter 3.

⁵¹ In New York, the Single REA meeting was implemented in only 10 AJCs, whereas the Multiple REA meeting was implemented across a significantly greater number of AJCs.

described in Section 4.1, all states except Wisconsin schedule participants into specific REA sessions soon after random assignment. In Wisconsin, however, participants self-schedule their REA appointments. Therefore, the percentage of participants not scheduled for REA in Wisconsin almost certainly represents those who decided not to complete (or did not understand) the REA requirements.⁵²

Exhibit 4.10: Initial REA Meeting Participation Patterns—Full REA (Single and Multiple) Group



RA is random assignment.

Note: In New York, Full REA includes the Multiple REA group across all AJCs and the Single REA group in 10 of the AJCs. Analyses are limited to participants with at least 25 weeks of follow-up data in Indiana, 23 weeks of follow-up data in New York, 18 weeks of follow-up data in Washington, and 19 weeks of follow-up data in Wisconsin to allow enough time to work through all the state-specific stages of the program. Analyses are based on a weighted *N* for Indiana to account for varying randomization fractions among the three treatment arms across place and time during the course of the study.

This difference in the states’ rates of scheduling the initial REA meeting does not appear to have had a more than moderate effect on the rate of meeting completion, however. The 67 percent of participants in Wisconsin who actually attended an initial REA meeting⁵³ is comparable to the rate of completion in Indiana (63) and New York (74) and is notably higher than the rate of completion in Washington (56). In all states, participants might not attend a meeting due to noncompliance (i.e., they choose not to attend), post-randomization exemptions, or reemployment. The structure of state services and UI data make it difficult to identify the relative pervasiveness of each of these factors.

⁵² Any interstate or cross-treatment condition difference in this section that is substantively important (i.e., a few percentage points) is also statistically significant. In particular, the standard error of differences across states or across treatment conditions is approximately one percentage point, so a two percentage point difference in rates is significant at $p < .05$.

⁵³ Because the study did not conduct random assignment based on different scheduling procedures, this comparison is a simple (unadjusted) cross-state comparison. Other factors that vary between the states could explain, at least in part, the apparent similarity in completion rates.

Attendance patterns across states do, however, indicate that at least some of the variation is the result of participant choice rather than a variation in local economic conditions or exemption policies. The states with the highest rates of attendance (New York and Wisconsin) have the most stringent noncompliance policies—an indefinite hold is placed on a participant’s claim for not attending a scheduled meeting. The lowest completion rate was in Washington (56), where the penalty for not attending an REA meeting is a one-week suspension of UI benefits. (See Chapter 7 for additional information on noncompliance policies.)

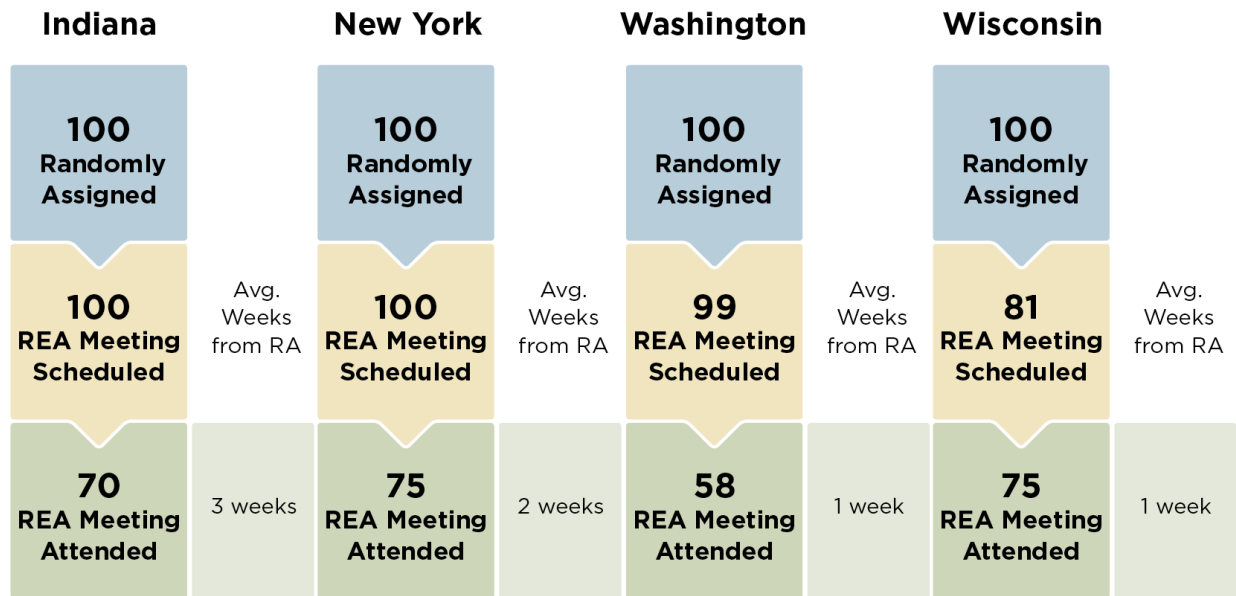
Participants generally complete their initial REA meetings in line with state timing policies (see the “average weeks from random assignment” estimates in Exhibit 4.10). What is not apparent from these estimates is the unique timing patterns in each state. In Indiana, the majority of REA participants attend their initial meeting in the second week after randomization, but some attend as far out as 6 to 10 weeks after random assignment. In New York, the majority of Single and Multiple REA participants attend their initial meeting within one to two weeks after randomization, and very few attend their first meeting after four weeks. In Washington, nearly all Full REA participants attend their initial meeting between one and two weeks after randomization. Finally, Wisconsin had the most variation in the timing between randomization and initial meeting: About one-fifth of its participants attend their initial meeting in each of the first five weeks after randomization.

These patterns seem to reflect the influence of states’ scheduling and noncompliance policies (e.g., use of indefinite holds versus denial of benefits).

4.4.2 Partial REA Initial REA Meetings

Meeting completion among participants who were randomized into the Partial REA treatment group follows patterns similar to those found among the Full REA participants. Nearly all participants (at least 99 percent) were scheduled for their initial REA meeting—except in Wisconsin, where only 81 percent were scheduled (Exhibit 4.11). Partial REA participants are more likely to complete their initial REA meeting than are their Full REA counterparts in each state. At least 70 of 100 completed their initial meeting in Indiana, New York, and Wisconsin; 58 of 100 completed their initial meeting in Washington. The smaller burden of shorter appointments and fewer pre-orientation requirements for Partial REA participants likely contributes to these higher attendance rates.

Exhibit 4.11: Initial REA Meeting Participation Patterns—Partial REA Group



RA is random assignment.

Note: New York implemented the Partial REA treatment condition in 10 of 64 AJCs. Analyses are limited to participants with at least 25 weeks of follow-up data in Indiana, 23 weeks of follow-up data in New York, 18 weeks of follow-up data in Washington, and 19 weeks of follow-up data in Wisconsin to allow enough time to work through all the state-specific stages of the program. Analyses are based on a weighted *N* for Indiana to account for varying randomization fractions among the three treatment arms across place and time during the course of the study.

One plausible explanation for why Partial REA participants are more likely to attend the initial REA meeting than are Full REA participants is the appointment length information in the notification letters. Appendix G provides that language. In three of the four states, the Full REA meeting is explicitly longer than the Partial REA meeting (New York: “up to” one versus two hours; Washington: two versus three hours; Wisconsin: 15 minutes versus three hours). In the fourth state, Indiana, there is no information about duration for the Partial REA meeting; stated duration for the Full REA in the notice varies from office to office, but the state standard is 45 minutes.

Partial REA participants generally complete their initial meetings at about the same time as the Full REA participants in their states. Indiana participants complete their initial meeting three weeks after randomization, on average; in the other states, the meeting is completed within one or two weeks.

Wisconsin is the only state where the average time to meeting completion for Partial REA participants is shorter than for Full REA participants. This is likely because the Wisconsin Partial REA meeting is 15 minutes in duration and the Full REA meeting is two to three hours.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter described the initial REA meeting in all four states for UI claimants assigned to the Full (Single REA or Multiple REA) and Partial REA treatment groups.

Though all of the states implemented their Full REA initial meetings within the guidance provided by DOL, a moderate amount of heterogeneity is evident across the states. This chapter noted these key differences while also highlighting points of similarity. All states implement similar pre-orientation

requirements, including taking participant assessments, registering with the state job bank, and bringing a resume to the initial REA meeting. The primary variation between states relates to work search verification. Indiana and Wisconsin require participants to bring in documentation of their work search activities, and New York and Washington do not. The day of the initial REA meeting, all states provide an orientation about AJC services to Full REA participants, most in a group setting. The content of the orientation is similar across states. The primary differences relate to how much information is provided on a given topic. For example, Wisconsin's orientation is two to three hours, which allows for in-depth demonstration of the state's labor market information system and detailed discussion of possible work search strategies.

New York offers the shortest orientation and the longest one-on-one meeting. As a result, much of the content that other states offer during the orientation, New York staff discuss one-on-one with participants. This content includes customized labor market information, discussion of UI eligibility requirements, resume review, and local job referrals. In contrast, Indiana offers the shortest one-on-one meeting. The Indiana meeting primarily answers any questions the participant has from the AJC orientation, briefly reviews the individual participant's self-assessment forms (including A&A-related questions), and schedules participants for their required workshops. These operational and design differences provide an important contextual foundation for interpreting the findings of the impact analysis.

The Partial REA intervention, as designed for the REA2 Impact Evaluation, largely was a requirement to bring UI claimants into the AJC for an eligibility review. All four states implemented the Partial REA treatment as agreed upon. There was considerable variation among states, though. The resulting within-state contrasts between Full REA and Partial REA varied by state, depending on the combined intensity of the Partial REA meeting and the baseline intensity of the Full REA treatment condition that was present in states at the beginning of the study. The treatment contrast was the most pronounced in New York⁵⁴ and Wisconsin; the weakest contrast was found in Indiana, largely due to the relatively short orientation and one-on-one meeting delivered to Full REA participants. Similar to the Full REA discussion, these differences provide context for interpreting the findings of the impact analysis.

Though the initial REA meeting is mandatory, compliance is well below 100 percent. Across all states, less than 70 percent of those claimants randomized actually appear for the initial REA meeting. Notably, in Wisconsin, where a very different scheduling approach is used, the attendance rate was directly in line with most of the other states. Exactly why participants choose not to attend the initial REA meeting is unknown. It is plausible, though, that at least some of those participants have become employed between having been scheduled for a meeting and the date on which they were to attend. A later report is planned that will include external data on employment and earnings that will help to clarify those issues.

Finally, a differential attendance rate was notable between participants assigned to Full REA and Partial REA, with higher numbers of Partial REA participants attending their initial REA meeting in all states. This result is consistent with deliberate behavior on the part of the claimant—that claimants are less likely to appear for the longer Full REA meeting than for the shorter Partial REA meeting (the duration is made clear in the scheduling notification participants receive).

⁵⁴ New York implemented Single REA and Partial REA in 10 selected AJCs.

5. Subsequent REA Meetings

Three of the four study states decided to implement the Multiple REA treatment condition. Only Indiana elected not to do so. According to conversations with the three states, the subsequent REA meetings achieve three objectives:

- ***Provide an Opportunity for Sustained Support and Guidance:*** For claimants who remain unemployed later into their claims, subsequent meetings provide a one-on-one opportunity to reinforce or modify their reemployment plan.
- ***Reinforce Messages of Accountability and Personal Responsibility:*** Subsequent meetings allow staff to reemphasize participants' responsibilities for pursuing assigned activities and reemployment services. The assumption is that participants are more likely to complete assignments when they are required to meet with REA staff to discuss their progress.
- ***Assess Continued Eligibility for UI Benefits.*** If a participant becomes ineligible to certify for weekly benefits after the initial REA meeting (e.g., due to the development of an A&A issue), REA staff may identify those incorrect claims at a subsequent meeting.

According to Unemployment Insurance Program Letter 10-14

States are allowed, but not required, to conduct subsequent REA meetings: "Up to three UI REAs for each individual claimant may be funded by the UI REA grant" (DOL 2014a, p. 6).

The UIPL also stipulates some requirements for the subsequent meetings: "It is not necessary to repeat the orientation session. [Meetings] must include an eligibility review; review and updating of the claimant's individual reemployment plan; the provision of labor market information if changes so dictate; and referral to reemployment services or training" (p. 5).

This chapter describes states' approaches in implementing subsequent REA meetings. The chapter begins by discussing eligibility criteria for determining who would be told to return for a subsequent meeting, and then describes the states' policies for implementing the second and third meetings. The chapter ends with a discussion of claimant participation rates and the timing of the meetings—first for the states that offered Multiple REA interventions and then for the state of Indiana, which did not.

Indiana is included in this chapter because the goals of its post initial REA meeting requirements are similar to the goals of the other states for subsequent REA meetings (e.g., increasing accountability, reviewing work search activities), and all provide longer-term engagements of select participants in the states' REA programs.

5.1 Cross-State Summaries

With the exception of Indiana, each study state had preexisting policies and procedures that shaped the timing and scheduling of their subsequent REA meetings. This section describes broad similarities and differences between New York, Washington, and Wisconsin. This section first considers the criteria used to identify claimants who are required to attend subsequent meetings, and then the structure and delivery of the meetings themselves.

5.1.1 Eligibility Criteria

Even in states that implemented the Multiple REA treatment condition, not every UI claimant assigned to that treatment condition is required to participate in a subsequent meeting. Exact policies that address this issue differ across the states (Exhibit 5.1).

New York follows the simplest rule: all participants who attend an initial REA meeting are told they must return for a second meeting, regardless of their readiness for work.⁵⁵

REA staff in Washington and Wisconsin use a slightly more complicated process to decide whether a participant must attend subsequent meetings, though their processes are similar. Following the initial REA meeting, Washington and Wisconsin REA staff make a determination as to whether a claimant is “work ready,” meaning that the claimant has sufficient skills to effectively search for work and to carry out the requirements of the desired occupation.⁵⁶

Common reasons why REA staff may identify participants as not work ready—and therefore require them to attend a subsequent meeting—include demonstrating some substantial barrier to employment (e.g., need additional workshop services) or exhibiting unproductive work search practices (e.g., searching for work they are not qualified to perform). Staff may also require claimants to attend a subsequent meeting if they do not comply with the requirements of the initial REA meeting (e.g., fail to bring work search records).

In New York, Washington, and Wisconsin, participants could be required to attend subsequent REA meetings but later become exempt (e.g., find a job).

Exhibit 5.1: States’ Eligibility Criteria for Subsequent REA Meetings

State	Required to Attend Subsequent REAs
New York	All who complete initial meeting
Washington	Participants deemed not “work ready”
Wisconsin	Participants deemed not “job search / work ready”

During the study, about 90 percent of participants in Washington who (1) were assigned to the Multiple REA treatment condition and (2) attended the initial REA meeting were required to attend a second meeting (see Exhibit 5.6 in Section 5.2). During the initial REA meeting, staff tell all participants that they will be contacted to schedule a second meeting, but those participants subsequently deemed work ready (the remaining 10 percent) are never contacted.

In Wisconsin, REA staff considered about 48 percent of participants in the Multiple REA group that attended their initial REA meeting to be “not work ready.” This determination is communicated to

⁵⁵ When the date of their meeting arrives, participants are required to attend only if they still are claiming UI.

⁵⁶ In both Washington and Wisconsin, staff review participants’ required pre-orientation materials while participants are listening to the orientation. In some cases, staff know before the initial REA meeting that the participant will need to return for a subsequent meeting. This typically is because the participant has forgotten to bring required materials (e.g., a resume) to the meeting or because their materials were incomplete or inadequate.

participants during the initial REA meeting, and those participants deemed not work ready are told they are required to attend a subsequent REA meeting.

5.1.2 Description of the Second REA Meeting

This section compares the structure and content of the second REA meeting across states. It starts with the timing and duration of the meetings, followed by staffing and delivery approach, and concludes with the content of the meeting itself.

Timing and Duration

The UIPL does not provide any guidance as to when states ought to conduct the second REA meeting, but states typically bring participants back for the second meeting within one month of the initial REA meeting. Each state allows REA staff some flexibility for scheduling the follow-up meeting, allowing staff to work around office volume, timing of upcoming reemployment workshops, and participants’ availability (Exhibit 5.2).

Wisconsin allows for a period of one to four weeks between the initial and the second REA meeting; in practice, REA staff typically schedule the second meeting two weeks after the initial meeting. New York allows for a period of two to four weeks; the second meeting is often scheduled four weeks after the initial meeting. Washington participants are scheduled for subsequent meetings either three or four weeks following the first meeting.

Exhibit 5.2: States’ Policies on Timing for Subsequent REA Meetings

	Common Timing of Subsequent REAs (# of weeks after previous meeting)
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second meeting: 4 weeks • Third meeting: 8 weeks
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second meeting: 3–4 weeks • Third meeting: 3–4 weeks
Wisconsin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second meeting: 2 weeks • Third meeting: 2–4 weeks (varies by office)

With regard to the duration of the second meeting, the UIPL suggests that “subsequent UI REAs require less time and resources to complete,” relative to the initial REA meeting (DOL 2014a, p. 5). Accordingly, the second meetings are shorter than the initial REA meetings in all three states.

As observed, Washington conducts the shortest meetings (10–15 minutes, on average), followed by Wisconsin (15–30 minutes) and New York (25–35 minutes). These meeting times are longer than the one-on-one initial REA meeting in Washington and Wisconsin, and a little shorter than in New York (Exhibit 5.3). Overall, though, participants spend considerably more time in the AJCs for their first REA meeting than in any subsequent meetings, at least those meetings dedicated to REA (i.e., participants might come to the AJC early and work on the computer or attend an AJC workshop later in the day after the REA meeting).

Exhibit 5.3: Comparative Length of States’ REA Meetings

	Initial REA Meeting		Subsequent REA Meeting(s)	
	Orientation	One-on-One	Orientation	One-on-One
New York	Group: 20 minutes One-on-one: unclear, built into longer meeting	40–50 minutes	N/A	25–35 minutes
Washington	60–90 minutes	5–15 minutes	N/A	10–15 minutes
Wisconsin	2–3 hours	10–15 minutes	N/A	15–30 minutes

Staffing and Delivery

The approach to staffing the subsequent REA meetings varies across states, consistent with staffing models the states use for their initial REA meetings. In New York and Washington, participants meet individually with one REA staff member; in Wisconsin, participants meet with both an REA staff member and a UI adjudicator simultaneously.

REA participants do not necessarily meet with the same REA staff members for their subsequent meetings as they did for their initial meeting (Exhibit 5.4). This is seen most clearly in Washington, where subsequent REA meetings typically are conducted by phone and staff are generally assigned a list of claimants for follow-up meetings based on their availability during the week.

In New York, 4 of the 10 study offices try to ensure that participants meet with the same staff member for each meeting, unless circumstances make that impossible. In the remaining New York offices, subsequent meetings are usually assigned to staff according to their availability or on a rotation.

In Wisconsin, each local office is assigned a single UI adjudicator to attend all of that office’s REA meetings. Under this arrangement, REA participants attending a subsequent meeting will usually meet with the same adjudicator who staffed the initial REA meeting. However, it is unusual for the same REA staff member to attend both the initial and the second REA meeting. This happens more commonly in smaller offices with fewer REA staff.

Both New York and Wisconsin conduct all subsequent REA meetings in person, at the same office location where the initial REA meeting is conducted. States differ slightly on where the REA meetings take place in the office—New York’s meetings are held at the REA staff member’s computer, typically in a cubicle or at a semi-private desk. Wisconsin’s meetings typically are held away from the staff member’s desk in a separate meeting room or semi-private table. In Washington, all subsequent REA meetings are conducted over the phone.

Exhibit 5.4: States’ Approaches to Implementing Subsequent REA Meetings

	Staffing Approach	Mode of Completion
New York	Four offices: same REA staff member participates in initial and subsequent meetings Six offices: REA staff assigned based on availability	In-person
Washington	REA staff assigned based on availability	Phone
Wisconsin	REA staff assigned based on availability Same UI adjudicator participates in initial and subsequent meetings	In-person

Content of Meetings

The second REA meetings vary in content across states with regard to the types of services delivered and the overall intensity of the meetings. New York and Wisconsin opt for more intensive meetings, while Washington allows for shorter check-in meetings to monitor progress.

Of the three states with multiple REA meetings, Washington's second meetings are the shortest. REA staff check whether participants completed the mandatory activity that had been assigned in the initial REA meeting, discuss any outstanding issues or barriers to employment, and make at least one additional mandatory referral to a reemployment service, even if the participant will not be called back for a third meeting. Staff use feedback from claimants about their general progress and whether they completed the mandatory activity to identify possible UI eligibility issues. However, staff do not directly review UI eligibility or work search activities.

Second meetings in New York and Wisconsin both are more likely to last longer and cover more topics than meetings in Washington. Related to a review of UI eligibility and work search, staff ask New York participants to bring a copy of recent work search records and to complete a second UI Eligibility Questionnaire, which staff then review during the meeting. In Wisconsin, the UI adjudicator reviews the participant's recent work search records and asks questions as necessary to identify any eligibility issues. In both states, REA staff discuss participants' progress toward completing any services or workshops assigned during the initial REA meeting and make additional referrals as the staff member deems necessary.⁵⁷

Though subsequent meetings in these states share many of the same components, they differ in some regards. Wisconsin's meetings emphasize a discussion of barriers to reemployment, which is facilitated by an assessment form that participants complete on their own between the first and second meetings. REA staff use the results to inform the discussion and referrals to services made during the second meeting. In New York, REA staff are more easily able to deliver labor market information and print job referrals since the meetings are conducted deskside at the staff member's computer.

5.1.3 Description of the Third REA Meeting

In each state, participants required to attend a third REA meeting are identified and scheduled according to the same criteria and procedures used for scheduling the second meeting. As shown in Exhibit 5.5 (in Section 5.2), REA staff in Washington and Wisconsin require approximately 68 percent and 25 percent, respectively, of participants who attend a second REA meeting to attend a third REA meeting. In New York, all participants who attend a second meeting are scheduled for a third.

In each state, the design of the third REA meeting is nearly identical to that of the second REA meeting. REA staff are instructed to cover the same content, and the third REA meetings usually last as long as the second. In practice, site liaison teams observed some variation in the intensity of the third meeting relative to the second meeting. Some REA staff use the third meetings as more of a shorter check-in and review of the participant's work search; other staff continue to deliver the same suite of services offered at the second meeting.

⁵⁷ In Wisconsin, staff make referrals only if the claimant is deemed to still be "not work ready." In New York, since all claimants are called back for a third meeting, staff always make a referral to at least one reemployment service.

The states’ policies regarding the timing of the third REA meeting sometimes vary from the timing of the second meeting (see Exhibit 5.2 above). New York and Wisconsin typically allow for more time between the second and third REA meetings. In New York, policy states the third meeting can be scheduled four to eight weeks after the second meeting; in practice, staff often schedule the third meeting eight weeks after the second meeting. Washington maintains its three or four weeks between the second and third meetings. Wisconsin policy allows one to four weeks between meetings, but in practice, REA staff typically schedule the third meeting four weeks after the second.

New York’s timing, in some ways, brings its policy of scheduling everyone for a second and third REA meeting more in line with the other study states that seek to target subsequent services to those who may need additional assistance in order to secure employment. Rather than having REA staff members proactively decide which participants are not work ready, and therefore in need of a subsequent REA meeting, New York partially allows its schedule to make the determination. By consciously building in a longer waiting period between meetings, only those claimants unable to find employment during the period are served.

5.2 Attendance Rates—Multiple REA

This section presents information on meeting completion for Multiple REA participants in New York, Washington, and Wisconsin (Exhibit 5.6).

To make clearer what factors may have influenced completion rates, this section begins by presenting states’ policies on (1) who must return for subsequent REA meetings, (2) the timing of when subsequent REA meetings are scheduled, and (3) the mode of completion (Exhibit 5.5). The combination of these factors helps to explain some of the variation visible in Exhibit 5.6.⁵⁸

Exhibit 5.5: States’ Policies for Subsequent REA Meetings

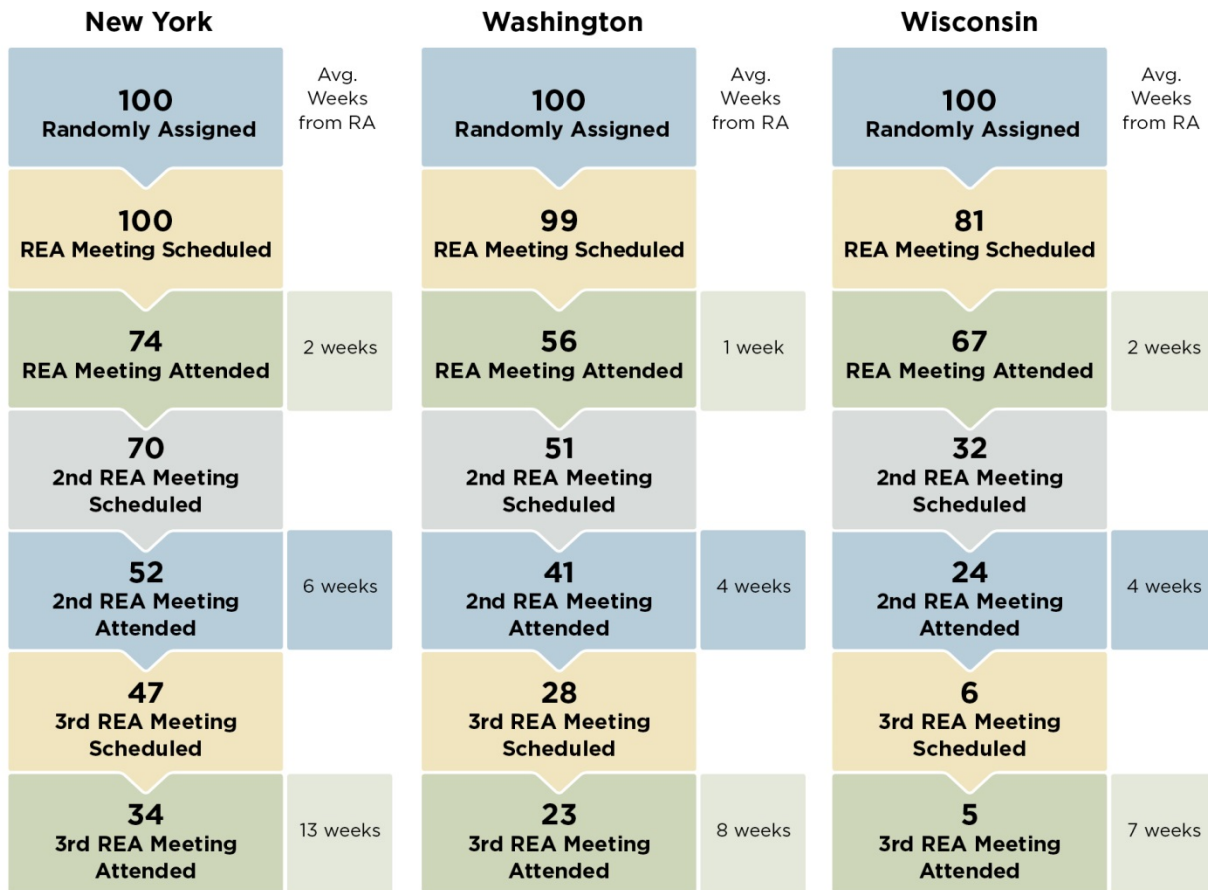
	Required to Attend Subsequent REA Meetings	Approximate Timing of Subsequent REA Meetings (# of weeks after previous meeting)	Mode of Completion
New York	All who complete initial meeting	Second: 4 weeks Third: 8 weeks	In-person
Washington	Participants deemed “not work ready”	Second: 3–4 weeks Third: 3–4 weeks	Phone
Wisconsin	Participants deemed not “job search ready” or “work ready”	Second: 2 weeks Third: 2–4 weeks (varies by office)	In-person

In New York, approximately 74 percent of participants attended their initial REA meeting; of those (i.e., conditional on attending initial meeting), 52 percent attended a second meeting (Exhibit 5.6). Approximately one-third of the sample completed all three meetings (34 percent), and they did so within 13 weeks of randomization, on average. New York’s longer completion time frame is consistent with

⁵⁸ The note about statistical significance in Chapter 4 also applies here. Any interstate or cross-treatment condition difference in this section that is substantively important (i.e., a few percentage points) is also statistically significant. In particular, the standard error of differences across states or across treatment conditions is approximately one percentage point, so a two percentage point difference in rates is significant at $p < .05$.

state scheduling policies that leave four to eight weeks between REA meetings. This extended follow-up period may explain in part why, though all REA participants in New York are required to attend and compliance is strongly enforced, only a small percentage of Multiple REA participants ultimately complete all three required meetings. It is likely that a higher proportion of participants have returned to work by the time the third REA meeting is scheduled to occur in New York than in other states where the third meeting happens much earlier in a participant’s claim.

Exhibit 5.6: Subsequent REA Meeting Participation Patterns—Multiple REA Group



RA is random assignment.

Note: Analyses are limited to participants with at least 23 weeks of follow-up data in New York, 18 weeks of follow-up data in Washington, and 19 weeks of follow-up data in Wisconsin to allow for enough time to work through all the state-specific stages of the program.

In Washington, only 56 percent of participants attended their initial REA meeting; 41 percent of them attended a second meeting, and only 23 percent attended a third meeting. The process in Washington is substantially shorter, averaging eight weeks to make it through all three meetings. Attendance rates increased substantially between the first and second REA meetings. Only 56 percent of participants attended their first REA meeting, but 73 percent of those scheduled for a second meeting attended. This may be because participants are able to complete the second meeting by phone within a prescheduled one-hour time slot (as opposed to having to travel to and from an AJC, in addition to the meeting time, as is required in the other states).

Finally, in Wisconsin, 67 percent of participants attended their first meeting. Among all claimants assigned to the Multiple REA treatment condition, 32 percent were scheduled for and 24 percent attended a second meeting, and 5 percent attended a third meeting (only six participants were scheduled for a third meeting so the actual completion rate was high). Of those who completed a third meeting, the average time to completion was seven weeks from the time of randomization. Compared to the other states, Wisconsin staff chose to schedule a substantially lower percentage of participants for second and third REA meetings—48 percent and 25 percent, respectively. REA staff make this decision based on whom they perceive to be “not work ready.”

From field observations and conversations with state staff, it appears that the functional definition of “work ready” in Wisconsin relates more strongly to whether participants have the skills they need to get hired (e.g., have an appropriate resume, understand how to interview) than to whether they have the right skills for the jobs in the area or in their desired profession. Staff in Wisconsin also focus on barriers to employment, but tend to refer participants with major employment barriers to partner agencies rather than continue to serve them through REA. These practices may have contributed to the state’s low scheduling rates for subsequent REA meetings.

In the three states implementing Multiple REA, the fractions of those randomly assigned to REA who attend the second REA meeting varies widely (52 percent in New York, 41 percent in Washington, 24 percent in Wisconsin). However, attendance rates conditional on having a second REA scheduled are quite similar (74 percent in New York, 80 percent in Washington, and 70 percent in Wisconsin). Thus, the difference across states in meeting attendance appears to be due to differences in rates of scheduling those who attend the initial REA meeting for a second REA meeting. New York and Washington schedule almost everyone who attends the initial REA meeting for a second REA meeting (94 percent and 91 percent, respectively); Wisconsin schedules fewer than half (48 percent). This variation in schedule rates is consistent with state policy. New York’s policy to schedule all Multiple REA participants for a second and third REA meeting resulted in the greatest number of participants scheduled and served by the Multiple REA process. The lowest rates of scheduling were found in Wisconsin, where the REA staff only scheduled for a second REA the claimants deemed not work ready (proxied for by quality of their resume and work search, rather than on whether they had the right skills for the job or occupation they desire).

5.3 Overall Completion Rates in Indiana

Though Indiana does not conduct subsequent REA meetings, the state does require all REA participants to complete a series of post-orientation activities in the 30 days after their initial REA meeting. These activities include:

- UI-required weekly job search activities, one of which must be completing an application for a job.
- Two additional job search–related activities each week, which can include AJC workshops, skills assessments, networking events, job shadowing, or other career/job development activities.
- Attendance at two AJC workshops during the four-week period.

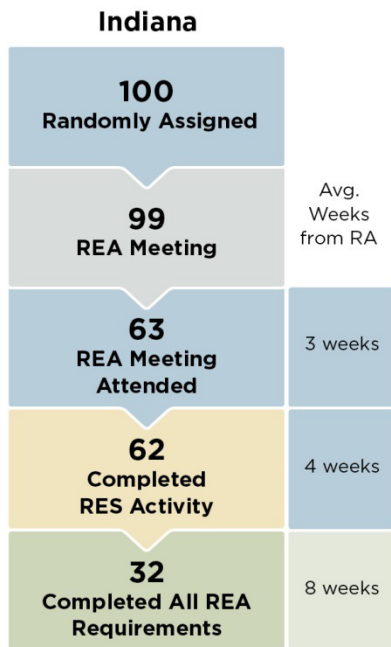
Participants report back to their assigned REA staff member on these activities using a “biweekly log” form, which they email, mail, or drop off in person biweekly. These follow-up activities are designed to speed participants’ return to work, create accountability, and reconnect them to the AJC, similar to the way subsequent REA meetings do in other states.

Indiana is included in this chapter because these longer-term follow-up activities serve some of the same purposes as the subsequent REA meetings do in other states (e.g., reinforce messages of accountability and personal responsibility; assess continued eligibility for UI benefits). It is useful, therefore, to review program completion rates in Indiana against subsequent REA meeting completion rates in the other states. Rates in all states represent the longer-term engagements of select REA participants, though Indiana’s data are not directly comparable to the attendance rates presented for New York, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Overall, 63 percent of REA participants in Indiana attended their initial REA meeting. Of those, 62 percent completed a reemployment service activity. About one-half of those (32 percent of participants assigned to the Single REA treatment condition) completed all the remaining requirements, including two biweekly logs and two workshops. The remaining 30 percent of those assigned to the Single REA treatment condition likely are a combination of claimants who were able to return to work and those who chose not to complete the required activities.

On average, those Indiana participants who completed all of the required activities did so within eight weeks of randomization—similar to the time frame in Washington and Wisconsin.

Exhibit 5.7: REA Follow-Up Participation Patterns—Indiana



RA is random assignment. RES is reemployment service.

Note: Analyses are limited to participants with at least 25 weeks of follow-up data in Indiana to allow for enough time to work through the all the state-specific stages of the program.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter described policies and procedures and attendance rates for UI claimants assigned to the Multiple REA treatment group. Because providing subsequent REA meetings to UI claimants is optional under federal guidance, only three of the four study states offered these meetings prior to the study. All three of these states continued to implement Multiple REA interventions during the study and thus were the focus of our analysis.

Federal guidance on the content and structure of the second and third REA meetings is limited, allowing states a fair amount of flexibility to design these meetings. As a result, the procedures for these subsequent REA meetings vary somewhat by state. In particular, states vary moderately in who is required to attend, even among participants who are in the Multiple REA treatment arm. There is also variation in the location of the subsequent meetings (e.g., in the AJC or over the phone), the length of the meetings, and when participants are told to return for them. These policies resulted in very different rates of receipt of the Multiple REA intervention across the states. New York had the highest scheduling and attendance rates for both subsequent meetings; Wisconsin had the lowest, with only 5 of each 100 participants randomized into the Multiple REA group attending a third REA meeting.

The biggest driver of service receipt appears to be states' scheduling policies. This trend is seen in the data: attendance rates are very consistent among claimants scheduled for meetings across all states (about 75 percent for all meetings), but the states have very different scheduling rates for subsequent REA meetings. New York's policy to schedule all Multiple REA participants for a second and third REA meeting resulted in the greatest number of participants scheduled, and therefore served by the Multiple REA intervention. The lowest rates of scheduling and attendance were found in Wisconsin, where the REA staff decided which participants were not work ready and staff tended to focus on readiness measures such as the quality of the resume and work search rather than on whether participants had the right skills for the job or occupation they desired.

Finally, though Indiana did not implement the Multiple REA treatment condition, Indiana's Single REA condition includes substantial engagement and follow up post initial REA meeting, fulfilling a similar role as the subsequent REA meetings in the other states. Indiana's Single REA participants are required to complete substantial post-orientation activities—weekly job search activities (above and beyond UI requirements), two workshops, and four weeks of search activity logs. Indiana's data show that about half of those participants who attended their initial REA meeting completed all of these additional requirements and did so within eight weeks of random assignment.

6. Receipt of Reemployment Services

This chapter describes how each study state approaches REA’s third program element: referring claimants to one or more reemployment services after their initial REA meetings. The goal of these referrals is to ensure that UI claimants take advantage of at least one service being offered by the American Job Centers or other partners, such as local training providers or community organizations. The underlying hypothesis is that this service will increase the claimant’s likelihood of becoming employed—either directly from the referral or as a result of the claimant being subsequently motivated to pursue additional services.

The chapter starts by describing the range of services to which states refer REA participants, policies regarding compliance, and a summary of when participants are expected to access these services. The bulk of this chapter discusses the actual services received by participants. It ends with a summary of key observations. Detailed tables are presented in Appendix F.

6.1 Overview of Federal Guidance

According to the UI Program Letter 10-14 (DOL 2014a, p. 4):

By applying for UI REA funding, states are agreeing to integrate the UI REA program with WIA and Wagner-Peyser funded reemployment services. Each completed REA will include a referral to a reemployment service and/or training.

The UIPL also includes specific guidance on ways that the REA program might connect UI claimants to mainstream workforce services (p. 7):

- *[Provide] referrals to appropriate services offered through AJCs such as self-assessments, education and training information, interviewing techniques, networking, career exploration, and online job and occupation resources; and*
- *[Offer] support in the development of the claimant’s reemployment plan that must include work search activities, appropriate workshops on topics such as resume writing and job search strategies if needed, and/or approved training.*

6.2 Variation in REA-Related Reemployment Service Referrals

State referrals to reemployment services vary along three dimensions: (1) the type of service referral, (2) the timeline for the participant to complete the referred services, and (3) whether completion of the service is monitored.

6.2.1 Referral Policies

REA staff in all four study states use the Full (Single/Multiple) REA one-on-one meetings to identify and refer participants to at least one additional reemployment service.⁵⁹ REA staff discuss these referrals within the context of developing participants’ reemployment plans. This further allows REA staff to

⁵⁹ No states make referrals for participants assigned to the Partial REA group or the Control group.

discuss options based on that participant's needs, his or her interests, and the availability of services locally.

As was discussed in Section 4.2, all study states refer participants to workshops and/or other services offered through a local AJC. Less frequently referrals are to services outside the AJC system.

Indiana. Exceeding the federal requirement of one mandatory reemployment service, Indiana requires participants to attend two workshops led by AJC staff, as well as complete self-selected job search activities, within 30 days. Because of this (comparatively) intensive basic requirement, REA staff only rarely refer participants to additional reemployment services. When they do, staff choose them in collaboration with the REA participant. In some cases, the referrals are based on the participant's interest or need. In many cases, though, the available workshop schedule seems to be the primary driver. This is particularly true in smaller AJCs, where some workshops are offered infrequently, making it unlikely that all appropriate choices are available within the required 30-day follow-up window.

New York and Wisconsin. REA staff in New York and Wisconsin have more flexibility in referring participants. They generally refer participants to workshops, but they also may make referrals to other activities on the AJC calendar, such as networking events or job fairs.

Washington. REA staff in Washington have the most flexibility among the study states. In addition to referrals to AJC workshops, state policy allows REA staff to refer claimants to a specific job opportunity from the state's job bank.⁶⁰ Alternatively, the staff may require the participant to complete some other agreed upon job search activity, such as attend a job fair, complete personal networking activities (e.g., "go talk to the foremen at these three facilities"), or consult other AJC staff about training opportunities.

6.2.2 Compliance Monitoring

Federal guidance *requires* states to include one reemployment service referral as part of their Full REA one-on-one session, but there is subtle variation in the way these referrals are presented to participants. In Indiana, Washington, and Wisconsin, all participants are told that their service referral is mandatory and must be completed or their benefits may be affected. In New York, most participants are provided with at least one referral, and that referral is not described as mandatory. A small number of participants in New York, identified at the discretion of local staff, are told they *must* participate in a specific, required service and they are scheduled for this service during the REA meeting.

The study states vary considerably in how they monitor participants' compliance with the reemployment service referral (Exhibit 6.1). When monitoring occurs, it is most often through meetings that REA staff have with participants to assess whether they are making progress in completing the steps listed in their reemployment plans.

New York, Washington, Wisconsin. This is the case for all Multiple REA participants who are called in for and attend a subsequent meeting in New York, Washington, and Wisconsin. Because staff historically have used the subsequent REA meetings to discuss the participants' attendance and progress, this is the pattern they continued during the study (see Chapter 7 for a full discussion of the states' monitoring and

⁶⁰ New York REA staff are required to make job referrals during the REA meeting, but these job referrals are not considered to be a referral to a reemployment service. New York staff are required to make an additional service-related referral, as well.

compliance activities). As a result, REA staff in these states do not consistently monitor whether Multiple REA participants who are not called in for a follow-up meeting or who are part of the Single REA group (in New York and Washington) complete their mandatory referrals.⁶¹

Indiana. As a Single REA state, Indiana has created an accountability function with its biweekly logs (see Section 5.3), which are carefully monitored by the state’s REA staff.

Exhibit 6.1: Monitoring of Compliance Referrals

	Method for Monitoring	Which Participants Have Compliance Reviewed
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants are required to submit biweekly logs “Failure to Report” codes are issued primarily if workshops are not completed by 30-day deadline 	All REA participants
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required referrals are entered into the Re-Employment Operating System, and completion is tracked automatically 	Only participants who have scheduled referral
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the REA follow-up meeting, participants must report the completion status of the activity in question 	Only Multiple REA group members who are required to attend multiple REA meetings
Wisconsin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the REA follow-up meeting, participants must report the completion status of the activity in question Job Service and UI staff can monitor completion in the state’s ASSET case management system, if a question arises 	Only Multiple REA group members who are required to attend multiple REA meetings

6.2.3 Timing of Service Receipt

Policies on Timing

In Multiple REA states, participants are expected to complete the reemployment service(s) to which they were referred before their second REA meeting. This timing allows staff to verify compliance at the second REA meeting and, as appropriate, identify and schedule follow-on services. This timing does not work for Single REA participants because there are no subsequent meetings at which to check compliance. Even so, in states that include Single and Multiple REA treatment groups, REA staff typically specify the same completion interval for both.

As can be seen in Exhibit 6.2, the states vary in when they schedule their first and second REA meetings. As discussed previously, the first meeting happened, on average, within one to three weeks of random assignment (see Exhibit 6.2 and also Exhibit 4.10) and for those participants who completed a second meeting, it was completed within four to six weeks of random assignment, on average (see Exhibit 6.2 and also Exhibit 5.6). States with more time between the first and second meetings allow participants more time to complete the reemployment services; states whose second REA meetings are closer to the first meeting allow less time. Indiana, which offers only Single REA and therefore no second meeting,

⁶¹ The exception to this is New York. If a staff member requires that a Single REA participant complete a particular activity, the staff member will monitor it through completion and enter a “Failure to Report” code if the participant does not complete as scheduled. In most cases, though, staff members do not “require” participation, providing only recommended referrals.

requires participants to complete their required activities within 30 days of their initial REA meeting (and their first biweekly log within two weeks).

Exhibit 6.2: Timing for Receipt of Reemployment Services

State	Timing of Initial REA Meeting for Single and Multiple REA Participants (avg. # weeks post RA)	Timing of Second REA Meeting for Multiple REA Participants (avg. # weeks post RA)	Expected Weeks to Complete First Referral for Single and Multiple REA Participants (# weeks post RA)	Actual Weeks to Complete First Reemployment Service, Post Initial REA Meeting (avg. # weeks post RA)	
				Single	Multiple
Indiana	3	N/A	7-8	4	N/A
New York	2	6	6-10	9	6
Washington	1	4	4-5	3	4
Wisconsin	2	4	4-6	N/A	4

Note: RA is random assignment. The information in Column 2 (Timing of Initial REA Meeting) is also reported in Exhibit 4.10 and the information in Column 3 (Timing of Second REA Meeting) is also reported in Exhibit 5.6.

Actual Timing of Service Receipt

To examine actual completion patterns, the study team used state data to calculate the average time to completion of a first reemployment service (after the initial REA meeting). Since some participants receive reemployment services unrelated to the REA program, this calculation was not an exact proxy for completion. It did, however, provide a preliminary sense of how quickly participants reengaged with the AJC system. In most cases, participants did reengage within the time frame that would be expected given state policies.

As anticipated, participants in the Multiple REA group completed their first reemployment service right about when they were scheduled to attend a subsequent REA meeting. For example, New York participants were expected to complete their first reemployment service within 6 to 10 weeks of random assignment (column 4)—that is, by their second REA meeting. Participants met this time frame, on average completing at least one reemployment service within six weeks post random assignment (column 6).

For participants in the Single REA group, the results were less consistent. Washington participants completed their actions earlier than expected. However, (as is noted below in Exhibit 6.6) less than a quarter of Washington’s Single REA group actually completed a reemployment service. It may be that these individuals who completed these activities were highly motivated to take advantage of the available services.

In New York, Single REA participants took an average of nine weeks to complete their first reemployment service. An in-depth review of the service data revealed two distinct completion waves. The first group of participants completed a service soon after the REA meeting (weeks 2-4), similar to what occurred in Washington. The second group completed a service in weeks 13-15 of their claim.

These participants who received services later in their claims likely were affected by New York’s state policy that anyone actively collecting UI benefits should not be exited from the workforce system.⁶²

The timing for Indiana service receipt followed state policy. The expectation was that participants would complete their initial REA meeting within three weeks of random assignment, and that they would submit their biweekly logs listing completed activities within two weeks of the meeting (week 5). Exhibit 6.2 above shows that participants met this timing, with a faster-than-expected average completion time of four weeks (column 5).

6.3 Receipt of Reemployment Services

The previous sections describe the states’ policies and practices with respect to *referrals* to reemployment services. This section considers the extent to which REA participants *followed through* on the referrals they received and the information they were provided during the AJC orientations; that is, did they participate in the services or activities to which they were referred. Understanding actual service receipt, in addition to the state policies, will inform the interpretation of observed similarities or differences in impacts across treatment conditions.

The following section summarizes the services that participants assigned to the Full (Single, Multiple) and Partial REA groups received after random assignment. From this summary, we identify two primary findings:

- First, we reviewed the rate of service receipt among Full REA participants, because this treatment arm mirrors the REA program’s design in the absence of the evaluation. These results indicate that the rate at which claimants receive expected reemployment services appears to be far lower than that intended by the REA program’s design.
- Second, we reviewed the rate of service receipt among Partial REA participants. Our intention in working with the states to design their Partial REA treatment arm was to offer a treatment in which claimants would be required to attend an eligibility review meeting that included only minimal services either during or after. The results discussed below suggest that states properly implemented this treatment arm, as evidenced by lower rates of service receipt among Partial REA participants than Full REA participants.

To support comparisons across states, we created five service type categories, common across states (Exhibit 6.3). These categories allow for consistent comparisons across treatment conditions and across states.⁶³

⁶² In New York, those who do not engage with the workforce system for 90 consecutive days are removed from the active reemployment service caseload. Under this policy, AJC staff will often complete a limited service to reengage the individuals in order to keep them on the active caseload and maintain their access to the employment services system. Just before participants are to be exited, state staff provide them with a “light-touch” service such as a job referral; this often occurs during weeks 13–15 of a claim.

⁶³ Before creating these categories, we consulted DOL’s existing service definitions used in the Labor Exchange Reporting System (as described in the *Labor Exchange Reporting System Handbook*), as well as for the WIOA and Wagner-Peyser Act funding streams. Wherever the data allowed, we aligned our categorizations.

Using these five categories, this section examines participation patterns in *all* reemployment services received starting the day after claimants’ random assignment to a treatment group (as recorded in the state’s data system). The analysis does not consider the source of the referral for the services (i.e., from an REA meeting, self-referral, or something else). This analysis provides insights into the net increase in service receipt that can be associated with assignment to a particular treatment condition.⁶⁴

Exhibit 6.3: Common Service Type Categories

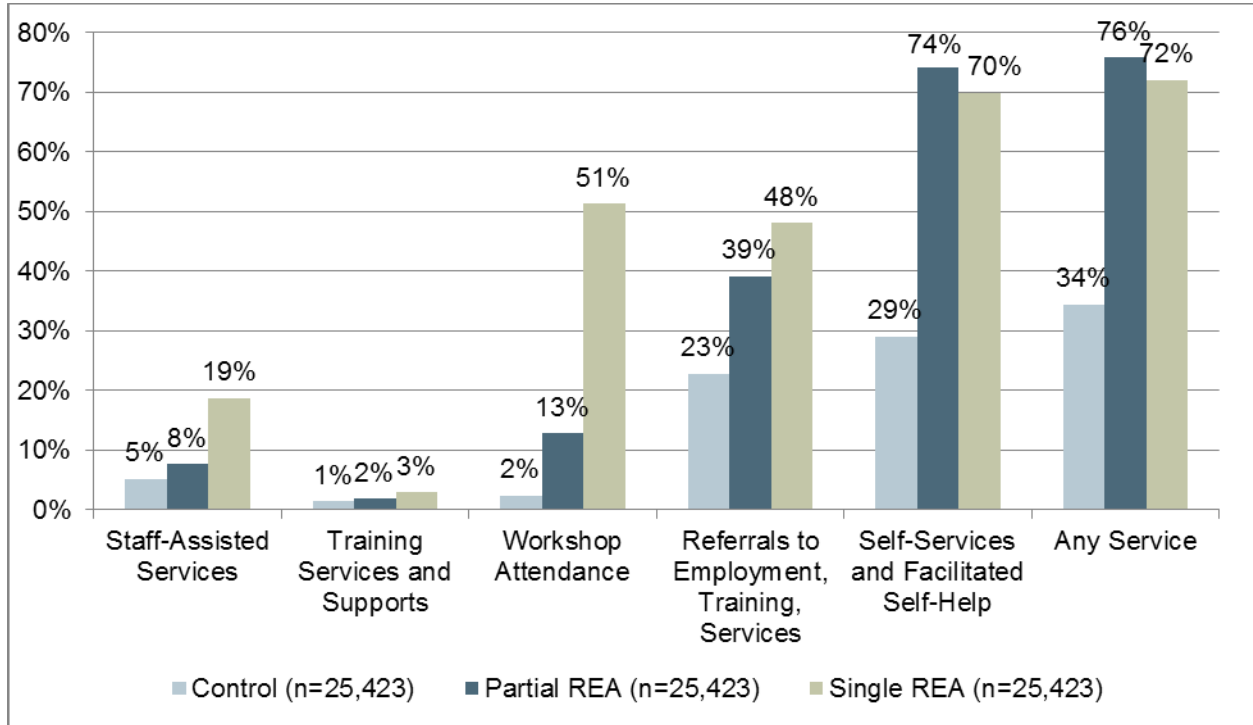
Service Type	Examples of Services
Staff-Assisted Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career guidance and counseling • Job search assistance • Assessment of skills and/or needs • Orientation, outreach, and general case management • Provision of labor market information
Training Services and Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged in adult basic education activities • Engaged in occupational skills and/or on-the-job training • Engaged in short-term pre-vocational services
Workshop Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with topics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Job search strategies ○ Work readiness ○ Financial literacy • Specialized assessment/diagnostic testing proctored in group setting
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to job search workshops • Referral to additional supportive services • Referral to employment
Self-Service and Facilitated Self-Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessed information for job search • Accessed labor market information • Completed skills/career interest assessment (not in group setting)

6.3.1 Indiana

Indiana’s Single REA treatment group had a relatively high rate of service receipt; 72 percent of participants received at least one service (Exhibit 6.4). The most common service received was self-services and facilitated self-help.

⁶⁴ For the purposes of this implementation analysis, knowing whether service receipt was directly tied to REA meetings would be desirable but is not crucial. Unfortunately, the nature of the states’ data systems made it difficult to definitively identify what services were received as referrals from the REA meetings.

Exhibit 6.4: Service Receipt among Indiana Participants during Study Period, by Treatment Condition



Comparing service receipt by Single REA members with that of Partial REA members, the former received considerably more services in two of the most time-intensive categories: staff-assisted services and workshop attendance. In neither group did many claimants receive training services and supports. Additionally, though service receipt appeared more similar than expected in the categories of referrals and self-services, taken together, these results suggest substantively important differences in services received by the two treatment groups (see Appendix F, Exhibit F.2).⁶⁵ Partial REA participants almost exclusively received auto-generated employment referrals, whereas the Single REA participants received both auto-generated referrals and customized employment referrals from staff plus pre-vocational services, assessments, and other supportive services.

Similarly, the most common self-services activities for Partial REA group members were accessing job search information, assessing labor market information, and completing a skills assessment, all of which occur in the Indiana Career Connect (ICC) system.

Though the percentages of Partial REA group and Control group members receiving *any* service were higher than expected, these are primarily limited to self-services and auto-generated referrals. The more nuanced service-level data (shown in Appendix F, Exhibit F.2) show that less than 5 percent of either of these groups received a staff-assisted service during the study period, and that the state honored its commitment to the study by not providing one-on-one assistance to these participants on a routine basis.

⁶⁵ All UI claimants are required to register with ICC. When registering, claimants can sign up for emails that provide customized, available job listings. Claimants select the frequency of these emails (e.g., daily, weekly).

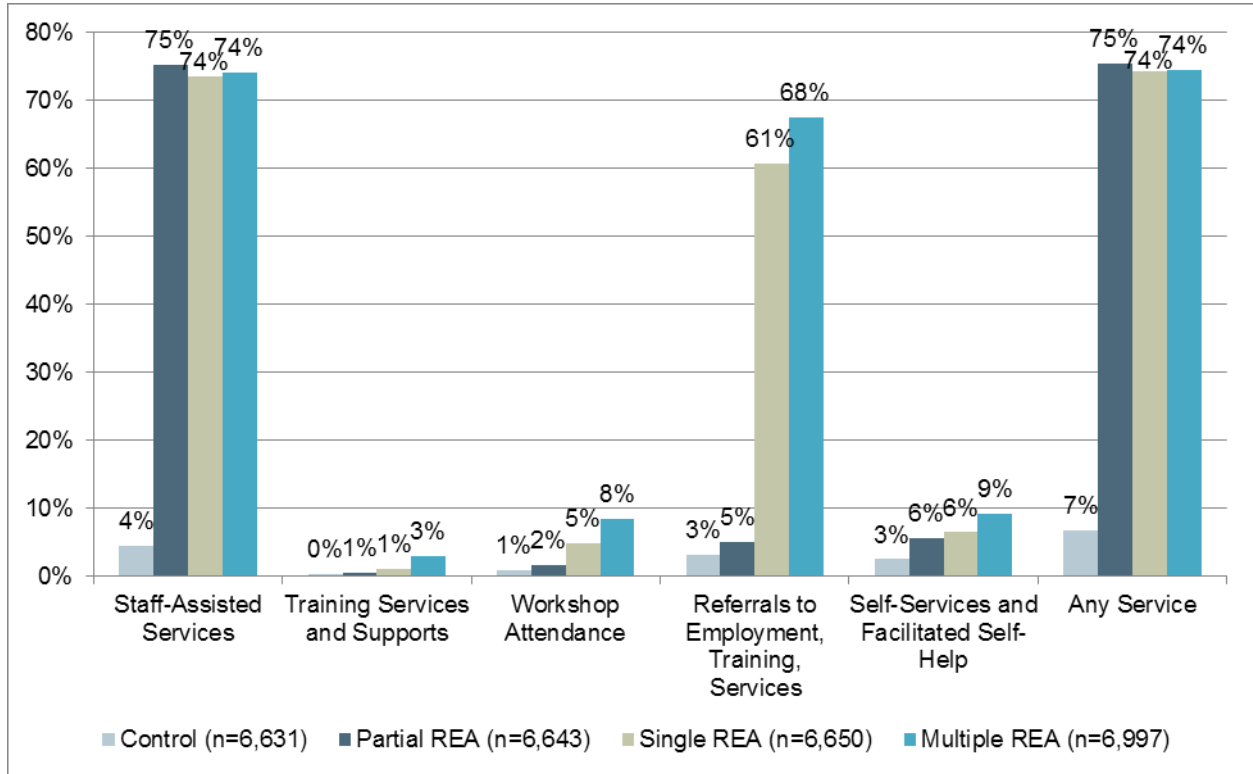
6.3.2 New York

The services reported in this section pertain only to those New York sites that implemented the four-arm study design. In these sites, the treatment conditions were designed such that participants assigned to the Multiple REA group should receive the most services, followed by the Single REA group, Partial REA group, and Control group, respectively. As shown in Exhibit 6.5, service delivery followed this expected pattern within certain categories, namely training, workshops, and self-services. However, aggregate take-up of all these services was quite low. As discussed in Chapter 7, New York’s policy is to describe service referrals in the reemployment plan as *recommended* rather than *mandatory* for most participants, which may have contributed to this low take-up rate.

For the referrals category, Multiple REA participants were indeed most likely to receive a referral service, followed by Single REA and Partial REA participants. However, there were many more referrals to employment and training services for the Multiple and Single REA groups than for the other groups.

The expected pattern across study groups does not hold for the staff-assisted services category as a whole; participants assigned to the Single REA treatment group members were just as likely as their counterparts in the Partial REA group to receive staff-assisted services. However, the composition of staff-assisted services received by Partial REA participants (not shown in Exhibit 6.5) was substantively different from that received by Single and Multiple REA participants, and those differences are consistent with the expected service pattern. Partial REA participants were most likely to receive an orientation service, which is the core service for Partial REA treatment; and only modest numbers of Partial REA participants received any other service. In contrast, Single and Multiple REA participants received a much wider range of staff-assisted services, many of which are more intensive than a simple referral, including career guidance and counseling, job search assistance, and one-on-one assessments of skills or needs.

Exhibit 6.5: Service Receipt among New York Participants during Study Period, by Treatment Condition, Four-Arm Sites Only

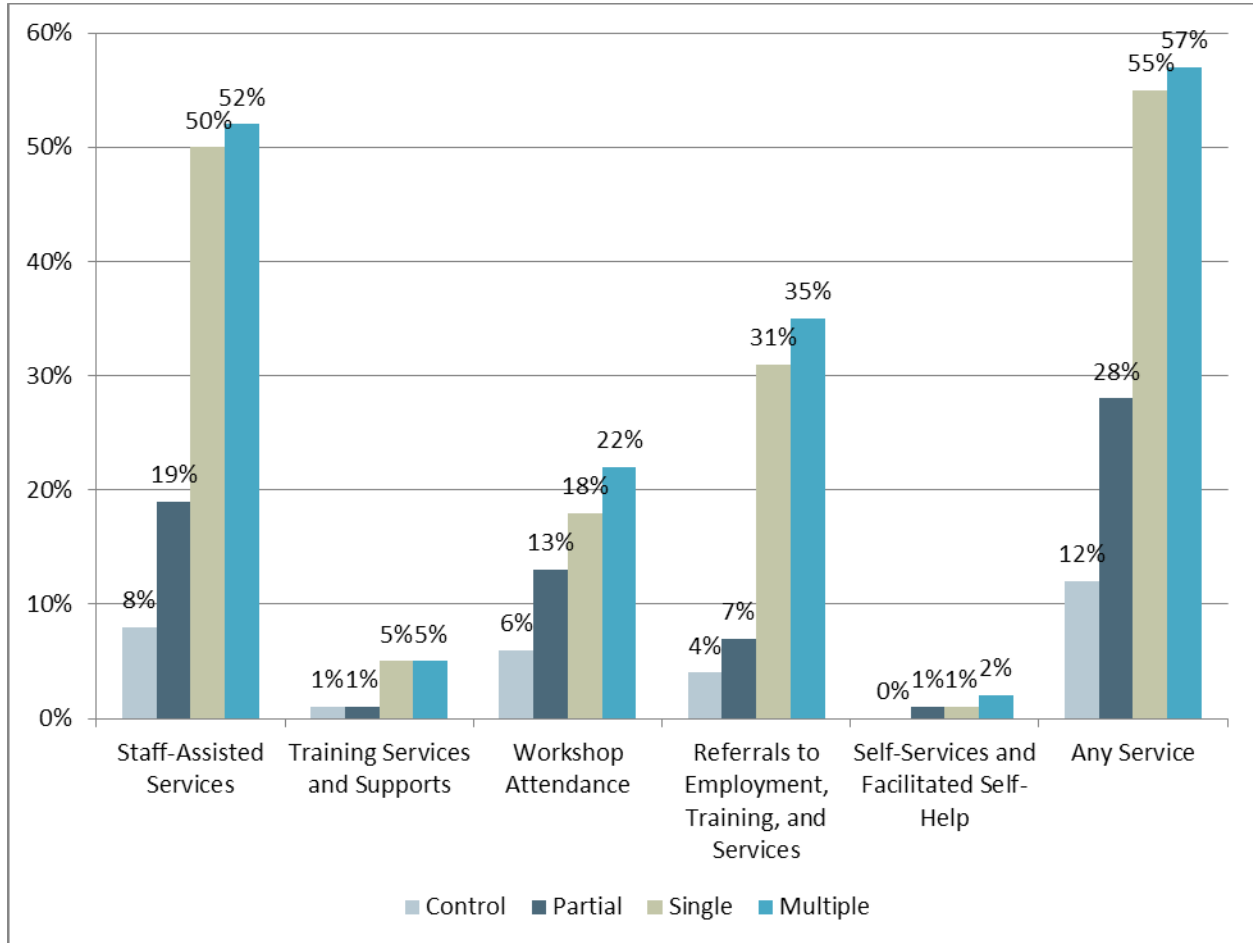


It is notable that there is essentially no difference between delivery rates for staff-assisted services for the Multiple and Single REA groups. This finding was expected: data reported in Exhibit 6.5 do not capture the number of instances in which a given service was delivered, so even though Multiple REA participants may have received multiple services within a category, the services are lumped together and counted only once. These services (e.g., staff-assisted labor market information and job referrals) were delivered to both of these groups during their in-person REA meetings. However, as discussed in Appendix F, participants in the Multiple REA treatment group were more likely to receive services delivered outside of the context of the initial in-person REA meeting. This is true in all categories including staff-assisted services, training services, and workshop attendance.

6.3.3 Washington

The state of Washington experienced the anticipated ordering of service intensity among treatment conditions, though service receipt for the Multiple and Single REA groups was generally lower than would have been expected (Exhibit 6.6). The Multiple REA group had the highest participation rate in reemployment services of all treatment groups (57%), followed closely by the Single REA participants (55%). Among the treatment groups, Partial REA group members received the lowest level of service, at 28 percent accessing at least one additional reemployment service.

Exhibit 6.6: Service Receipt among Washington Participants during Study Period, by Treatment Condition



Comparing the Multiple REA and the Single REA treatment groups, receipt of staff-assisted services, and training and support services occurred at similar rates between the two groups. However, as shown in Appendix F, Exhibit F.10, Multiple REA participants were much more likely to receive staff-assisted services (e.g., career guidance and counseling, job search assistance) and referrals (to supportive services and to employment) when the services were delivered after the initial REA meeting.

Some aspects of service receipt may appear lower in Exhibit 6.6 than the services that participants actually received. For example, during the site visits, many AJCs in Washington reported sending email blasts about available job leads to registered UI claimants, similar to what is done in Indiana through its ICC system. Yet data provided by Washington did not appear to include such outreach practices. Additionally, Washington participants are required to register with the state’s Labor Exchange website, and REA staff spend considerable time during the orientation demonstrating how the system works. The state’s data management system was not set up to track ongoing use of the labor exchange system. Apparently as a result, despite this emphasis on using the system, Exhibit 6.6 suggests very limited self-service activity.

6.3.4 Wisconsin

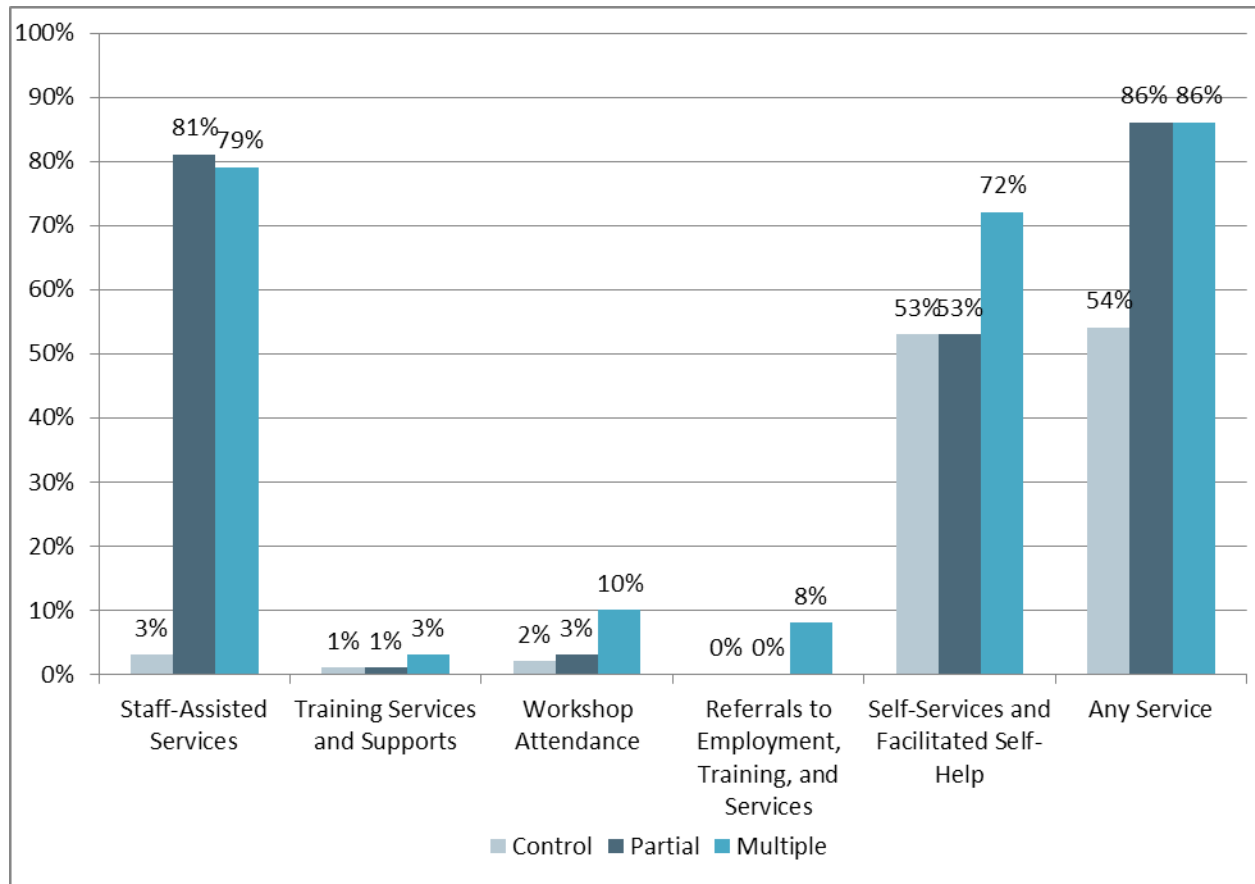
The service data presented in Exhibit 6.7 for Wisconsin were comparatively difficult to interpret for several reasons.

First, there were inconsistent levels of detail in reporting. The state implemented a new data system (“Labor Exchange”) that carefully tracks all activities on the state’s Job Center of Wisconsin (JCW) website. These activities fall into the self-services category shown below. However, it appears that local staff did not consistently enter information on training services, workshop attendance, and referrals into the state’s employment services data system such that it could be easily analyzed (i.e., the information is recorded in case notes or in separate local scheduling systems).

Second, Wisconsin did not enter separate service codes for any activities that occurred during the subsequent REA meetings. This may partly account for why rates of services received by Multiple REA participants appear lower than in New York and Washington, states in which staff typically did enter additional service codes for some multiple REA meeting activities.

Together these factors along with our understanding of the service delivery model as observed during site visits and through conversations with state and local office staff make it likely that the number of services reported in the Wisconsin data undercounts actual services delivered.

Exhibit 6.7: Service Receipt among Wisconsin Participants during Study Period, by Treatment Condition



The two categories of service for which reported data appear to be most reliable were staff-assisted services (because REA and other AJC staff enter these directly into the data system) and self-services (because these service records are generated automatically within the JCW system). Focusing on these two categories of service, there are a few noteworthy findings.

First, Multiple REA and Partial REA participants appear to have similar rates of staff-assisted services (81% versus 79%). However, a detailed examination of the services received reveals a different mix between the two groups (see Appendix F, Exhibit F.6). Both groups were about equally as likely to receive a one-on-one orientation or assessment, but the Multiple REA group was far more likely to also receive career guidance and counseling, which would have been covered in the reemployment plan created only for Multiple REA participants. Second, self-services consist almost entirely of accessing labor market information (see Appendix F, Exhibit F.6). UI claimants in Wisconsin are all required to register with the state's online labor exchange, which automatically delivers LMI to registrants and tracks that service delivery. Therefore, we expected to see relatively high and comparable levels of this service delivered across all three study groups. With regard to the other service categories, the Multiple REA group was indeed more likely to receive training, workshop, and referral services, but the overall level of this service delivery was somewhat lower than expected.

The data collection systems and practices in Wisconsin posed unique challenges in aggregating and interpreting service data across the treatment conditions. Nonetheless, from the data that were available, as well as from the study's qualitative observations, it appeared that participants across the study arms received the agreed-upon mix and intensity of services. Furthermore, it appears that study sites did not encourage Partial REA participants to pursue services beyond what was provided during the Initial REA meeting.

6.4 Key Observations

Based on site visit observations and interviews, all study states follow DOL's guidance and provide Single REA and Multiple REA participants with at least one referral for additional reemployment assistance. In Indiana, Washington, and Wisconsin, these referrals are described as mandatory and participants are expected to complete them. A small number of participants in New York are also told that their referrals are mandatory, but most are told they are recommendations rather than requirements.

Staff follow-up on completion of referred services vary across states and across treatment arms. Completion monitoring is most consistent for the Multiple REA group. Staff use the second and third REA meetings to check on participants' progress and to reiterate the need to complete any outstanding referrals. REA staff do not formally monitor the activities of Single REA participants in Washington, and they only do so in New York when a referral is entered as mandatory (which tends to be the exception). This monitoring does occur in Indiana, where a clear reporting and monitoring system has been established (e.g., the submission of biweekly logs and procedures for reporting noncompliance to UI).

These policies seem to have influenced the level of service receipt in each state. For example, only a small percentage of Single REA participants in New York and Washington complete a reemployment service after their initial REA meeting. Indiana has the highest workshop completion rates, likely because its participants are required to complete two workshops to stay in compliance with the REA program and because the biweekly log provides an effective accountability mechanism.

Overall, the states' administrative data show that the level of services received after the initial REA meeting by participants in the Single REA group and in the Multiple REA group is lower than may have

been expected. States are providing participants with referrals to additional reemployment services, but many are choosing not to comply. The exact causes of this noncompliance are unknown. Plausible explanations include claimants returning to work, stopping their UI claims, or simply choosing not to participate. Reasons why claimants might have simply chosen not to participate include potentially minimal penalties (e.g., denial of benefits for one week) or because limited state follow-up on referral completions resulted in noncompliance not even being detected.

7. Noncompliance with REA and UI Requirements

The Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment program is not voluntary—that is, grantee states do not merely advertise the program and hope that their UI claimants will use its services. Instead, REA is intended to be implemented as mandatory; UI claimants assigned by their state to REA are to be required to participate. This mandate reflects DOL’s objective to expose UI claimants to broader American Job Center (AJC) services that the Department perceives to be valuable but underused.⁶⁶ However, as we discuss in Section 7.3, for a state to make its program truly mandatory, the penalties for noncompliance must be sufficiently stiff and enforced promptly and consistently.

That said, each state must implement REA’s mandatory requirements within the context of the due process protections in the Social Security Act and the state’s own UI laws and regulations. Because state UI laws allow for very different timing and penalties, there is potential for variation in how mandatory the program appears to UI claimants.

This chapter considers the implementation of noncompliance policies in the four study states. The first three sections (7.1 through 7.3) provide key context for the discussion: guidance from DOL’s Office of Unemployment Insurance, why noncompliance policy might matter for state and participant outcomes (e.g., benefits received, earnings), and why implementing noncompliance policy might be difficult.

The subsequent three sections form the core of the chapter. Section 7.4 describes each state’s policy when UI claimants “fail to report” (FTR) to a scheduled REA meeting. Section 7.5 describes each state’s policy when REA participants fail to complete their REA-related reemployment service referrals. Section 7.6 describes each state’s procedures when REA participants are found to have UI eligibility issues that need to be investigated. The sections also consider the extent to which each state’s noncompliance policies are likely to affect claimants’ decisions and actions—but only as they apply to participants assigned to the Full-Single REA, Full-Multiple REA, and Partial REA treatment groups. Because claimants assigned to the control group are not required to participate in REA, their decision-making framework is not relevant in this context.

The final section (7.7) discusses noncompliance as a whole; that is, to what extent are state noncompliance policies as implemented likely to affect client outcomes. Foreshadowing that discussion, it’s worth noting that state noncompliance policies vary widely. At one end are Washington’s policies as implemented—in particular, its small maximum penalty—which seem less likely to influence the choices claimants make. At the other are New York’s and Wisconsin’s policies as implemented—in particular, the tight connection between their workforce and UI data systems and the conspicuous presence of the latter’s adjudicators. Indiana’s policies as implemented seem to fall somewhere in between.

During the study’s qualitative field research, the team discussed and observed each state’s approach to various aspects of REA implementation related to compliance. This included talking with staff about

⁶⁶ For example, Unemployment Insurance Program Letter No. 10-14 states: “The UI REA program provides claimants an entry point to a full array of services available at American Job Centers” (DOL 2014a, p. 2). Similarly, among the required components of REA is “orientation to help claimants access self-service core services offered at AJCs through the resource room or virtually, with particular emphasis on accessing available labor market and career information” (p. 7).

when and how they enter FTR codes, observing staff as they examined the adequacy of work search records, and hearing staff talk with REA participants about A&A issues. Interviews with each state’s REA/UI point of contact and subsequent clarifications with state REA leadership further offered insights into each state’s adjudication policies and processes.⁶⁷

7.1 Federal Guidance on Consequences of Noncompliance

The REA guidance (UIPL 10-14) envisions that the REA program will be operated by staff separate from the UI program staff that would address noncompliance by suspending or terminating benefits. Given that separation, the REA guidance expects that REA staff will report to UI program staff instances when REA participants do not comply with program requirements. States also are expected to help UI monitor participants’ compliance with their broader responsibilities as UI recipients (e.g., A&A issues, inadequate work search activities). With respect to REA compliance, two key requirements are in play: that REA participants attend all meetings to which they are assigned and that participants assigned to Full (Single or Multiple) REA participate in any mandated reemployment referral. With respect to the broader responsibilities, DOL’s emphasis is on continuing eligibility review. The following section provides the specific text from the governing Unemployment Insurance Program Letter 10-14 (DOL 2014a) that guides states as they incorporate the REA program into their preexisting UI compliance activities.

According to UIPL 10-14, an REA program must include a “requirement for the claimant to report to an AJC to receive the services identified” (p. 5). The consequences of noncompliance are clearly stated later in the UIPL (pp. 5-6):

Once the state notifies a claimant that s/he has been selected for a UI REA, participation in the UI REA is mandatory. If a claimant fails to report for any UI REA without notifying the state beforehand, the state must refer the issue of the claimant’s failure to report to the appropriate UI staff to be adjudicated under state law.

In particular, the language “to be adjudicated” derives from the Social Security Act. UI is an entitlement. The Social Security Act specifies that entitlements, including UI, cannot be denied without due process, including formal adjudication and a finding of fact by an appropriate administrative process (often a decision of an Administrative Law Judge). States are required to establish policies for that adjudication. Those policies vary across states, thus the language “under state law.” Fulfilling the requirements of the federal Social Security Act and state policy imposes a moderate burden before benefits can be removed. In practice, it is unclear how often states promptly refer noncompliant claimants for adjudication. A more common alternative appears to be to suspend benefits pending compliance or exiting UI, where such suspension is not viewed as requiring prior formal adjudication. (The project Final Report will include tabulations of the prevalence of various responses to noncompliance.)

UIPL 10-14 also requires state REA programs to specify a process for referring to adjudication REA participants who are noncompliant either for failure to report or for failure to participate (p. 7):

⁶⁷ It is important to note that the focus was solely on the policies and practices as implemented; identifying inconsistencies with federal guidelines was not an objective of this analysis.

UI Feedback Loop and Adjudication. *Once selected for an REA, claimants are required to participate in all components of the UI REA. Failure to report or participate in any aspect of the UI REA must result in referral to adjudication of these issues under applicable state law. Claimants who contact the appropriate agency before their UI REA appointment and request to change the scheduled UI REA date or time for good reasons, such as scheduled job interviews, may be accommodated. ... [S]tates must include in their proposals:*

- *A feedback loop from the AJC to the UI system as to whether the claimants reported as directed and participated in the minimum activities outlined in their reemployment plan;*
- *A feedback loop must be established to refer any eligibility issues uncovered in the eligibility review for adjudication, and*
- *A process for referring to adjudication UI claimants selected for UI REAs who failed to report for them without contacting the agency.*

As we discuss below, the actual process of adjudication varies widely across the four states in the study due to variation in their UI laws and procedures.

7.2 Potential Repercussions: Penalizing Noncompliance

To understand why consequences are important in motivating compliance, consider a “rational choice” perspective (Becker 1974). UI claimants selected for REA choose whether to participate in its activities and requirements. Under a purely voluntary program, UI claimants would choose whether to participate in REA by balancing its perceived benefits (i.e., improved likelihood of reemployment) against its perceived costs (i.e., loss of time for leisure or self-directed job search, that an initial eligibility or ongoing eligibility issue will be detected).

In the framework of the REA program, nonparticipation brings the loss of the perceived benefits of REA assistance in addition to the (potential) loss of the UI benefit. As a result, noncompliance penalties imposed by states may alter participants’ perceptions of REA’s relative costs and benefits, and eventually their decisions and actions. For instance:

- Regarding a claimant’s decision whether to participate in REA activities, a state’s noncompliance policy could have a deterrent effect; that is, claimants’ may change their behavior because they *perceive* that a penalty would be imposed if they did not comply. Such changes might include: (i) attending the REA meeting and complying with other program requirements; (ii) accelerating job search (or perhaps acceptance of a job), such that the claimant exits UI before the REA meeting; or even (iii) exiting UI without finding a job. Of course, a claimant’s understanding of the consequences of noncompliance is likely to be incomplete. Thus, perceived costs of noncompliance will often diverge from actual costs.

- A claimant also may not comply until penalized. Once the penalty is imposed, some of the uncertainty about the likelihood of any penalty, its magnitude, and its timing is resolved.⁶⁸ Given that an expected benefit was not received, a claimant may reconsider the choice not to participate.⁶⁹

Given these decision pathways, how might a state’s noncompliance policy affect outcomes? Relative to a voluntary program or a mandatory program with a smaller penalty (in dollars, in timing, or in likelihood), the following impacts might be expected:

- A claimant responds to the threat or actual imposition of a penalty by complying with the mandate (or returning to compliance) and receiving REA services. Relative to no REA program, in as much as REA services are effective, we would expect such a claimant’s job search to be faster and more productive, leading to reduced duration of UI claims and higher earnings during the period the claimant would otherwise have been unemployed (and have zero earnings). In as much as the REA services not only led to finding a job faster, but also led to a better job match, we would expect higher earnings in the intermediate term (i.e., when the claimant would otherwise have been employed).
- A claimant responds to the threat or actual imposition of a penalty by cutting short her job search. Relative to no REA program, we would expect worse job matches (i.e., job with lower wages and shorter job tenure).
- A claimant does not comply despite both the threat and the actual imposition of a penalty. Relative to no REA program, we would expect UI payments to drop as the claimant’s benefits were suspended. The impact of imposing noncompliance penalties on claimants’ earnings is less clear, however. If the REA program does help participants to find better jobs and faster, then we would expect earnings of noncompliant claimants to drop—both in the short term and in the long term. Their short-term earnings might rise (relative to earnings in a voluntary program) if—no longer receiving UI benefits—they now accelerate their job search; their long-term earnings might fall, however, because the accelerated job search might lead to poorer job matches (i.e., jobs with lower wages and shorter job tenure).

Each of these considerations influences claimant behavior—in various ways—at each step of the REA program. The initial notice sent to claimants will establish their perceptions of the penalty (e.g., “Do I need to participate at all?” “What is the severity of the penalty if I do not?”). Any notice of the reason for non-payment of benefits or informal contact with REA staff after noncompliance further shapes perceptions of consequences.

Finally, inasmuch as claimants have been selected for REA based on earlier (but recent) UI spells or current UI claimants talk to previous claimants, perceptions also can be altered based on this actual experience.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Some uncertainty remains for the claimant: How long will the penalty remain in force? What will be required to lift the penalty? Can the lost benefits be recovered—immediately or as additional weeks at the end of the claim? Will additional benefits be lost if the claimant attends the REA meeting and A&A issues are discovered?

⁶⁹ This calculation is true if the penalty is ongoing. In Washington, the penalty is one week of no benefits, with no hold on ongoing benefits, so participants have no need to alter their behavior to ensure that benefits resume.

7.3 The Complexities of Implementing a Noncompliance Policy

The discussion in the previous section suggests that implementing a rigorous noncompliance policy has the potential to induce more compliance with REA program requirements; in particular, increased attendance at REA meetings. To the extent that REA assistance is effective in helping participants return to work more quickly, bringing more claimants into the REA program can potentially lower UI benefits paid and increase claimants' earnings in the short and intermediate terms.

For three reasons, however, implementing a rigorous noncompliance policy is complicated. First, though the REA program is funded and designed by the federal government, it must be implemented within a grantee state's existing UI and workforce systems, and all compliance decisions are grounded in the state's UI laws and regulations. Those state UI laws and regulations constrain how each state implements the federal REA guidance. Partially as a result, policies and penalties are very different across states.

Second, state REA program directors work carefully with their state UI counterparts to establish program requirements and the feedback loops required to monitor them. However, REA program administrators have no role in setting the state's noncompliance penalties, nor do they have control over the process for imposing those penalties.

The third group of reasons concerns the difficulty of designing a noncompliance process:

- ***Perceived Role and Competing Priorities.*** REA staff are expected to both provide assistance and implement the noncompliance policy. Doing so requires two very different modes of behavior from a single staff person. Our fieldwork suggests that REA staff view their role primarily as to provide assistance. Given that focus on assistance, enforcing noncompliance policy may be perceived as counter-productive (even if time to service each claimant was unlimited), taking limited time away from (more productive) assistance, and distasteful. In net, for some staff with respect to at least some UI claimants, enforcing noncompliance may be done less than vigorously—not at all, not swiftly, or not consistently.
- ***Interagency Coordination.*** Implementing a noncompliance policy requires coordination between the workforce staff who detect the noncompliance and the UI staff who implement the process to impose the penalty. The explicit mention of such coordination in the UIPL underscores its challenging nature.
- ***Timing.*** Penalties are most effective when they are sure and swift. However, REA staff need to both provide REA services and implement the noncompliance policies. Particularly for staff with multiple responsibilities, monitoring noncompliance may not always be their highest priority when there are clients to be served.

The next sections review the approaches taken by the four study states.

⁷⁰ It appears to be common for workers to repeatedly receive UI benefits over a number of years (Michaelides 2014; Meyer & Rosenbaum 1996).

7.4 Noncompliance—Failure to Report

As was documented in Chapters 4 and 5, many claimants assigned to receive REA services do not attend their scheduled REA meetings. The eventual attendance rate at this required initial meeting varied between 56 percent and 75 percent (see Section 4.4), with some of these participants completing the meeting only after having not shown up the first time.⁷¹ Given the prevalence of noncompliance with the attendance requirement, it is important to understand states' policies for responding.

7.4.1 Initial REA Meeting

When states first communicate with UI claimants that they have been selected for the REA program and about the requirement to participate in an initial meeting, they also emphasize the penalty for noncompliance. Exhibit 7.1 provides the exact text included in the Full REA letter (the Multiple REA letter was used in states where there are Multiple and Single REA treatment groups). Indiana, New York, and Washington send slightly different letters to participants in the other treatment groups, though the tone of the penalty is similar. Appendix G provides the specific compliance text included in each of the states' letters.

In New York and Wisconsin, the letter explicitly states that claimants' UI benefits will be suspended for noncompliance with program requirements. Though any benefit of REA participation may not yet be clear, this language gives claimants an unambiguous message as to the costs of noncompliance. The text used in Indiana's and Washington's letters is less absolute, though still communicating the possibility that benefits will be affected unless claimants participate.

⁷¹ The state data on REA meeting attendance did not provide a clear depiction of attendance. In some cases, the study team was unable to determine whether claimants were “no shows” at the first meeting, but later attended a meeting or whether the claimant never attended a meeting at all. The study's *Interim Impact Report* (projected to be publicly released in late 2017 or early 2018) will include additional analyses of these issues.

Exhibit 7.1: Compliance-Related Text Used in REA Notification Letters, by State

State	Text
Indiana	<p>“If you do not complete an in-person review at WorkOne your benefits may stop.”</p> <p>“Please note: you are required by Indiana law to keep a log of your weekly work searches. If you cannot present a work search log when requested, you could lose your weekly benefits. If you do not complete the above requirements before your in-person visit you may have to reschedule your visit and possibly risk losing benefits.”</p> <p>“Your UI benefits may be disrupted if you fail to attend this orientation as scheduled without contacting me within 48 hours of the date and time listed above, or if you fail to comply with any portion of the program or any of its components.”</p>
New York	<p>“If you miss this appointment [the <u>mandatory</u> Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment], your unemployment insurance benefits <u>will stop</u> immediately. To start receiving benefits again, you must come in person to your Career Center located at the above address on a weekday between 9:00am and 3:00pm. Each day you wait could cause you to lose benefits.”</p>
Washington	<p>“If you miss your appointment, Employment Security will send a questionnaire that you must complete to explain why you did not attend. Employment Security will decide whether you had good cause for missing the orientation, as well as review your availability for work and your job search activities. If we find you have not met these requirements, you may have to repay some or all of any benefits you’ve received.”</p>
Wisconsin	<p><i>Initial Mailed Notice:</i> “Your deadline to complete <u>both</u> the online orientation and assessment is [INSERT DATE]. Note: After the deadline, you will not receive unemployment benefits until you complete <u>both the online orientation and assessment elements.</u>”^a</p> <p><i>Online Prompt, post-online orientation:</i> “If you fail to schedule, fail to attend a scheduled session or fail to complete any follow-up requirements, your Unemployment Insurance benefits may be denied until you comply with all requirements.”</p>

^a Prior to scheduling their initial REA meeting, participants in Wisconsin see compliance-related text at two different milestones. The first is a letter they are sent instructing them to complete an online registration and orientation. Once the claimant completes those activities, an online prompt is shown on the screen that includes additional compliance-related text. These prompts are customized to each treatment group.

Procedures for Noncompliance

All states allow for some rescheduling without penalty *prior* to the initial REA session. In three of the four states (Indiana, New York, and Washington), claimants must provide a permissible reason in order to be rescheduled (e.g., job interview, long-scheduled medical appointment). Wisconsin allows self-scheduling so there are no constraints on rescheduling appointments other than that it must be done before the end of a scheduled REA session and before the end of the claimant’s 21-day scheduling window.

Across all four states, if claimants miss an REA session but are able to complete a make-up session prior to the end of the same week, they most likely will not be penalized for noncompliance (see Exhibit 7.2). In two states this is because REA staff often do not enter a “Failure to Report” (FTR) code until later in the week (despite official state policy that no-shows should be documented on the day they occur), which allows claimants to complete their REA meeting within the week without penalty. In the other two states the policy is to create a “Pending” issue the day of the no-show but not adjudicate it if compliance occurs prior to the next time a claimant certifies for benefits.

Indiana is the most proactive in establishing make-up sessions and urging participants back into the office for the initial REA meeting. New York REA staff do not contact participants, but UI sends a letter the day after the scheduled session to no-shows informing them they are now out of compliance. Many participants bring this letter into their local AJC to try and complete a session. When this happens, the REA staff work to fit them in, either in a one-on-one session or in a group session if one is scheduled to

occur during the week. Washington and Wisconsin staff also do not contact no-shows, but they do encourage participants who contact the AJC to schedule into the next available session, which sometimes could be available that same week.

By Friday of the week of the scheduled initial REA meeting, staff in all four states enter an FTR code in their employment services system for any no-shows. In New York, Washington, and Wisconsin, the REA system provides information directly to the UI system. In those three states, entering the FTR automatically notifies the UI data system, simultaneously creating an issue in that participant’s claim. This automated process provides a predictable and consistent response that should remove any uncertainty as to the consequences of missing a scheduled orientation.

In Indiana, notification of UI staff is not automatic. Instead, REA staff email or speak with local UI representatives, notifying them that a list of no-show participants is ready for entry into the UI system. REA staff also must fax paperwork (e.g., copies of each participant’s invitation letter and the sign-in sheet) to the central UI office to substantiate the creation of the Pending issues. Though there is greater chance in Indiana for human error to delay the imposition of UI penalties, field observations and data monitoring suggested that errors are not common.

Exhibit 7.2: State Rescheduling and Penalty Policies—Initial REA Meeting

State	Rescheduling Prior to Initial REA Meeting?	After No-Show at Session	
		Penalty?	Rescheduling Strategy
Indiana	Yes, for permissible reason	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If rescheduled session is completed by Friday of the week originally scheduled and the initial no-show was not submitted to UI, there is no denial of benefits for the week • If delayed rescheduled, compliance policies are implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive rescheduling • Try to get them in the week of original meeting
New York	Yes, for permissible reason	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If rescheduled session is completed by Friday of the week originally scheduled, there is no denial of benefits for the week • If rescheduling delayed to the following week (or later), compliance policies are implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No proactive rescheduling • If participant calls, flexible in trying to get claimant in during same week to avoid loss of weekly payment
Washington	Yes, for permissible reason	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If rescheduled session is completed by Friday of the week originally scheduled, there is typically no denial of benefits for the week • If rescheduling delayed to the following week (or later), compliance policies are implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No proactive rescheduling • If participant calls, flexible in trying to get claimant in during same week to avoid loss of weekly payment

State	Rescheduling Prior to Initial REA Meeting?	After No-Show at Session	
		Penalty?	Rescheduling Strategy
Wisconsin	Yes. Participants schedule themselves. Can reschedule as many times as they'd like within the 21-day window, as long as they do not miss a scheduled session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pending issue created • Benefits on hold until rescheduled • When rescheduled, Pending issue is automatically lifted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No proactive rescheduling • No one-on-one or make-up sessions • May be able to get into session scheduled later in week, but typically the next week

Penalty for Noncompliance

The response to a claimant’s decision not to attend a scheduled orientation varies by state, but generally is constant across treatment conditions within each study state. Despite some cross-state variation, once an FTR code is entered and UI is notified of a noncompliance, states appear to follow two broad approaches:

1. UI enters the Pending issue, places a hold on the participant’s benefits. If and when the participant complies with the requirement to attend the initial REA meeting that hold is lifted. States vary as to whether UI will adjudicate the issue, and if so, whether it occurs immediately when the issue is created or will wait to begin adjudication of the issue (i.e., the earlier claimant action or failure to do some action) until compliance occurs.⁷²
2. UI enters a “Conduct” issue and proceeds with adjudication, without placing a hold on benefits.

In both instances, any unpaid weeks can be claimed later in the benefit year; that is, participants continue to be eligible for the total benefit amount.

Creation of a Pending Issue

Indiana, New York, and Wisconsin all proceed by entering Pending issues onto participants’ claims, placing holds on their UI benefits, and assigning the issues to UI staff for investigation. The exact details of the hold vary by state. As can be seen in Exhibit 7.3, Indiana and Wisconsin keep indefinite holds on benefits until the claimant complies with the meeting requirement. In New York, the hold is for up to four weeks; thereafter (assuming the claimant continues to certify) payments resume. The definition of becoming compliant varies across states, as well. In Wisconsin and in some sites in Indiana, the hold on benefits is lifted once a claimant reschedules the REA meeting.⁷³ Claimants in the other Indiana sites and in New York must attend the rescheduled REA meeting to have the hold on benefits lifted.

Again, such variations likely shape how claimants weigh the relative costs of incurring a sanction for nonparticipation. In the states where the sanction is fairly immediate and consistent across incidents, participants may be more likely to comply with requirements or to stop filing for benefits. This stands in

⁷² Pending issues are created when a state has questions about a participant’s claim. In this case, the question is whether the participant is eligible for benefits given the potential noncompliance with a directive to attend a meeting.

⁷³ The official policy in Indiana states that everyone who misses the meeting without “just cause” or doesn’t respond to the adjudicator’s inquiry will have benefits held until they attend the required meeting. Despite that, we were told by staff in some visited sites that benefits were restarted when the REA meeting was rescheduled.

contrast to the policies implemented in Washington, discussed below, where there is no hold on benefits and the maximum overall penalty is a one-week loss of benefits. Though that week of benefits must be paid back, generally within one to two months of the incident, the amount lost for the infraction can be paid later, at the end of the claim.

Exhibit 7.3: State Procedures on When Pending Issues Are Created for Initial REA Meeting Noncompliance

State	Penalties		
	Length of Hold on Benefits	When Are Participants Considered Compliant?	Does UI Investigate All Weeks for Which Pending Issue Was on Claim?
Indiana	Indefinite hold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some offices, until rescheduled In other offices, until meeting is attended 	Yes
New York	Four-week hold	Once meeting is attended	Yes
Wisconsin	Indefinite hold	Once meeting is scheduled or rescheduled ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If within the 21-day scheduling window, no UI investigation. All benefits are denied outright, though participant can request adjudication If after 21-day window, eligibility is investigated during these weeks

^a UI claimants are given 21 days from when they complete their online assessment to schedule and attend their initial REA meeting. If they do not do so, they are noncompliant, a Pending issue is created, and their benefits are put on hold.

Note: Washington is not included in this table because it does not create Pending issues for meeting noncompliance.

If a claimant comes back into compliance and the hold is lifted, states vary in the extent to which the noncompliance is then adjudicated. In Wisconsin, if the claimant is within the 21-day scheduling window, the state denies benefits for the weeks of noncompliance and UI does not adjudicate the issue. If the claimant is beyond the 21-day window or missed more than one scheduled REA session, the assigned adjudicator contacts the claimant to assess whether there might be an A&A issue that is preventing compliance with REA requirements.

In New York, the procedures are similar when claimants come back into compliance. UI lifts the hold on benefits and a questionnaire is sent to the claimant to investigate the issue. Once the investigation is complete, the adjudicator decides whether the noncompliance was permissible and if the back benefits should be paid. In many cases, the benefits are denied for the week of noncompliance as well as the weeks while the hold was in place.

In Indiana, adjudication occurs soon after the issue is created. The issue enters the UI staff work distribution pool and is worked/completed. The adjudicator determines the reason for the failure to attend and assesses the penalty accordingly.

Investigation of a Conduct Issue

Uniquely among our four study states, Washington does not create a Pending issue, nor does it place a hold on benefits. Instead, Washington immediately creates a Conduct issue and begins adjudication. This more aggressive adjudication policy might lead the state to discover other compliance issues more quickly

than might otherwise occur (and perhaps than occurs in other states that do not move immediately to adjudication).

In the short run, though, the claimants experience less of an immediate effect, because no benefits hold is put in place during the adjudication process. (The other three states in the study do not pay benefits while the claimant’s eligibility is investigated.) Continuing to pay benefits results in Washington participants experiencing no immediate, direct penalty for noncompliance. If adjudication determines that the noncompliant claimant did not have a permissible reason for missing the meeting, the state attempts to recoup the paid benefits retroactively. This delayed response likely has little direct impact on attendance at the REA meeting.

7.4.2 Subsequent REA Meetings

Three states offered additional meetings after the mandatory initial REA meeting (New York, Washington, and Wisconsin). In New York and Washington, state policies for participants who miss later meetings are essentially the same as those for missing earlier meetings. Because Indiana offers only the initial REA meeting, it is not discussed in this section.

Exhibit 7.4: State Noncompliance Policies—Subsequent REA Meetings

State	Summary of Noncompliance Policies
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies are identical for all meetings • Participants who do not attend their REA meetings have a hold placed on their benefits until they attend an REA session or until four weeks have passed, whichever occurs first • Participants must contact the REA staff to reschedule their appointment
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All subsequent REA meetings must be completed by phone • Participants must be available anytime during their one-hour scheduled call. If they are not available, the staff member will enter an FTR, and UI will process a one-week denial of benefits • Rescheduling after the no-show is not allowed
Wisconsin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach for subsequent meetings is slightly different from the policy for the initial REA meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participants are not allowed to reschedule once they miss their required REA session ○ Maximum penalty for not attending the meeting is a one-week denial of benefits, though a hold is placed on the claim while the issue is being adjudicated

Note: Indiana is not included in this table because it offers only an initial REA meeting.

Wisconsin appears to use the subsequent meeting as an opportunity to impose a slightly stricter noncompliance policy in that it imposes a loss of services by not allowing the meeting to be rescheduled.

7.5 Noncompliance—Reemployment Plan Activities

A different type of noncompliance is not completing the activities required by the REA reemployment plan. These policies are relevant only for participants in the Full REA treatment groups (Single REA and Multiple REA). They are not relevant for the Partial REA group, where by design, no referrals are made during the group orientation.

7.5.1 Procedures for Assessing Compliance

A state’s approach to verification appears to be related to whether it implemented a Single or Multiple REA model prior to the study.

Prior to the study, states with multiple REA meetings used the follow-up session(s) to assess participants’ progress toward completing the action steps agreed upon in their reemployment plan. This pattern continued during the study (Exhibit 7.5). In all three Multiple REA states (New York, Washington, and Wisconsin), REA staff spoke with participants during the second and third meetings to determine whether they completed their recommended and/or required activities.

In New York, staff formally verify completion of any required activities (i.e., check the data system to verify workshop attendance), though few activities are labeled as required.⁷⁴ When the activities are not required, REA staff in New York use the subsequent REA meetings as a check-in point to determine whether participants have made progress on reemployment activities/steps set forth in their reemployment plans. Typically, no external verification of activity completion occurs—participants self-report on their progress and staff review any materials that the participant brings to the meeting (e.g., copy of a revised resume).

Washington and Wisconsin use a similar approach, though verification of required steps is particularly challenging in Washington, where the subsequent REA meeting occurs by phone and tangible evidence of progress (e.g., a revised resume) cannot be easily shared.

Though making use of subsequent REA meetings to confirm reemployment plan compliance is a practical option, it does allow the participant some flexibility. Specifically, it allows a participant who becomes employed before the subsequent meeting, or who was not required to attend a subsequent meeting (see discussion in Section 5.1), or who simply stops claiming before the follow-up meeting to avoid losing benefits for those weeks before compliance would be reviewed.

Exhibit 7.5: State Methods for Verifying Activity Completion

State	Single REA	Multiple REA
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant-reported biweekly logs; some offices check workshop attendance 	
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check for completion of services in employment services database; only for “required” activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During subsequent REA session, verify completions in employment services database only for those with “required” activities
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No verification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During subsequent REA session, no independent verification
Wisconsin		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During subsequent REA session, no independent verification

Because the follow-up one-on-one meetings are the primary way REA staff ensure that participants are completing their individual reemployment plans, there is almost no verification of whether Single REA

⁷⁴ In Washington and Wisconsin, staff consider the activity listed in reemployment plans as required. In New York, staff describe most activities as recommended and only listed action steps as required if they believed it was critically important for the participant to complete the activity.

participants in New York and Washington have completed the steps listed in their plans.⁷⁵ The only exception is New York, if a referral is formally required. If this is the case, staff check the centralized employment services database and make sure the action was completed. The result is that Single REA participants in New York and Washington experience the requirement to complete their referred reemployment service as voluntary rather than mandatory. Early evidence from the service data supports this—though participants appear to receive a service referral, very few participants from the Single REA group complete additional reemployment services after the initial REA meeting (see Exhibits 6.5 and 6.6).

Only Indiana had a Single REA model prior to the study. This meant that its model needed a method for tracking participants' progress in completing their reemployment plans that did not rely on a subsequent REA meeting. To this end, Indiana implemented a monitoring process that requires participants to complete and submit biweekly logs that track completion of their required REA activities (see Section 5.3). Furthermore, Indiana REA staff do not always accept those reports. Instead, they sometimes go into the local workshop scheduling systems to independently verify whether participants attended the workshops they say they did on their logs. Other times, the staff trust the logs and only flag participants for noncompliance who submit incomplete logs (or complete no logs at all).

Indiana uses these policies to impose a consistent penalty for noncompliance with required activities. As a result, participants are more likely to complete a follow-up reemployment service than are participants in the other study states that offer the Single REA treatment condition (see Section 6.4). To the extent that completing activities results in quicker return to employment (and that compliance activities do not consume too many resources), Indiana might be expected to spend less on UI. In the same vein, it can be hypothesized that participants' earnings would be higher than those of the other treatment conditions and states.

7.5.2 Penalty for Noncompliance

When noncompliance with required activities is identified, REA staff apply the appropriate state policies, as listed in Exhibit 7.6.

As was mentioned in Section 7.5.1, Indiana carefully monitors compliance with required reemployment referrals. REA staff enter an FTR for participants who do not submit their biweekly logs or do not complete the required activities. When this code is entered and UI is notified, UI places a Pending issue on the claim for investigation. This places a hold on the participant's benefits, which is lifted if the participant completes the reemployment services activity that was assigned. UI staff adjudicate the noncompliance and the length of the denial of benefits, which depends on the reason the claimant did not complete the required reemployment service. The potential penalty is a maximum one-week denial; all other held benefits are released if noncompliance was for just cause. If the noncompliance was deemed to be not for just cause, UI will impose an indefinite denial until the claimant completes the requirement.

At the opposite extreme is Washington, where compliance with reemployment service referrals is not monitored for Single REA participants. This treatment group did not exist prior to the study, and the state

⁷⁵ Recall that the Single REA treatment condition in New York and Washington was created explicitly for the REA2 Impact Study. State policies were designed in the context of using follow-up meetings for accountability and tracking of participant action.

did not develop alternative monitoring activities (as a replacement for subsequent REA meetings, which are not permitted for Single REA participants).

Single REA participants in New York also receive no monitoring of reemployment service activities unless the activities are deemed mandatory. When they are, New York staff monitor compliance and notify UI if the mandatory activity is not completed. The penalty for noncompliance is that the participant’s benefits are put on hold and only resume once the activity is completed or four weeks pass, whichever occurs first. Once the activity is completed, the Pending issue is removed (the hold is lifted) and the noncompliance is adjudicated to determine whether the benefits should be denied. Overall, among those assigned to a Single REA treatment group, only participants in Indiana and a small number in New York with mandatory referrals are likely to experience the need to complete any additional activities after the initial REA meeting as a requirement.

Exhibit 7.6: State Penalties for Not Completing Required REA Referrals

State	Single REA	Multiple REA
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indefinite hold until completion Once completed, week of initial noncompliance is adjudicated and other held benefits are released 	
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If action is required, the penalty for noncompliance is the same as for Multiple REA If action is <i>not</i> required, no verification; no penalty for noncompliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold is put in place until compliance or for four weeks, whichever occurs first Adjudication occurs once hold is lifted to determine which of the held benefits will be denied/released
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No verification; no penalty for noncompliance 	<p><u>Second Meeting:</u> Required to attend third meeting; issue may be created and adjudicated</p> <p><u>Third Meeting:</u> Failure to Report code entered and issue created; one week denial of benefits is likely penalty</p>
Wisconsin		<p><u>Second Meeting:</u> Required to attend third meeting</p> <p><u>Third Meeting:</u> Failure to Report code entered and issue created; one week denial of benefits is likely penalty</p>

Considering those assigned to Multiple REA, New York’s enforcement policy is the same as for Single REA participants—if an activity is required and the participant does not comply, UI is notified and a Pending issue is created. What is unique for Multiple REA participants in New York, which does not occur for Single REA participants, is greater accountability for referrals not classified as mandatory. REA staff there have the opportunity to talk directly to participants in subsequent meetings, asking what they have accomplished to date and reiterating the importance of completing both mandatory and suggested activities. Though the penalties in New York are similar for Multiple REA and Single REA participants, there is additional accountability for Multiple REA participants originating from their engagement with staff during the required meetings.

The policies in Wisconsin and Washington vary with which meeting the participant is attending when the noncompliance is discovered. In Wisconsin, if noncompliance is discovered during the second REA meeting, the most common repercussion is being scheduled for a third REA meeting. Wisconsin staff

almost never flag participants who do not complete their action plan prior to their second meeting as having failed to participate. A “Failure to Participate” code is entered only for noncompliance with requirements specified during the third meeting. That is, if at the third meeting, a participant still has not completed the required actions, REA staff enter the code, notifying UI to deny benefits for the week and adjudicate the issue.

Washington implements a similar policy to Wisconsin except that its REA staff do sometimes report nonparticipation with a required activity after the second meeting, particularly if an A&A issue is suspected. In all cases where a penalty related to REA reemployment plan requirements is assessed, it results in a one-week denial of benefits.

7.6 Issues Discovered during Eligibility Review

Central to the REA program is its continuing review of participants’ eligibility for receiving UI benefits. Unemployment Insurance Program Letter No. 10-14 states, “The UI eligibility review is a key part of the REA for program integrity purposes, and if UI staff does not conduct the eligibility review, the service delivery staff must be trained to identify all potential eligibility issues” (DOL 2014a, p. 2).

Exactly what is to be included in the eligibility review is left to the discretion of the states. As a result, each state has implemented slightly different strategies for reviewing participants’ eligibility. The two most common activities are (1) a review of overall eligibility, looking for potential A&A issues and (2) a review of participants’ work search activities. The following two subsections describe the study states’ approaches to each of these activities, describing similarities and differences across states.

7.6.1 Review of Claimants’ Eligibility

The four study states approach eligibility reviews in different ways: education on UI eligibility requirements with delayed implementation (New York and Washington), high-level eligibility review (Indiana), or strict implementation of UI policies (Wisconsin). The following section describes each of these approaches in more detail.

REA staff in New York and Washington use participants’ completed UI eligibility or assessment forms to discuss any responses that would raise A&A concerns with UI staff. REA staff counsel these participants about the UI eligibility rules and work to persuade them to change their job search to comply with UI regulations. Though these participants might be reported to UI for investigation in other states, processes in New York and Washington are structured to ensure that the first step in the initial REA meeting is to educate participants, rather than reporting them to UI for potential eligibility issues.⁷⁶ If, however, REA staff perceive that the observed issue will not be remedied by the education provided, they will notify UI so it can initiate an investigation.

In subsequent meetings (for participants assigned to and required to attend a subsequent REA session), enforcement increases and REA staff are more likely to report potential A&A issues to UI for investigation. This approach substantially decreases the severity of the penalties associated with the REA program’s eligibility review. In practice, few penalties are levied at the first meeting. Given that only a

⁷⁶ In New York, this view is in keeping with the state’s UI policy that claimants must be directly informed of their obligations before they can be held accountable.

small percentage of those participants assigned to Multiple REA meetings attend them and are likely to be reported for investigation, the eligibility review in these two states is likely to have a negligible impact on benefits received.

Indiana's self-assessment form includes a few high-level questions related to A&A issues. At least one staff member was observed discussing problematic responses with a participant. Nevertheless, such discussions appear to be much less frequent and much less in-depth than in the other three states.

In Wisconsin, the UI adjudicator assigned to the REA program takes the lead at the initial REA meeting in probing for any A&A issues, using the participant's assessment form and then the one-on-one discussion. The presence of the UI adjudicator increases the likelihood that A&A issues will be discovered and reported consistently, which substantially increases the penalty imposed on participants when they do not comply with UI regulations.

In summary, with the exception of Wisconsin, the study's site observations and interviews indicated that REA staff rarely reported UI eligibility issues. This was true in Washington and New York because their REA models emphasize education rather than enforcement during the initial meeting. In Indiana, REA staff infrequently identified A&A issues, likely due to their cursory review process; when eligibility issues were identified, REA staff there seemed willing to create a flag for UI follow-up. In these three states, it seems reasonable to assume that participants are not likely to change their behavior in substantial ways as a result of the required eligibility reviews.

7.6.2 Review of Weekly Work Search Activities

All UI claimants are required to certify that they are looking for work in order to remain eligible for UI benefits. The REA programs in Indiana and Wisconsin ask participants to verify this by bringing in a copy of their previous work search activities. These documents demonstrate that they are in fact looking for work. These documents also give the REA staff insights as to how to help the participants to improve on their work search strategies (e.g., conducting a very narrow search, applying for inappropriate jobs). The number of weeks required to be reviewed during the initial REA meeting varies by state, as does the responsibility for completing the review.

In Indiana, it is four weeks, and the REA staff complete the review. In Wisconsin, it is the previous week (including an applied-for job posting), with the review being completed by the UI adjudicator. In both states, referral to UI occurs when work searches are missing. Study observations indicated it was more likely for Wisconsin's UI adjudicators to notice problems in participants' work searches (e.g., applying over and over at the same employer; listing resumes dropped off instead of applications submitted) and follow up with adjudication than it was for Indiana's REA staff to refer participants to UI for follow-up if they noticed a similar issue. In Indiana, when a work search was missing or an inadequate number of searches were completed, staff often coached the participants on how to do a work search better. In Wisconsin, this may be because the UI adjudicator is present at the REA meeting, can make a determination on the spot whether the participant is compliant, and may be more willing to fully enforce the work search policies than are AJC staff in other states.

New York applies different policies during the first and subsequent meetings. During the first meeting, the REA staff review the participants' work search activities but do not report inadequate activity to UI. Instead, they educate participants on proper activities and give them guidance for future work search submissions. Participants in the Multiple REA group then are held accountable in subsequent meetings. If

participants present an inadequate work search during a second or third REA meeting, staff enter the proper code in the services database and UI will be notified to begin an investigation.

Washington's REA program does not include review of participants' work search activities.

Indiana's and Wisconsin's emphasis on reviewing participants' previous work search does seem to create an understanding of the importance of the work search for maintaining UI benefits. Enforcement of this requirement, particularly in Wisconsin, where penalties are implemented quickly and decisively, are likely to increase participants' compliance and decrease UI benefits paid when noncompliance occurs. Conversely, because work search review is minimal in Washington and New York, we would expect that impacts of work search requirements would also be limited.

To the extent that work search activities result in higher rates of employment, one might expect higher rates of employment in the states with more emphasis on consistent and quality work search activities.

7.7 Discussion

The REA program is a mandatory initiative designed to provide services that speed reemployment simultaneously with enforcing UI program requirements. This chapter described the approach that each of the states uses to monitor and address three major compliance responsibilities: participation in REA meetings, completion of mandatory reemployment plan activities, and engagement in productive work search. States must implement these REA requirements within the context of their own UI laws and regulations. Each state has also adopted an ongoing set of procedures for monitoring and tracking compliance and administering penalties for noncompliance.

Collectively, these factors contribute to a monitoring and compliance environment that is unique to each state. Their approach to sanctioning nonattendance at the initial orientation meeting provides an example of this diversity. Both New York and Wisconsin have adopted explicit "hold" policies in which benefits are suspended for missing the initial REA meeting. In New York, nonattendance results in a four-week hold on participants' benefits until the meeting is completed. In Wisconsin, if participants miss an REA meeting, their benefits are held indefinitely until the meeting is rescheduled. Indiana also has an explicit policy to put a hold on benefits until the meeting is completed; however, the way its policy is implemented in practice allows for a degree of flexibility that is unique among the study states. Indiana's written policy directs staff to report nonattendance the day of the missed session. Staff, however, were observed following a parallel state policy—waiting the allowed 48 hours to enter a noncompliance code in hopes that participants would attend a make-up session and avoid the penalty. This, coupled with Indiana's proactive approach to rescheduling (i.e., calling individuals who missed and letting them know about make-up sessions), served to create a compliance environment that is somewhat less restrictive than New York's or Wisconsin's. By contrast, Washington's policy has the most limited immediate penalty, in that it does not hold benefits until compliance nor while nonattendance at the initial REA meeting is investigated.

Understanding how the states differ in their approach to compliance is particularly important because it potentially influences participants' decisions to fully engage with REA services, which can in turn influence the impacts generated by the REA program.

8. Conclusion

The earlier chapters of this report have described how each of the four study states has implemented the REA program in support of the REA2 Impact Study. The discussions have focused primarily on the structure and operation of each of the study-specific treatment arms, the patterns of service receipt that resulted, and the compliance and enforcement environment in which these REA programs operate. This final chapter briefly synthesizes all of these factors and summarizes the extent to which they may have influenced the service contrast (i.e., the difference in services received) across the various treatment arms. Understanding the intensity of each treatment arm and exactly how the arms vary within and across each state is the key to appropriately interpreting the program impacts in subsequent REA2 study reports.

8.1 Cross-State Overview

The four study states were successful in designing distinct treatment arms as required by the study. With technical assistance from the Abt team, the states designed distinct treatment conditions that generally increased in intensity as follows (Exhibit 8.1 summarizes which treatment arms each state implemented):

- **Control group** participants receive no services (i.e., neither enforcement nor assistance).
- **Partial REA** participants receive very minimal services typically limited to a single abbreviated orientation session (i.e., all of the enforcement; none—or little—of the assistance).
- **Single REA** participants receive the state’s standard services package that typically includes a comprehensive orientation, a one-on-one meeting, a customized reemployment plan, and a referral to an appropriate reemployment service (i.e., all of the enforcement; all of the services—flowing from one REA meeting).
- **Multiple REA** participants receive all of the Single services with the additional opportunity for up to two follow-up sessions (i.e., all of the enforcement; all of the services—flowing from multiple REA meetings).

To maintain the fidelity of these distinctions, the states carefully trained staff on how to ensure that UI claimants received only the services that corresponded to their assignment group. The study team’s ongoing data monitoring and periodic site observations confirmed that REA staff generally followed through and implemented the treatment conditions as planned.

Exhibit 8.1: State-Specific Randomization Procedures

	Number of Treatment Arms	Treatment Type			
		Control	Partial REA	Full-Single REA	Full-Multiple REA
Indiana	3	✓	✓	✓	
New York ^a					
Four-Arm Cohort (10 sites)	4	✓	✓	✓	✓
Two-Arm Cohort (54 sites)	2	✓			✓
Washington	4	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wisconsin	3	✓	✓		✓

^a Of New York’s office locations, 10 implemented a four-arm treatment approach and 54 a two-arm treatment approach.

Despite the concerted effort by both the state REA leadership and the Abt study team to design and maintain distinct treatment arms, state compliance policies clearly influence the services that claimants actually receive. These policies include the actual rules that are in place (e.g., whether rescheduling of a missed meeting is allowed) and set the severity and timing of penalties for noncompliance (e.g., whether UI benefits are suspended immediately after a missed meeting is logged in the services tracking system).

Collectively, these policies and prospective penalties seem to influence claimants' decisions about whether to attend their meetings and whether Full REA participants (Single REA and Multiple REA) chose to pursue and complete their reemployment service referrals. The discussions that follow briefly summarize the confluence of factors at work in each state, potentially influencing claimant decisions about their pursuit of REA services. It is these decisions that shape the final mix and intensity of services received and ultimately the contrast among the treatment arms.

8.1.1 Indiana

Indiana used its existing REA and Jobs for Hoosiers program models as the basis for the services to be delivered to Single REA and Partial REA participants, respectively. These programs, while distinct, were more similar than in other states where Abt was able to work with staff to design a new Partial REA treatment condition. Indiana's primary service receipt difference was that Single REA participants received a simple reemployment plan that typically included two workshop referrals. In contrast, Partial REA participants did not receive either the plan or the referrals.

This distinction was reinforced by the requirement that after the initial REA meeting, all Single REA participants complete two biweekly logs, documenting their job search activities and workshop attendance. This compliance requirement acted to increase the rate of service receipt for Single REA participants far above that of Partial REA participants, and as a result increased the contrast between the Partial and Single treatment conditions.

Other policies further reinforced the service distinctions across treatment arms. For instance, Indiana consistently and immediately reported claimants who did not attend REA meetings. The resulting Failure to Report issue translated into an indefinite hold on benefits until the claimant rescheduled or attended (depending on the local office). This unambiguous policy likely helped increase Indiana's attendance rate, increasing the contrast between the control group and the two treatment groups. The higher attendance rates may also have increased the overall contrast between the Partial and Single REA participants in that more Single REA participants had a chance to receive the additional services provided during the initial REA meeting.

8.1.2 New York

In keeping with the broad parameters of the evaluation, New York provided very distinct levels of service to its treatment groups. The state's practice of implementing a swift penalty on those who did not attend their REA meetings served to bolster attendance and maintain the proper distinctions in service receipt that were envisioned. Specifically, those claimants who chose not to attend (Partial, Single or Multiple) had their UI benefits withheld until they attended or four weeks passed, whichever occurred first.

At the same time, however, other state policies may have had the opposite effect on the treatment distinctions. First, the state's REA policy allowed most participants to be given a *recommended* rather than a *required* reemployment service referral. Without the requirement for completion or a subsequent meeting to prompt action, most Single REA participants chose not to complete additional reemployment services after the initial REA meeting. This lowered the contrast between Single REA and Partial REA.

Second, state polices allowed for wider intervals between follow-up meetings among those assigned to the Multiple REA group. Specifically, staff were allowed to schedule subsequent meetings anywhere between four and eight weeks apart—versus two to three weeks in Washington and Wisconsin. This extended time frame for scheduling appeared to result in fewer individuals actually participating in second and third REA meetings, presumably because they had already found a job. Lower attendance results in fewer claimants participating in the reemployment services that help to maintain the distinction among treatment arms.

8.1.3 Washington

Washington chose to use a preexisting program, the Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Orientation, as the foundation for its Partial REA treatment condition. Though the resulting Partial REA treatment condition provided a very similar AJC orientation to that received by Full REA participants, the state emphasized several additional program components during the Full REA initial meetings, providing considerable contrast. Particularly noteworthy is the highly customized reemployment plan that is prepared for those assigned to the Single and Multiple REA groups. The plan is begun as part of the initial group orientation and is then further refined during the one-on-one (“deskside”) meeting that follows. Program operations in Washington are also designed to maintain the necessary distinction between Single and Multiple REA treatments. Specifically, Washington maintains a “default” practice in which it is presumed that all participants assigned to the Multiple REA arm will always be scheduled for subsequent meetings unless specific circumstances preclude it.

However, a number of program practices in Washington may decrease the contrast between the various treatment conditions. First, when claimants miss their initial REA meeting, their benefits are not immediately affected. Adjudication does occur promptly, but the claimants’ benefits continue until UI makes a determination. This, coupled with the fact that the state makes no attempts to reschedule participants into follow-up orientation sessions, tends to dampen overall rates of participation. Lower attendance at the initial meeting, in turn, decreases the likelihood of participants receiving their anticipated services. The other program element affecting service receipt in Washington is the only limited follow-up with Single REA participants to confirm that they completed their required reemployment service referral. Without this follow-up and/or enforcement, very few Single REA participants complete their referrals. These policy and program decisions likely reduced the treatment contrast between Washington’s Control, Partial, Single, and Multiple REA participants.

8.1.4 Wisconsin

The planned treatment contrast between Wisconsin’s Partial and Multiple REA participants was dramatic. The Partial REA participants were to receive UI eligibility reviews of 10 to 15 minutes each, with no additional orientation or services. The Multiple REA participants were to be required to participate in an orientation to AJC services and key job search strategies lasting two or three hours. During that orientation each claimant would be pulled out for a short one-on-one meeting attended by both REA staff and an UI adjudicator. The presence of a UI representative was expected to increase compliance with work search requirements and identify any UI eligibility issues.

Actual program implementation, however, decreased this built-in contrast. Particularly influential was Wisconsin’s policy for Multiple REA of giving REA staff the discretion to decide who would be required to attend a subsequent REA meeting. Staff required about half of those claimants who attended their initial REA meeting to return for a second meeting, and only a quarter of those who attended their second meeting to attend a third meeting. As a result, only a small portion of those assigned to Multiple REA

actually participated in multiple meetings. Additionally, those deemed “work ready” were not given a reemployment plan or a referral for additional services.

8.2 Final Thoughts

This document has described the programs as implemented in support of DOL’s upcoming impact evaluation. By understanding each of the state’s program designs, operational procedures, and policy environments, we increase our opportunity to meaningfully interpret the impact that REA has on claimants’ UI receipt, employment, and earnings. In addition to tracking both short- and intermediate-term impacts, our future analyses will look to link these findings to specific design, implementation, and policy dimensions discussed in this report. Given that there are only four states and that their treatments differ across many dimensions, any links will be suggestive rather than definitive.

Department of Labor guidance (UIPL 10-14) describes a program which is to address two concerns: (i) “[t]he reemployment needs of UI claimants” and (ii) “the prevention and detection of UI improper payments.” The reemployment needs of UI claimants are to be addressed by REA through one or more REA meetings—with eligibility assessment and job search assistance—and a mandatory reemployment service, which together provide “an entry point to a full array of services available at American Job Centers[.]”

These two goals will only (directly) be achieved if UI claimants actually attend the REA meeting and if during that meeting eligibility issues are carefully explored. To that end, the UIPL describes a mandatory program and explicitly requires that procedures be put in place to adjudicate non-compliance: “Once selected for an REA, claimants are required to participate in all components of the UI REA. Failure to report or participate in any aspect of the UI REA must result in referral to adjudication of these issues under application state law.”

As implemented, the programs in our four study states look rather different. We conclude by highlighting several of these differences across the four state REA programs studied and the implications of these implementation study findings for the upcoming impact analysis.

- ***Mandatory participation.*** A combination of federal and state due process rules, state practices, and REA staff choices results in a program that appears, in practice, to be closer to voluntary than would have been expected given the DOL guidance. In particular, the penalty for noncompliance often appears not sure, not swift, and not substantial. This report has presented evidence that supports the underlying hypothesis that even moderate penalties will bring additional claimants into the REA meeting (see Section 4.4.1; Washington state does not withhold benefits, and in contrast to other states, most of those who do not attend the initially scheduled REA meeting never attend). Therefore, it seems likely that an implementation of REA (or an REA-like program) with surer, swifter, and more substantial penalties would further increase attendance at the REA meeting—resulting in more claimants coming to that “entry point for AJC services.” In as much as those services are effective, this will also lead to shorter UI durations and better job matches.
- ***Emphasis on UI eligibility assessment:*** Once at the REA meeting, the general program emphasis is on assistance rather than compliance. Review of initial and ongoing eligibility does not appear to be a major focus of the program (at least in three of the four states in our study), though, when detected, egregious Able and Available issues and lack of sufficient job search appear to trigger some enforcement.

- **Required referral to a reemployment service:** In two of the four study states, the follow-on reemployment service is de facto voluntary for Single REA participants. In some states it is described as voluntary to the claimants; in other states, procedures are minimal for identifying and penalizing noncompliance with the requirement for reemployment service. There is more accountability for reemployment services in New York and Washington at the subsequent REA meetings (if the claimant is in the Multiple REA treatment group and still claiming UI).
- **Participation in reemployment services:** Actual participation in reemployment services as a follow-on to the REA meeting appears to be lower than might have been expected. In part, this is a reflection of the above noted variation in how the states present this “requirement” during orientation. However, other factors may also contribute to the lower than expected participation in reemployment services. These factors include states’ inability to detect and track noncompliance, the limited penalties for noncompliance, and underreporting due to data-entry practices by REA staff.
- **Distinction between Partial and Single REA services:** The Partial REA treatment condition was intended to deliver less assistance than the Single REA. The orientation was to be shorter, and there was to be a greater relative emphasis on UI eligibility and compliance. This distinction between Single and Partial was consistently present, as expected. Furthermore, this Partial treatment arm did not include referrals to reemployment services. However, given the low level of attendance at reemployment services in the Single REA treatment condition, as noted above, reported differences between Single and Partial REA were smaller than might have been expected.

Our next step is to estimate the impact of the program as implemented.

We hypothesize that an alternative implementation of REA (or an REA-like program) with surer, swifter, and more substantial penalties for noncompliance than those described here would have larger impacts on reducing UI duration. We hypothesize these effects because more enforcement would lead to: (i) more claimants leaving UI to avoid attending the REA meeting; (ii) more claimants coming to the REA meeting, receiving services, and through those services leaving UI faster; and (iii) more claimants having their benefits suspended for noncompliance.

Nevertheless, earlier evaluations of the REA program—presumably programs with enforcement similar to what we have described in this document—did find moderate impacts (half a week to a week). Thus, even given the levels of enforcement and participation described in this report, similar impacts seem likely in our now in progress impact analysis.

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Appendix A: Implementation Study Research Questions

This implementation study for the REA2 Impact Study focused on two key dimensions of state REA programs: (1) services provided under each of the study's treatment conditions, including procedures for noncompliance with the REA program; and (2) each REA program's goals, structure, and staffing. This appendix discusses the study's initial research questions related to each dimension of the selected REA programs, as listed in the REA2 Impact Study's *Evaluation Design Report*.

A.1 Service Delivery

The primary focus of the implementation study was to document the services provided under each treatment condition, by weeks since UI claim:

- **Eligibility for REA:** Which groups of claimants are excluded from REA completely? Why did the state choose to put these exemptions in place? What exemptions are commonly granted after random assignment (e.g., moved, returned to work, union attached).
- **Scheduling the REA Meeting:** Is initial scheduling done at the state level or at the local level? Is scheduling done by a computer system or by some manual process? How does that process ensure that staff are available to conduct the REA meetings? Relative to the approval of the UI claim, when is the scheduling decision made? For when is the meeting itself scheduled? What provisions are made for a UI claimant leaving UI between the scheduling date and the meeting date?
- **Services Provided under REA and Each Treatment Condition:** How does the state operationalize the key REA program requirements (as defined by federal guidance)? Where does implementation vary across sites and treatment conditions within a state?

To answer these overarching questions, the study team considered:

What is the content of the REA orientations? Who delivers the content and for how long? What labor market information is provided during the REA meeting? What is the process for developing employment plans? What are the most common reemployment service referrals? What type of job search activities are available to and used by claimants?

- **Number of REAs:** How many REA meetings does the state offer to each claimant? Is the number of REA meetings offered/required uniform across all REA-assigned UI claimants? If not, which REA-assigned claimants get how many REA meetings, and how are those decisions made?
- **Control Group Services:** What does the state require of non-REA participants (i.e., control group members), particularly employment-related services (e.g., required non-REA eligibility review and job search requirements)? What is the strength of the state's non-REA eligibility review and work search review? What is the availability of reemployment services to non-REA UI claimants?

A.2 REA Program Goals, Structure, and Staffing

Though OUI specifies some aspects of what states must do with REA grant funds, states have a wide range of options for structuring their programs. The study team explored questions to help document each study state's REA program goals, structure, and approach to staffing:

- **Program Goals:** What is the relative importance that each state places on providing reemployment assistance and enforcing REA program requirements?

- ***State-Level Organization:*** What are the state’s organizational linkages between the REA program and other related programs—UI, American Job Centers, Employment Service/Wagner-Peyser Act, and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) or other training programs?
- ***Local REA System:*** Which geographic areas have REA and which do not? Where are REA programs physically located? What agency employs and supervises REA staff?
- ***Structure of Reemployment Services:*** What agency and staff provide these services to REA participants? What is the role of the AJCs and Employment Service in providing these services? What is the role of UI staff? How is UI notified if clients do not report for the mandatory reemployment service?
- ***Staffing and Supervisory Structure:*** What are REA staff roles and responsibilities? In a local office, what is the supervisory structure? To what extent is supervision local (i.e., within the local office) versus statewide (i.e., through state-level REA staff)?
- ***Data Systems:*** How prompt is data input? How complete?

Appendix B: Qualitative Data Collection

This appendix describes the study team’s approach to qualitative data collection. Qualitative data were used to document program implementation in each state and were a key information source for this report. As described below, site liaison teams collected qualitative data through several rounds of site visits in each state, as well as through recruitment visits (i.e., early visits to states to recruit them to participate in the random assignment study) and regular monitoring calls. The following sections of this appendix describe the study’s qualitative collection protocols in detail, including information on how local sites and staff were selected to participate in qualitative data collection efforts, such as interviews.

B.1 State-Level Data Collection

Prior to any local data collection, the study team held a series of conversations with officials in each state to better understand how the state had designed and operationalized its REA program. The first of these conversations occurred during the site team visit to secure the state’s participation in the study. The next stage of communication happened as states and the study team worked together to design and train staff on the study’s random assignment process. Finally, the Abt team engaged with state staff throughout study implementation. The state staff accompanied the site teams on some of their local site visits and answered questions along the way to ensure the study team accurately understood each state’s policies. During each stage, the Abt liaison teams documented how state staff described their vision of how the REA program was to be implemented.

Importantly, the approach to state-level fieldwork was very different from the approach to local, site-level fieldwork. At the state level, the Abt liaison teams began gathering information during the first recruitment site visits. The teams continued to collect information as they worked with the state’s Evaluation Leadership Team to design the study’s random assignment process, implementation procedures, and monitoring. In comparison, the Abt liaison teams spent four to eight hours with each individual office visited, interviewing frontline and management staff and observing program operations. These office visits occurred during three monitoring site visits made in each state as described below.

B.2 Local Site Visits

The core data source for this implementation study was a single recruitment-focused visit to each state, followed by three monitoring site visits. Exhibit B.1 presents the approximate timing of the monitoring visits and the amount of time that the study team spent on site. Site liaison teams made adjustments as needed to accommodate state schedules.

Each site visit was conducted by the same Abt liaison team—one senior staff member and one junior staff member—responsible for design, training, and monitoring of the study’s random assignment in each particular state.

Exhibit B.1: Planning Guidelines for Site Visits

Visit	Number of Days on Site	Timing	Number of Local Sites to Be Visited
Recruitment Visit	1	During project start up	One to two AJCs
Monitoring Visit #1	4	Within 4 weeks of study start	Three or four AJCs
Monitoring Visit #2	3	About 3 months after study start	Two or three AJCs
Monitoring Visit #3	2	About 6 months after study start	Two AJCs

While on site, the study team spoke with the state’s REA program staff and staff delivering reemployment services to REA participants, as well as to key representatives from the state when possible.

The following sections discuss how, with state input, the study team selected which local sites would be visited to ensure a mix of geographic and economic contexts (Section B.2.1), preparation for the site visits (Section B.2.2), and the structure of the visits themselves (Section B.2.3).

B.2.1 Selecting Local Sites to Be Visited

The study team spent eight or nine days in each state observing local implementation of the REA program and interviewing local and state staff. These observations occurred in four sets of sites in each state—one day for each of 8 to 10 local sites, with the state conversations scattered throughout the visits.⁷⁷

Each state’s site liaison team collaborated with state staff to identify the sites to be visited. In general, the team invited states to propose itineraries that provided a range of office sizes and local labor markets and that were spread geographically across the state. The team also asked states to consider inter-office drive time when grouping sites for a single visit (e.g., that travel from local site 1 to local site 2 would take less than two hours). In the end, the team balanced logistical constraints by visiting different parts of the state on each site visit.

Exhibit B.2 shows the percentage of offices in each state the study team was able to visit during their qualitative fieldwork. The exact percentage was driven by the total number of offices in the state. For example, the study team was able to visit all sites originally participating in the study in Wisconsin⁷⁸ and a little more than half of the sites participating in the study in Washington.

⁷⁷ State REA staff accompanied the study team to all local sites so they were able to conduct interviews with state staff around breaks in local staff availability. The team also conducted at least a half day of interviews in the state capital in each state, allowing conversations with a wider variety of state staff members.

⁷⁸ After the site visits were complete, the state added three more sites to the study, which were not visited.

Exhibit B.2: Sites Visited during the REA2 Impact Study Qualitative Fieldwork

	AJCs That Offer REA Services	Number of Sites Visited During Start-Up	Number of Sites Visited for Monitoring	Percentage of Sites Visited
Indiana	27	1	9	37%
New York	10 ^a	1 ^b	9	90%
Washington	17	1 ^c	10	59%
Wisconsin	11	1 ^c	8	73%

^a This includes the 10 AJCs that offered the four-arm study design. The remaining 54 AJCs that offered REA services were not visited during the monitoring period because the two-arm service design delivered at these locations was unchanged from the sites' pre-study procedures.

^b The site visited during start-up was not subsequently included among the 10 REA study sites and is therefore excluded from the "percentage of sites visited" calculation in this table.

^c The site visited during start-up was also included among those sites visited during monitoring, so it is counted only once for the purposes of the "percentage of sites visited" calculation in this table.

B.2.2 Preparing for Site Visits

To facilitate conversations with REA and reemployment services staff, the Abt evaluation team developed semi-structured discussion guides before the visits. The guides targeted state REA program staff and staff operating the REA program at the local level. These discussion guides allowed the study's qualitative fieldworkers to focus the discussion on the topics that are most relevant to the site and program structure.

Once the discussion guides were finalized, and before the qualitative fieldwork in a particular state began, the study project director met with the state's site liaison team to review the discussion guides. These meetings were intended to increase the consistency with which the guides were followed across the four states, given that fieldworkers were different in each state. Prior to the site visits, the Abt liaison team also reviewed the state's REA manual, if one was available, as well as notes from their discussions with state REA leadership during state recruitment, the design of random assignment, and any monitoring calls.

B.2.3 Scheduling the Site Visit Meetings

Exhibit B.3 provides a sample schedule for a site visit. The schedule lists, in general, whom the team met with, the duration of each meeting, and the focus of each. Generally, local site visits included a meeting with the site director, a meeting with the REA supervisor (or a group meeting, when there are multiple supervisors), group interviews with REA line staff and reemployment services supervisors and line staff, and observation of REA meetings and of delivery of reemployment services.

Exhibit B.3: Sample Meeting Schedule for Site Visits

Functional Responsibility	Duration	Format and Focus
Full REA supervisor and Partial REA supervisor (if different)	45 minutes each; 90 minutes total	Individual interviews—Program goals and services, staffing and supervision, data systems
Staff who implement Full REA program	1 hour	Group interview—Program goals and services, noncompliance with REA requirements, data systems
Single REA service delivery		“Fly on the wall” observation of Single REA activities ^a
Multiple REA service delivery		“Fly on the wall” observation of Multiple REA activities ^a
Staff who implement Partial REA program (if different from Full REA)	45 minutes	Group interview—Program goals and services, noncompliance with REA requirements, data systems
Partial REA service delivery		“Fly on the wall” observation of Partial REA activities ^a
Reemployment services supervisor	30 minutes	Interview—Interaction with REA, services provided, noncompliance with REA requirements, data systems
Reemployment services delivery (if services being delivered while on site)		“Fly on the wall” observation of a typical service that REA participants receive
Local UI adjudication staff	20–30 minutes	Interview—Interaction with REA staff to identify REA participants who fail to report; timeline and procedures used to investigate non-monetary issues
AJC leadership	20–30 minutes	Interview—Full REA and Partial REA in the context of broader AJC operation

^a REA activities: eligibility review; “assistance” consisting of orientation to the AJC, provision of labor market information, development of reemployment plan, and registration in the state’s job bank; and referral to reemployment service. Not all activities are part of all treatment conditions.

Appendix C: Random Assignment Processes by State

This appendix describes the study's random assignment processes in each state. For each state, the information is organized in steps, beginning with a description of how each state defined the pool of eligible claimants for REA. Next we describe state-specific guidelines and rules for how eligible claimants were assigned to one of the study's treatment arms.

Where appropriate, the section highlights the types of exemptions and anomalies observed before and after random assignment in each state. REA program guidance from DOL specifies that states should exclude certain UI claimants from eligibility assessments, and therefore also from randomization into the REA study (DOL 2014a). Such claimants would include those who meet any of the following criteria:

- Member of a union hiring hall or seeking work through a union hiring hall.
- Enrolled in an approved training program.
- Temporary layoff or job attachment with anticipated recall date (states vary in how soon the return-to-work may be).
- Participating in Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services or other special programs (i.e., programs that provide benefits when regular UI is not normally payable).⁷⁹

In addition, states were not required to implement the UI REA program statewide, and as a result, claimants who lived outside the service area were excluded from the study. Finally, for purposes of the study, individuals who recently received similar services were excluded from randomization into the study.

Across the four states, the vast majority of exemptions occurred within the first six weeks of the claimant's initial claim—prior to or at the time of randomization. However, some exemptions were detected *after* claimants were randomized. Although claimants may have screened as eligible for randomization into the REA program prior to their initial meeting, caseworkers sometimes discovered information about the claimant's initial or ongoing circumstances during the meeting or shortly after (such as a recall date for returning to work) that resulted in an exemption. The number of claimants exempted for various reasons before and after randomization in each state is provided in Exhibit C.1.

⁷⁹ Programs include Trade Readjustment Allowances, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Short-Time Compensation, Self-Employment Assistance, special federal extension programs, and state additional benefit programs.

Exhibit C.1: Pre- and Post-Randomization Exemptions by State

	Indiana	New York (2-Arm)	New York (4-Arm)	New York (Total)	Washington	Wisconsin
REA-Eligible UI Claimants (UI Claimants eligible to be randomly assigned)	67,281	272,416	189,433	461,849	Unknown	Unknown
# Exempt prior to or at Randomization (Seasonal Worker, Union Attachment, etc.)	12,763	161,262	118,624	279,886	Unknown	Unknown
“RA Pool” (UI Claimants available to be randomly assigned)	54,518	111,154	70,809	181,963	46,626	50,128
# Excluded due to Capacity Constraints	3,063	5,621	685	6,306	0	23,961
“Study Sample” (UI Claimants who were randomly assigned to a treatment or control group)	51,455	105,533	70,124	175,657	46,626	26,167
# Excluded for Problems with Randomization, Multiple Random Assignments, or Problems Determining Original Office	334	2,441	7,701	10,142	728	21
“Analytic Sample”	51,121	103,092	62,423	165,515	45,898	26,146
Control	7,856	19,471	15,415	34,886	10,086	8,709
Multiple	0	83,621	16,166	99,787	12,224	0
Full Single	25,005	0	15,426	15,426	11,951	8,722
Partial Single	18,260	0	15,416	15,416	11,637	8,715

RA is random assignment.

Note: Unweighted counts are presented.

C.1 Indiana

In Indiana, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) agreed to randomly assign eligible UI claimants to one of three REA treatment arms during the 12-month assignment period: at least 25,000 participants in a Single REA treatment arm; at least 25,000 (and up to 60,000) participants in the Partial REA treatment arm, and 8,000 participants to the control group. Overall, the target sample size for Indiana was 58,000 participants.

C.1.1 Random Assignment Step 1—Determine Eligible Random Assignment Pool

The process for assigning participants to the REA program was contingent on two things. First, DWD determined where (in which office) UI claimants would receive REA services. Second, in the fourth week of an initial UI claim, DWD made a determination regarding UI claimants' eligibility status for REA. DWD excluded certain individuals from the program:

- Members of a union hiring hall.
- Claimants with a defined call back date.
- Individuals living more than 50 miles from a site offering REA.
- Those who received like services within the last 60 days.
- Claimants living out of state.
- Claimants involved in a job training program.

C.1.2 Random Assignment Step 2—WPRS Assignments

Once DWD made those exclusions, an automated process assigned a fixed number⁸⁰ of eligible participants with the highest WPRS profiling scores to WPRS programs. The number of eligible participants that DWD assigned to WPRS from each office was weighted based on that office's proportion of the REA-eligible pool and the weekly target of 58 WPRS assignments per week, and then rounded up. For example, if 3 percent of the week's REA-eligible claimants received services in a particular office, DWD assigned the top two highest-scoring individuals from that office to WPRS:

$$58 \times 3\% = 1.74, \text{ rounded to } 2.00$$

C.1.3 Random Assignment Step 3—Assign One to Each Treatment Arm

After making WPRS assignments, the random assignment process sorted the remaining REA-eligible claimants randomly by office. If there were at least three eligible claimants, one was assigned to each of the three treatment arms (i.e., Single REA, Partial REA, and Control). If there were less than three eligible participants, all were assigned to Single REA.

⁸⁰ The number of claimants assigned to WPRS is based on a target of 3,000 individuals over the 12-month period, which yields a weekly target of 58 individuals. The actual number assigned fluctuates due to rounding, but is approximately 58 per week.

C.1.4 Random Assignment Step 4—Assign Control Group

After filling at least one slot in each of the treatment arms, a fixed number of eligible participants were assigned to the control group. The target control group was 8,000 for the 12-month period, or a total of 153 assigned weekly (including those assigned in Step 3). The total number of eligible participants that were assigned to the control group from each office (including those assigned in Step 3) was weighted based on that office’s proportion of the REA staff capacity, and rounded normally. The formula was:

$$\left\{ \frac{(n_{\# \text{ of REA Staff per office}} \times C_{\# \text{ of appointments per REA staff}}) - 1_{\text{control assigned in step 3}}}{(N_{\text{Total \# of REA staff}} \times C_{\# \text{ of appointments per REA staff}})} \right\} \times 153_{\text{weekly control target}}$$

For example, if an office had 1 out of 44 REA staff studywide, and each staff could handle 13 REA appointments in a given week, the number of participants assigned to the control group in that office was three.

$$\left\{ \frac{(1 \times 13) - 1}{44 \times 13} \right\} \times 153 = 3.21, \text{ rounded to 3}$$

Once the control target was determined, the control group for each office was randomly filled with eligible participants, accounting for the one participant who was already assigned in Step 3.

C.1.5 Random Assignment Step 5—Assign Single REA Treatment Arm

After the control group was assigned, a fixed number of eligible participants were assigned to the Single REA Treatment arm, based on the capacity in that office. For each full-time REA staff, the random assignment algorithm assumed the office could handle 13 REA appointments. Therefore, the number of full-time REA staff was multiplied by 13 to get the total office capacity for Single REA appointments, and remaining eligible participants were randomly assigned to Single REA up to the office capacity in a given week.

C.1.6 Random Assignment Step 6—Assign Partial REA Treatment Arm

If there were any remaining eligible participants after Steps 1-5, they were all assigned to the Partial REA treatment (i.e., to Jobs for Hoosiers, or JFH).

C.2 New York

In 10 of its One-Stop offices, New York agreed to randomly assign approximately 19,000 eligible UI claimants to each of four REA treatment arms, during the 12-month assignment period: (1) a Multiple REA treatment; (2) a Single REA treatment; (3) a Partial REA treatment; and (4) Control. In the remaining 61 One-Stop offices, New York randomly assigned eligible UI claimants to either Multiple REA or Control.

C.2.1 Random Assignment Step 1—Determine Eligible Random Assignment Pool

Eligibility was based on the WPRS profile score (between 1 and 69), which was calculated sometime in the first two weeks of the UI claim. After an individual’s waiting week was over, and assuming the individual continued to certify for benefits, continuing eligibility excluded certain individuals from random assignment (these records were saved with an assignment status of “Not Applicable”):

- Work search marked as “not required.”
- Temporary layoffs.
- Union membership.
- Training in 599 program.
- Self-employment program (SEAP).
- Seasonal workers with two-year attachment to same employer.

In those offices that conduct the program, REA operates alongside two other statewide programs for UI claimants who are not eligible for REA: Career Center Customer Engagement (C3E; New York’s WPRS program) and Jobs for Veterans (JFV).

C.2.2 Random Assignment Step 2—Assign to Treatment or Control

In the 10 full-service offices, eligible UI claimants were randomized evenly across four groups (Multiple, Full/Single, Partial, and Control). The other 61 non-full-service offices assigned claimants to the Multiple REA group and the control group at a ratio of four to one. If there was a remainder when dividing the number of eligible participants among groups, the remainder was placed in the Multiple REA group. If there were more claimants than the office capacity would allow, the remaining claimants were put into the “Not Selected” group.

In some cases, staff made manual changes to an individual’s REA eligibility status; for instance, if a staff member happened to know that a claimant was a seasonal worker even though the existing data indicated not. *The manual exclusions are still considered to occur prior to or at the time of randomization.*

Once random assignment began (usually between the “weekly fill” of the random assignment pool on Friday and COB Tuesday), claimants were distributed between treatment conditions until the office capacity was reached.

C.2.3 Data Anomalies: Problem Weeks, Backdated Claims, and Multiple Claims

In New York, there were a few weeks in which claimants were assigned to a different (usually neighboring) office between the determination of the random assignment pool and the time of randomization. Without knowing which office’s pool these claimants were originally a part of, we were unable to create reliable office-week-specific weights for the remaining sample members. These office-weeks were flagged and excluded from the analytic sample.

In addition, there were a handful of office-weeks in which a manual random assignment process was used and we were unable to capture the random assignment data. These office-weeks were also flagged for exclusion from the analytic sample.

Finally, there are some instances of multiple and/or backdated UI claims that cause unexpected results from the random assignment algorithm. For instance, affected individuals were assigned to multiple treatment groups, or reassigned to the same group unnecessarily. These claimants were flagged and excluded from the analytic sample.

C.3 Washington

Washington agreed to randomly assign eligible UI claimants to one of four REA treatment arms during the 12-month assignment period, across 17 WorkSource centers implementing the REA program: (1) 26 percent to Full Multiple REA; (2) 26 percent to Full Single REA; (3) 26 percent to Partial REA; and (4) 22 percent to Control. Overall, the target sample size for Washington was 40,000 participants.

C.3.1 Random Assignment Step 1—Determine Eligible Random Assignment Pool

Individuals were eligible for random assignment into REA in the third week of their UI claim if they had a regular claim, or if they had a monetarily ineligible UI claim with wages pending from another state. Claimants were eligible if they had a WPRS score less than 53.4.⁸¹ In addition to a WPRS above this threshold, there were some additional exemptions prior to random assignment:

- Interstate claimants (LEC 990).
- In training.
- Union referral.
- Pacific Maritime Association.
- On standby.
- Shared Work Program.
- Partially employed by previous employer.
- Working with future employer.
- On strike.
- In lockout.
- Victim of domestic violence.
- Claimants with certain open, unresolved issues or a resolved issue that resulted in a denial of UI.

C.3.2 Random Assignment Step 2—WPRS Assignments

Once the random assignment pool was determined, the top 5 percent of claimants with the highest profiling scores (up to 53.4) were placed in WPRS. The remaining claimants were eligible for random assignment into one of the four treatment arms.

C.3.4 Random Assignment Step 3—Assign Control Group

Of the claimants in the remaining random assignment pool, 22 percent were randomly assigned to the control group.

⁸¹ The cutoff range for WPRS scores was wider (both lower and higher) between 10/25/2015 and 2/1/2016.

C.3.5 Random Assignment Step 4—Assign Treatment Groups

The remaining claimants in the random assignment pool were assigned randomly to either Multiple, Single, or Partial REA. When the total number of claimants was not evenly divisible by 3, the remainder was divided between the Multiple, Single, and Partial REA groups, in that order. For example, if there were four participants eligible for random assignment, two were assigned to the Multiple REA group, one was assigned to the Single REA group, and one was assigned to the Partial REA group.

C.4 Wisconsin

Wisconsin agreed to randomly assign 10,000 UI claimants to each of two treatment arms (Full REA and Partial REA) and a control group, for a total sample of 30,000 claimants. For the first half of the study, there were nine offices implementing the REA program; due to lower-than-anticipated study samples, however, three additional offices were added in November 2015.

C.4.1 Random Assignment Step 1—Determine Eligible Random Assignment Pool

In Wisconsin, UI claimants were required to register with Job Center of Wisconsin (JCW) within 14 days of their initial claim. If claimants satisfied the study eligibility requirements, they were eligible for random assignment. The claimants excluded from random assignment were those without a work search requirement, specifically those with the following circumstances:

- Participated in a similar service program; that is, the claimant was actively working with a case manager and provided the name of that case manager.⁸²
- Called to military duty.
- Out-of-state address.
- Wages recorded in the previous week.
- Stopped claiming benefits for the last three weeks.
- Claimant was returning to work (on a specified date) for a current or former employer within eight weeks (after that, weekly work searches resume).
- Claimant was currently working part-time for a primary employer.
- Claimant would be starting a new job within four weeks.
- Claimant was on the out-of-work list and in good standing with a trade union hiring hall.
- Claimant had an interstate claim.

C.4.2 Random Assignment Step 2—WPRS Assignments

Once the eligible random assignment pool was determined, records were sorted by office and by WPRS profile score, and the top 5 percent (reduced to 3 percent as of September 2015) of participants were selected for WPRS.

⁸² A case manager from one of the following programs was acceptable: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; Veterans Services; Wisconsin Workers Win (W-3); WIA or TAA; Employer-provided Outplacement Services (does not include temporary employment agencies)

C.4.3 Random Assignment Step 3—Assign to Treatment or Control

The remaining eligible random assignment pool was sorted by office and random ID number. Claimants were split equally between the study groups (Full REA, Partial REA, and Control) up to a maximum capacity determined by the number of appointments available for scheduling. Any remainder was placed in WPRS.

Each type of treatment (Full or Partial) had its own allocation of appointments. Once chosen for a service, a claimant had 21 days to make an appointment, and appointment slots were opened up one week at a time, three weeks in advance. To determine the number of available appointments for a given service, the system took the total number of available appointments in the next three-week period and subtracted the number of claimants selected for that type of service who had not yet been scheduled. The process broke down appointments and claimants by week.

Step 1 was to take the current week's availability and subtract the number of unscheduled claimants from two weeks prior. Second, the next week's total number of appointments was reduced by the number of unscheduled claimants from the prior week. Step 3 added the number of appointments from the first two steps to the number of appointments in the third week (the full allotment because it will be past the 21-day limit for those assigned in previous weeks). This was the total number of available appointments for that service.

An office could assign only up to the lesser of the constraint for Full REA and Partial REA appointments. For example, if there were 15 available Full appointments and 10 available Partial appointments, the office assigned 10 participants to each group if there were 30 or more total eligible claimants. If there were fewer than 30 eligible claimants, the claimants would be divided equally among groups with the remainder going to WPRS.

Shortly after the initial assignment pool was run through the algorithm, a second batch was run through the assignment algorithm separately. This latter group included claimants for whom staff made a manual adjustment to the record to make them eligible for assignment. The process worked the same as the first run.

Appendix D: Data and Samples

This appendix describes the methods and variables used in the analysis presented in this report. Section D.1 characterizes the sample, including a discussion of the study period, sample selection process, and the calculation of sample weights used for REA participants randomized in Indiana. Section D.2 describes the data sources used to construct the analytic dataset and Section D.3 provides additional details on the types of services examined in Chapter 6 of this report.

D.1 Samples

In this section, we discuss the study period, the sample selection process, and the calculation of sample weights used for REA participants randomized in Indiana.

D.1.1 Study Period

Randomization for the study began in March and April 2015 and continued for one year after state randomization procedures were approved by the study team. Exhibit D.1 summarizes the start dates of randomization for each state. Data collection for the impact analysis will continue for an additional six months after the end of randomization to obtain sufficient follow-up data for participants randomized later in the study period.

Exhibit D.1: Study Dates by State

	Indiana	New York	Washington	Wisconsin
Week random assignment began for study	4/5/2015	4/19/2015	4/19/2015	3/22/2015
Week random assignment ended	3/27/2016	4/17/2016	4/17/2016	3/27/2016
End date for data collection for implementation analysis	3/18/2016	3/18/2016	3/18/2016	3/18/2016
Anticipated end date for data collection for final report	9/27/2016	10/17/2016	10/17/2016	9/27/2016

The implementation analysis presented in this report is based on a subsample of REA participants. These participants had a sufficient observation period (post-randomization) which allowed Multiple REA participants enough time to schedule and attend any subsequent REA meetings.⁸³ The following steps were taken to calculate the follow-up period for each state:

1. Determine the week of the study period when at least 50 percent of Multiple REA participants were randomized in New York, Washington, and Wisconsin and Full REA participants in Indiana.
2. Calculate the number of weeks from the date in Step 1 and the date data collection ended for the implementation study—March 19, 2016.

⁸³ To see the problem, note that the last UI claimants were randomized in April 2016. The data files for the analyses reported here were created in April 2016. We want approximately four post-randomization months for our analyses. We would need to wait until late August to have four post-randomization months for the last UI claimant randomized.

The determination of the follow-up period necessitated focusing the analysis of REA meeting attendance and service receipt on a sample that enrolled earlier in the study period. We also ran the analysis for a shorter follow-up period with 75 percent of the sample by state and found minimal differences in the scheduling and attendance rates of the initial REA meeting. Because the rates of attendance for the second or third REA meeting were slightly higher with the longer follow-up periods, the analysis presented in this report uses the longer follow-up period with 50 percent of the sample. Exhibit D.2 summarizes the number of weeks and cutoff dates for the subsample included in this report.

Exhibit D.2: Cutoff Dates for Implementation Analyses Subsample

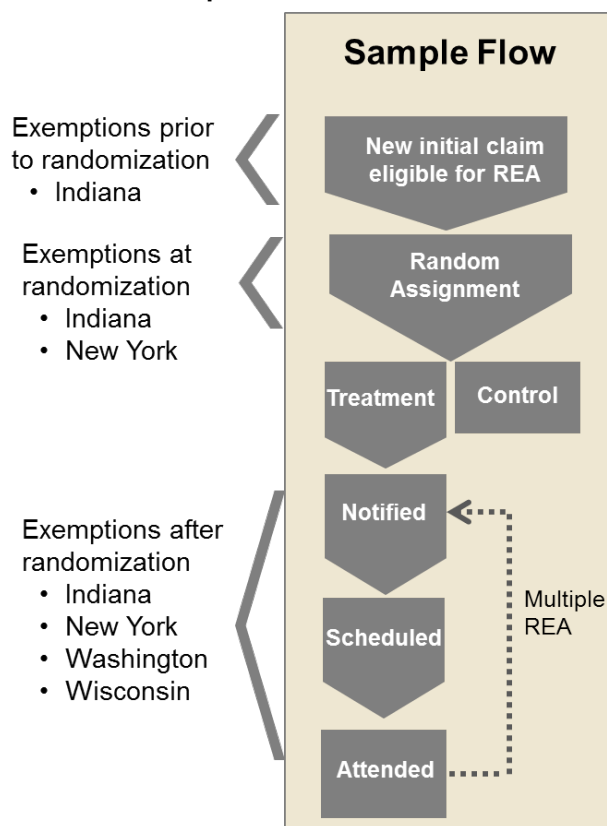
	Indiana	New York	Washington	Wisconsin
Week random assignment began for study	4/5/2015	4/19/2015	4/19/2015	3/22/2015
Cutoff RA Date for implementation analyses	9/26/2015	10/10/2015	11/14/2015	11/7/2015
Number of weeks of follow-up period	25	23	18	19

D.1.2 Sample Selection

The REA program provided reemployment and eligibility services to claimants deemed most likely to exhaust benefits. Though states are given broad discretion to determine REA eligibility, all states used their existing WPRS system to identify eligible claimants. Those claimants deemed REA eligible were randomized to one of the treatment conditions. States varied in the specific eligibility criteria for selecting claimants for randomization and the processes for randomly assigning selected claimants. Appendix C provides detailed descriptions of the randomization process and exemptions for each state.

Exhibit D.3 illustrates the flow of claimants through the randomization process and into the study sample. The timing of when exemptions occurred is presented on the left. For each time point, the exhibit lists which states provided Abt with data on exempted participants at that time point (other states did conduct exemptions at these time points but didn't provide Abt with data on those participants who were excluded). Data for claimants exempted after randomization are available in all states. Indiana and New York provided data on exemptions occurring at random assignment.

Exhibit D.3: Sample Selection Process and Data Available for Exempted Participants



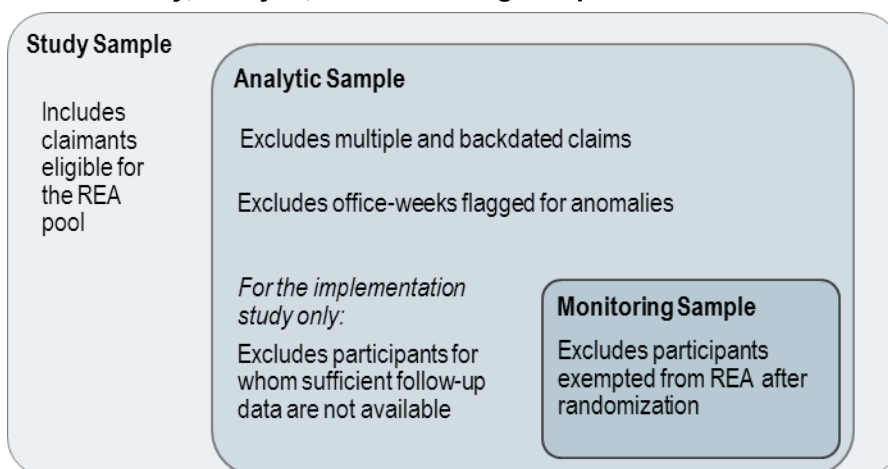
Across the states, few REA participants had an exemption that occurred after random assignment. Washington had the highest post-randomization exemption rate at 8 percent, whereas Indiana, New York, and Wisconsin had rates at 2 percent or below (Exhibit D.4).

Exhibit D.4: Rates of Post-Randomization Exemptions by State

	Indiana		New York		Washington		Wisconsin	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
Number randomized	25,423	100.00	73,225	100.00	20,991	100.00	12,888	100.00
Number exempted from REA participation post-randomization	303	1.19	1,678	2.29	1,704	8.12	45	0.35

D.1.3 The Study, Analytic, and Monitoring Samples

We created three related files: the study sample, the analytic sample, and the monitoring sample. Exhibit D.5 illustrates these.

Exhibit D.5: Study, Analytic, and Monitoring Samples

The *study sample* includes all claimants randomly assigned to one of the treatment conditions during the study period.

The *analytic sample* begins with the study sample, but drops those for whom randomization was not confirmed to meet the study's protocols. As such, we exclude the following randomized claimants from the analytic sample:⁸⁴

- Claimants with multiple or backdated claims that may cause multiple treatment assignments.
- Claimants assigned to specific office-weeks where a problem with the random assignment algorithm was identified.⁸⁵

The sample for the implementation analysis is further restricted to claimants for whom data are available within the follow-up periods discussed in Section 3.2.3.

The *monitoring sample* is used to generate weekly reports to monitor treatment fidelity across the states. This monitoring sample excludes participants exempted from REA participation after randomization.

D.1.4. Calculation of Sample Weights for Indiana REA Participants

In three of the study states, randomization fractions are consistent over time. The exception is Indiana, where, at the request of the state in order to smooth workflow to staff, the evaluation deliberately varied the randomization fraction from week to week and across office sites. The randomization algorithm in Indiana assigned participants to the Full REA group up to the maximum capacity of available staff, and then additional claimants who qualified for REA were assigned to the Partial REA group. As a result, whenever there were more claimants than available REA appointment slots in a given week and within a particular office, the ratio of assignments to Full REA versus Partial REA treatment groups was closer to the targeted two-to-one balance than in weeks when the number of claimants was less than the maximum capacity for the available staff and hardly anyone was assigned to Partial REA.

⁸⁴ For additional details on these claimants, please see Appendix C.

⁸⁵ We discuss each of these cases in more detail in Appendix C.

Further, the target for the control group was a set number of participants rather than a percentage of the available randomization pool, so the ratio of the number of participants in the treatment groups versus the control group also fluctuated week to week. This variation in the ratio of the treatment groups could produce biased estimates of treatment effects, because the factors affecting the relative sizes of the groups (e.g., local unemployment swells due to a mass layoff) are potentially also related to the outcomes of interest such as length of time on UI and time to reemployment. Weighting is generally the easiest way to address this concern and thereby to generate unbiased estimates of the population average treatment effect.

For the analyses presented in this report, we weight study participants in Indiana using a methodology that yields weights that eliminate any bias due to variation in who is randomized with the randomization fractions (as discussed in the previous paragraph). Specifically, we first total the number of individuals who were randomized within each office-week. Then, within each office-week, we calculate the probability of being selected into that group. Finally, we use the inverse of these probabilities (i.e., 1 divided by the probability) as a multiplier so that in the analysis, the total weight per treatment condition does not vary—even though the fractions of participants randomized to each treatment condition do.

To illustrate, consider, simple treatment/control random assignment (in fact, Indiana was Single/Partial/Control, but the conceptual issues are the same) and a week in which 50 individuals were randomized in a particular office, 20 of whom were assigned to a control group and the remaining 30 were assigned to a single treatment group. Applying our weighting methodology, we first calculate the probability of assignment for each group:

$$\frac{20}{50} = 0.40 \text{ for the control group and } \frac{30}{50} = 0.60 \text{ for the treatment group}$$

And also the inverse probability for each group:

$$\frac{50}{20} = 2.50 \text{ for the control group and } \frac{50}{30} = 1.67 \text{ for the treatment group}$$

Finally, we assign the respective inverse probability as a multiplier to each individual within treatment or control groups, within that office-week. That is, each of the 20 participants in the control group gets a weight of 2.5 (i.e., each represents 2.5 participants), for a total weighted n of 50 participants in the control group. And each of the 30 participants in the treatment group gets a weight of 1.67 (i.e., each represents 1.67 participants), for a total weighted n of 50 participants in the treatment group. By adjusting the weight of each individual within his or her respective group, we can compare the average characteristics and outcomes of the groups with one another with more confidence and precision, allowing for an unbiased estimate of the average treatment effect.

Totally, across all weeks, Exhibit D.6 presents the unweighted and weighted observation counts and percentages for each of the three treatment arms in Indiana: Control, Full REA, and Partial REA. (Actual fractions vary from site to site and within sites from week to week.) The weights are intended to scale each group to be of equal size and match the total N of 25,423, and as a result the total weighted N is 76,269.

Exhibit D.6: Indiana Unweighted and Weighted Ns

	Unweighted <i>N</i>	Percent	Weighted <i>N</i>	Percent
Control	3,825	15.05	25,423	33.33
Full	12,220	48.07	25,423	33.33
Partial	9,378	36.89	25,423	33.33
Total	25,423		76,269	

Note: Unweighted *N* includes only the subsample included in the implementation analyses, as described in Section D.1.2.

D.2 Data Collected for the Study

In this section, we summarize the data collected from the states. Each week, we received between 6 and 10 files from each of the four states participating in the study. Because each state uses a different data management system, the files were slightly different from one another. Nevertheless, taken together, the files contained nearly the same information. Exhibit D.7 provides a generic list of the files and each file's content.

Exhibit D.7: Description of Administrative Data Files

File	Contents
Claimant	Names, addresses, demographic information and exemption status flags of study participants
Initial Claim	Claim details on initial claims (claims that triggered REA assignment), including claim dates and types, maximum benefit amounts, number of weeks claimed and benefit year begin and end dates.
Weekly Claims/Payouts	Dates and amounts of all payments and the date of the claim that resulted in each payment.
Nonmonetary Issues	Records of all nonmonetary issues, status and decisions of any issues and any information on denial of benefits
Randomization	Claimant information required for randomization, including treatment group assignment, profiling score, office assignment, and relevant exemptions.
REA Scheduling and Completion	Scheduling dates for REA orientation and meetings
Employment and Training Services	Transaction information for each employment and training service received, including dates of service, type of service, and description of service. Services include self-service and informational activities, staff-assisted services, referrals to employment and other services, and workshop attendance that are available from workforce programs authorized under the Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser Act, TAA program, and other programs funded by rapid response, statewide incumbent worker programs, and other statewide and local programs.

From these files, the evaluation team constructed an analytic dataset. That analytic dataset was an individual-event level file. The events (sometimes called “transactions”) include information on the activities of each participant over the course of the study. Events in the file include payment, claim, nonmonetary issue, service record, and REA meeting record for each participant. These events are linked to each participant's random assignment and study office location in the event file so this file can be used for random assignment and service monitoring.

D.3 Definitions of Service Receipt

As discussed in Chapter 6, study participants received a variety of services and these services were coded in the administrative data. We used data documentation provided by each state, in conjunction with guidance from the study team in each state, to classify services by service type. These classifications were used to interpret and compare services across states. Exhibit D.8 defines each service type.

Exhibit D.8: Service Type Definitions

Service Type	Definition
Employment Services and Training	
Engaged in adult basic education activities	Adult education activities include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Basic Education (ABE) for individuals whose literacy and numeracy skills are below the high school level • Adult Secondary Education (ASE) for individuals seeking to pass the General Education Development (GED) test; and • English Literacy (EL), which includes instruction for adults who are not proficient in the English language.
Engaged in short-term pre-vocational services	Includes activities to prepare individuals for employment or training, such as development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, and professional conduct.
Engaged in occupational skills and/or on-the-job training	Includes engagement in a vocational training program leading to a certificate or other credential, on-the-job training, entrepreneurial training, and/or skill upgrading and retraining.
Received supportive services and/or needs-based payments	Received supportive services to alleviate barriers to work, such as transportation, child care, or housing assistance. Needs-related payments (e.g., gas, uniforms, books) are also included.
Staff-Assisted Services	
One-on-one assessment of skills and/or needs	Assessment of skills and needs done in a one-on-one setting (i.e., not proctored in a group setting), including comprehensive and specialized assessments. A formal assessment tool may be administered. Alternatively, an informal assessment of skills or employment barriers is used.
Career guidance and counseling	One-on-one assistance with analyzing and understanding career information and identifying additional services and information to achieve their career goal. This includes developing an individualized employment or service plan, which outlines the necessary steps and timelines to achieve employment.
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	This includes any orientations to other programs (such as Self-Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance), assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid and non-Workforce Investment Act training and education programs, reviewing progress made on an employment plan, and any subsequent follow-up with the individual.
Job search assistance	This one-on-one assistance is designed to help the participant plan and carry out a successful job search strategy, such as resume review or mock interviews. Note job development and placement activities are not included in this category, but are instead included in “referral to employment category”.
Provision of labor market information	This includes the provision of individualized labor market information, such as occupational hiring trends, skill transferability, and skill upgrading.

Service Type	Definition
Referrals to Training and Services	
Referral to supportive services	Participant received a referral to any additional supportive services, such as transportation, child care, housing, and needs-related payments provided by community organizations or other local partners.
Referral to pre-vocational services or workshops	Participant received a referral to short-term services to develop the participant's work readiness skills in preparation for employment, such as development of learning skills, punctuality, professional conduct, and digital literacy.
Referral to occupational skills training or on-the-job-training	Participant received a referral to an occupational skills training program, including on-the-job training or worker retraining.
Referral to diagnostic testing or other specialized assessment	Participant received a referral to specialized assessment of skills levels, career interest, or barriers to employment, including diagnostic testing and use of other formal assessment tools.
Referral to employment	Participant received a referral to a job listing based on their qualifications and experience.
Workshop Completion	
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	Assessment of skills and aptitudes proctored in a group setting using a formal tool, such as WorkKeys, TORQ, or other assessment tool.
Financial literacy topics	Workshops focused on topics related to financial literacy, such as identifying types of expenses, personal budgeting, and understanding credit and loans.
Job readiness topics	Workshops included topics on developing the participant's work readiness, such as digital literacy, punctuality, communication skills, and professional conduct.
Labor market information topics	Workshops focused on providing information on state and local labor market conditions, such as occupational hiring trends, workforce availability, or high-demand or high-growth industries.
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	Workshops focused on topics designed to help participants plan and carry out a successful job search strategy, such as resume writing, application preparation, and interviewing techniques. Job finding clubs are also included in this category.
Self-Service and Facilitated Self-Help	
Accessed information on job search	Accessed information designed to help the participant plan and carry out a successful job search strategy.
Accessed resource room	Accessed information and tools available in their local AJC's resource room.
Assessed labor market information	Accessed information on state and local labor market conditions, such as occupational hiring trends, workforce availability, or high-demand or high-growth industries.
Completed an online assessment of skills or career interest	Completed an online assessment to help identify skills, aptitudes, interests, or other relevant information related to career decision making.

Appendix E: Detailed Descriptions—Initial REA Meeting Content and Procedures

This section profiles each state’s approach to the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment initial meeting. Each state profile first describes the services provided to claimants assigned to the Full REA treatment groups (in these summaries, the Single REA and Multiple REA treatment groups are combined because the initial meeting is consistent between groups). Each profile ends with a summary of that state’s initial REA meeting required for its Partial REA participants. All descriptions in this appendix relate to the REA program as implemented during the study period.

E.1 Indiana

Indiana randomly assigned individuals into one of three treatment groups: Single REA, Partial REA, and Control. The following sections provide a detailed summary of the requirements for, and the services provided to, participants in the Single REA and the Partial REA treatment groups.

E.1.1 Full REA—Single REA Treatment Condition

Indiana’s Single REA treatment arm provides services nearly identical to those that the state had been providing prior to the start of the REA2 Impact Study.

Pre-Orientation Requirements

Indiana requires REA participants to complete a self-assessment form and three online assessments prior to the initial REA meeting, as well as a few other actions that involve the state’s online labor exchange, Indiana Career Connect (ICC). The state includes a blank paper copy of the self-assessment form with the REA meeting notification letter it sends to REA-selected UI claimants. The self-assessment form contains questions regarding potential barriers to employment and issues that might potentially impact UI eligibility.

The three online assessments are housed on two websites. The first two, “Work Interest Analyzer” and “Work Skills Analyzer,” are found on ICC. Once participants create their required ICC profiles and upload recent resumes, the participants can complete these assessments at the site. The third online assessment, the Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN) assessment, can be completed on the WIN website.

Finally, participants are required to bring documentation of their work search and other job-related activities for the four weeks immediately prior to their REA meeting.

Initial REA Meeting

Indiana’s initial REA meeting takes place in a group setting, generally in either a computer lab or a classroom-style space. The orientation generally lasts between 45 and 60 minutes, during which time the REA staff deliver two standardized PowerPoint presentations—one on services available at the American Job Center and in the broader community, and one that describes the REA program and its requirements. With the study in mind, state staff revised an existing Orientation to Reemployment Services PowerPoint presentation and asked all participating AJCs to give this presentation to REA participants. Our observations in the field indicated that local office staff have the flexibility to make minor changes and additions to the PowerPoint presentation as long as those changes do not substantively change the message or content of the orientation. These local variations seem to be driven by the nature of the local

labor market or the backgrounds of typical attendees. The rules and requirements portion of the orientation covered both basic job search and UI eligibility requirements, as well as the responsibilities of the REA participants during the 30-day REA follow-up period.

Claimants who do not complete all required pre-orientation activities prior to arriving at their orientation are given a chance to do so on the day of the initial REA meeting, either during or after the group orientation. If they did not finish their online work before, claimants can use the computers available in the main lobby of the local office. Claimants who have not completed all pre-orientation activities may receive some over-the-shoulder support from available AJC staff.

Each REA participant receives a one-on-one meeting immediately after the orientation. These meetings take place desk-side with REA staff, often with the same REA staff member who led the orientation. The one-on-one meetings generally last 5–10 minutes. During these meetings, REA staff check the claimant's ID and job search records to ensure UI eligibility; review the claimant's self-assessment form; and work with the claimant to complete the reemployment plan, which always includes referrals to two workshops in addition to any other needed service referrals. Staff also provide feedback on the quality of the work search, and sometimes they also review the claimant's posted resume and try to identify possible barriers or potential interest in other AJC services. Staff primarily use these steps to determine which workshops to assign to the participant, and they record these workshops on the signed reemployment plan.

Emphasis on UI Eligibility

REA staff consider the participant's UI eligibility when they review the four weeks of work search activities and when they discuss the participant's responses to A&A questions on the self-assessment form. Our on-site observations indicate that the work search review is implemented consistently across sites and staff, but that there is wide variation in how much emphasis staff place on reviewing and discussing any A&A issues. UI eligibility is not a central focus of the group orientation.

E.1.2 Partial REA (Jobs for Hoosiers)

In Indiana, the study was able to use an existing state program to implement the Partial REA treatment arm. The existing program, Jobs for Hoosiers, was implemented statewide prior to the start of the study. The description below represents the program as implemented under the study, which was very similar to the preexisting JFH program. The text notes the instances where Abt requested modifications of the existing JFH model for the purposes of the evaluation.

Pre-Orientation Requirements

Most of Indiana's pre-orientation requirements are similar for Partial and Single REA participants: (1) register with the state's online workforce portal, (2) complete two ICC-based online career assessments, (3) submit resume to state Job Bank, and (4) conduct standard UI job search activities and bring search logs to orientation. However, unlike Single REA participants, Partial REA participants do not have to complete the REA self-assessment form that staff use in the one-on-one REA meeting and the WIN online basic skills assessment.

Initial REA Meeting

The initial REA meeting for Partial REA participants consists of two parts. First, participants listen to a group orientation that describes reemployment services available at the AJC and in the community more broadly. This presentation typically lasts 30–45 minutes. As described above in the Full REA section, the state developed a consistent set of PowerPoint slides on available reemployment services and asked REA staff to deliver it to all Full and Partial REA participants. However, our observations in the field indicate

that staff delivering the Partial REA orientation often modify the slides to meet their local needs, including creating differences between the presentations delivered to Full and Partial REA participants. It is worth noting that prior to the Impact Study, AJC staff were permitted to use customized slides to orient JFH participants to their local services. The request for consistent presentations was driven by the study.

The second aspect of the initial REA meeting for Partial REA participants is an ID check and a work search review. In some offices, these checks occur when claimants arrive or immediately after the orientation in the same room as the orientation. Other offices briefly meet with Partial REA participants one on one to review these materials. In these offices, a state staff member reviews the job searches during the orientation presentation in order to be able to quickly provide feedback on the work search activities during the one-on-one meeting. Participants who do not bring a summary of their work search are asked to try to re-create one so it can be reviewed. If the participant cannot do so, an indefinite hold is placed on his or her claim, which is frequently lifted if the participant can produce the job search records by the end of the week (i.e., prior to the next round of benefits certification).

E.2 New York

New York randomly assigned individuals into four treatment groups—Full-Single REA, Full-Multiple REA, Partial REA, or Control. The following sections provide a detailed summary of the requirements for and the services provided to participants of the Full REA (with the Single REA and Multiple REA groups combined, as they receive the same services during their initial REA meeting) and the Partial REA treatment groups.

E.2.1 Full REA—Single and Multiple REA Treatment Conditions

Participants in New York’s Single REA and Multiple REA groups receive identical services in their initial REA meeting. REA staff know to which group each participant belongs, but staff are instructed to conduct the same initial REA meeting for both groups. The Multiple REA treatment arm is nearly identical to the services the state was providing prior to the start of the REA2 Impact Study. The Single REA treatment arm receives services during the initial REA meeting that are identical to the services provided to Multiple REA participants, except that participants are not called back for a second meeting. The following section outlines these treatment conditions as implemented during the study period.

Pre-Orientation Requirements

The State of New York requires participants to complete a *Career Center Registration* form and an *Unemployment Insurance Eligibility Questionnaire* prior to the initial REA meeting. The state includes these forms as attachments to the meeting notification letter sent to participants. If these forms are not completed in advance, participants are given an opportunity to complete them upon arrival at the career center. The letter also asks participants to upload a resume to the state’s career management and job search website, JobZone, but this is not required.

Initial REA Meeting

New York’s initial REA meeting varies in its implementation across the network of career centers, but there are two broad approaches. First, some career centers require that participants watch video orientations in a group setting before meeting individually with an REA staff member. Other centers deliver all REA services, including the orientation, in one-on-one meetings.

When conducted in a group, the orientation videos last about 20 minutes. The orientation videos are standardized across all offices. They cover services available through the career center, capabilities of the

JobZone website, and work search rules and requirements. In those career centers that do not hold group orientations, REA staff cover all of the orientation content during the one-on-one meetings.

The one-on-one meetings typically last 40–50 minutes. The REA staff member reviews the completed *UI Eligibility Questionnaire*. When participants' responses indicate that they may not be fully able or available for employment under UI regulations, staff advise participants on the applicable regulations, provide an opportunity to change their response(s), and amend their questionnaires. Staff do not review the participants' work search records from previous weeks.

Staff then create a *Work Search Plan*. The plan identifies suitable work for each participant, the appropriate UI cutoff wages, and required work search activities. The REA staff member also provides re-employment services as necessary and feasible, including an introduction to JobZone, the state's labor exchange site; a review of an existing resume or creation of a new one to be uploaded into JobZone; a referral to at least one job opening; and a review of customized labor market information.⁸⁶

The meeting concludes with the creation of the reemployment plan (called a *Next Steps Service Plan* in New York), in which the REA staff member documents the initial assessment as to what types of additional services a participant needs and schedules the participant for the next REA appointment. (All REA participants assigned to the Multiple REA group are scheduled for a follow-up REA meeting.) The plan may include steps to address barriers to employment or UI eligibility, workshop referrals, and other actions required before the next REA appointment, as necessary. Common referrals include workshops (e.g., interviewing, resume, and LinkedIn) and career fairs. Though REA staff have discretion over whether or not to mandate referrals, in practice they usually do not.

Emphasis on UI Eligibility

UI rules and eligibility requirements are covered in the state's orientation videos and reviewed on an individual basis using the participant's answers to the *UI Eligibility Questionnaire*. The emphasis of those individual reviews is to identify and address barriers to eligibility. UI involvement is very limited in New York. UI adjudicators are involved only to the extent that REA staff refer issues for investigation and adjudication.

E.2.2 Partial REA

In New York, the Partial REA treatment arm was created by removing certain components from the preexisting Full-Multiple REA program. The career centers participating in the study were given instructions on which components of the Full REA were to be kept for the Partial REA, and each center was given a certain level of flexibility when ensuring that its approach to the Partial REA met the requirements as stipulated by the central office. The description below represents the program as implemented under the study.

⁸⁶ In New York, JobZone serves as a portal through which staff can navigate to labor market information available from New York's labor statistics website and other sources. However, during on-site observations, the liaison team noted that JobZone was occasionally inaccessible. This occurred in about 20 percent of observed meetings. In response, REA staff typically navigate around JobZone to access labor market information directly from those sources as necessary. In general, New York defines labor market information to include not only employment projections but also prevailing wages that are included in a work search plan.

Pre-Orientation Requirements

New York sends Partial REA participants a different notification letter than for Full REA, but the pre-orientation requirements are the same as those of Full REA, except that the letter sent to Partial REA participants does not ask them to upload a resume to JobZone. Partial REA participants are also asked to complete a *Career Center Registration Form* and an *UI Eligibility Questionnaire* prior to the meeting. If these forms are not completed in advance, participants are given an opportunity to complete them upon arrival at the career center.

Initial REA Meeting

The initial REA meeting for Partial REA participants consists of three components: an orientation to the career center, a review of UI eligibility, and a discussion of work search requirements. Across the centers participating in the study, there were two approaches to conducting the Partial, with limited additional variation within those two approaches. Some centers held the entire Partial REA in a group setting, with minimal one-on-one interaction between REA staff and the participants. Six of the visited centers followed this model. Other offices conducted the entire Partial REA in a one-on-one meeting. Three of the nine visited centers followed this model. In all cases, participants received the same kinds of services: orientation to the career center, the review of work search requirements, and the *UI Eligibility Questionnaire*.

When career centers offered the Partial REA in a group setting, participants typically watched the same orientation videos shown in the Full REA, covering services available at the center and work search requirements. In a small number of offices, the presentation was delivered by an REA staff member (instead of by video) or the participants watched a locally produced video created by that career center and targeted to its services. These group sessions still covered the same content as the videos created by the state's central office.

During the group orientation, REA staff members review participants' *UI Eligibility Questionnaires*. Afterward, if needed, staff meet briefly with participants one on one to review their responses to the questionnaire. In some career centers, these one-on-one meetings are very brief and are held directly in the same room where the group orientation was delivered. The meetings are just long enough for staff to address any concerns with the questionnaire and dismiss the participant. In other career centers, staff bring the participant to their desk for the one-on-one conversation. These conversations may last a little longer but still cover only the content presented in the group orientation and the participant's answers to the eligibility questionnaire (as opposed to the Full REA sessions, which include the development of a reemployment plan, discussion of labor market information, in-depth explanation of work search rules, etc.).

In those offices where the entire Partial REA is conducted in a one-on-one setting, the REA staff member covers the orientation to the career center, the review of work search requirements, and the *UI Eligibility Questionnaire*. These sessions last on average about 15 minutes.

E.3 Washington

Washington State randomly assigned individuals into four treatment groups—Full-Single REA, Full-Multiple REA, Partial REA, and Control. The following sections provide a detailed summary of the requirements for and the services provided to participants of the Full REA (Single REA and Multiple REA) and Partial REA treatment groups.

E.3.1 Full REA—Single and Multiple REA Treatment Conditions

Washington’s Single REA (known in the state as the “Full REA with no follow-up” group) and the Multiple REA group attend the same initial REA meeting. REA staff do not know who is in which group when delivering services. The Multiple REA treatment arm is nearly identical to the services the state was providing prior to the start of the REA2 Impact Study, and the Single REA treatment arm is identical to the Multiple REA services except that participants are not called back for a second meeting. The following section outlines these treatment conditions as implemented during the study period.

Pre-Orientation Requirements

Washington requires Full REA participants to bring paper copies of a completed *Employment Readiness Review Form* (ERRF) and an up-to-date resume with them when they attend orientation at the AJC. The ERRF is a self-assessment form where claimants report previous and desired occupations, potential barriers to job search or employment, and AJC resources that they may be interested in accessing. If participants have not completed their ERRF by the time they arrive at the AJC, they are given 10–15 minutes to complete the form, generally in the room while the initial meeting is in progress. Staff have the discretion to require participants to reschedule their initial REA if they have not completed the pre-orientation materials. These meetings are typically rescheduled for later in the same week.

Initial REA Meeting

Washington’s initial REA meeting takes place in a group setting, generally in either a computer lab or a classroom-style setting. The orientation typically lasts 1–2 hours, averaging around 90 minutes. During the orientation, REA staff deliver a standardized PowerPoint presentation and show a nine-minute video on job search logs. The initial REA meeting orientation has three key components: (1) discussion of available resources, (2) review of rules and requirements, and (3) initial completion of the “Action Plan,” the state’s term for the reemployment plan.

The order in which the key orientation topics are presented and the emphasis placed on each topic vary by office and even by staff member. During the presentation of available resources, staff alternate between using the PowerPoint presentation as the visual foundation and navigating around the “WorkSource” website—to provide real-time examples of how to get detailed labor market information, search for jobs, and find resources. The standard job-search-logs video is shown as a part of the review of the rules and requirements for program participation, and staff generally spend a substantial portion of the presentation describing the ways in which claimants can remain in compliance and avoid the negative outcomes of a UI audit. The last portion of the group orientation is dedicated to completing the participants’ Action Plans. Claimants are asked to use the information from the orientation to fill in three steps they will take to achieve their employment goals, and they check off whether they would like assistance with any aspect of their job search.

REA staff who are not leading or supporting the group portion of the initial meeting use the orientation time to develop individual claimant packets behind the scenes. Each staff member involved in the process conducts the one-on-one portion of the initial REA meeting with the individuals for whom the staff member made packets. The process involves reviewing each claimant’s resume, using the ERRF to identify possible eligibility issues or barriers, and preparing possible referral activities to have on hand when meeting with the claimant.

Washington’s one-on-one meetings generally last 5–15 minutes and focus on issues and concerns staff identified during their behind-the-scenes packet review. Staff also review and provide feedback on the

items participants entered into their Action Plan, identifying one activity as a mandatory referral activity to include in the participants' plans. Washington State allows REA staff to assign one of three types of mandatory activities: (1) attending a workshop; (2) applying to a job referral given by the staff member during the one-on-one meeting; and (3) taking part in another job search activity (attending a job fair, networking with individuals in a given occupation, seeking out additional resources, etc.) that is not necessarily a designated reemployment service.

In some cases, staff have a clear sense of the appropriate referral activity based solely on the packet review, such as instances where a claimant indicates interest in a workshop topic on his or her ERRF, or cases where a known job referral option fits a participant's experience and desired occupation. In other cases, staff spend a significant portion of their one-on-one meeting working with the claimants to decide which referral activity would be most beneficial to their job search efforts. REA staff across the state vary in the types of referrals they make. The variation seems to be guided by institutional philosophies related to the types of referral activities that are the most beneficial, though some offices are limited in terms of the workshops and resources they have available. At the conclusion of the one-on-one, participants are told they need to be prepared to report on their completion of the required activity during the follow-up phone call, the state's second REA meeting.

Emphasis on UI Eligibility

Participants in the initial REA are not required to report any past job search, and the UI eligibility review takes place behind the scenes as a part of the ERRF review, in packet development, and during general discussion in the one-on-one meeting. When A&A issues are discovered, which seems to be rare, the REA staff member reports the issue to UI for adjudication. UI eligibility rules and requirements are a substantive portion of the orientation, both through the standard video on job search and through staff emphasis of claimant responsibilities, but REA staff present that information with an emphasis on how to avoid becoming noncompliant.

Similar to Indiana and New York, in Washington UI adjudication happens centrally. Most claimants interact with UI staff via a state hotline. REA staff at the local offices refer all but the most basic UI questions to that hotline or to the WorkSource website.

E.3.2 Partial REA

In Washington, the study was able to use the existing state Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) program as the Partial REA treatment arm. In Washington, the Partial REA group attends the same orientation and receives exactly the same level of services as WPRS claimants. Similar to the Full REA, the Partial REA includes (1) discussion of available resources and (2) review of rules and requirements. However, it does not include any substantive discussion of how to complete the Action Plan. AJC staff were informed that the assignment process during the study would divert potential REA participants to the WPRS program, and they were trained by state staff on the importance of maintaining the key differences between the Full REA and Partial REA–WPRS interventions as previously designed.

The description below represents the program as implemented under the study.

Pre-Orientation Requirements

All of Washington State's pre-orientation requirements for Partial and Full REA participants are the same. Participants are required to have paper copies of a completed ERRF and an up-to-date resume with them when they attend the initial REA. If participants have not completed their ERRF by the time they arrive at the AJC, they are given 10–15 minutes to complete the form before it is collected. Staff have the

discretion to require participants to reschedule their initial REA meeting if they have not completed the pre-orientation materials.

Initial REA Meeting

Washington State’s initial Partial REA meeting is very similar to the Full REA initial meeting. The orientation takes place in a group setting, generally in either a computer lab or a classroom-style setting. The orientation lasts 60–90 minutes, during which time REA staff give the standardized PowerPoint presentation and show the nine-minute video on job search logs. The Partial REA meeting orientation has two key components that mirror the Full REA meeting: (1) discussion of available resources and (2) review of rules and requirements.

As is the case with the Full REA orientation, the order in which the key orientation topics are presented and the emphasis placed on each topic vary by office and even by staff member. During the presentation of available resources, staff alternate between using the PowerPoint presentation as the visual foundation and navigating around the “WorkSource” website (in order to, among other things, provide real-time examples of how to get detailed labor market information, search for jobs, and find resources). As with the Full REA meeting, staff show the standard job search logs video as a part of the review of the rules and requirements for program participation. Staff generally spend a significant portion of the presentation describing the ways in which claimants can remain in compliance and avoid the negative outcomes of a UI audit. The primary difference between the Full REA and Partial REA is that, though Partial REA group participants are given the paper Action Plan and advised that it can be a helpful tool in the job search process, no substantial orientation time is spent explaining what can go in the form or how it can be helpful.

By completing the orientation, Partial REA group members have fulfilled their activity requirement. Claimants are asked to give their completed ERRF and resume to the presenter, so documents can be saved as a part of their records. Partial REA group claimants are not asked to bring in job search logs. Unless staff immediately spot a blatant UI eligibility issue when scanning the ERRF, there is no substantive review or discussion of UI eligibility. Partial group members do not meet one-on-one with REA staff, and they are not required to receive an additional reemployment service. If a Partial REA group claimant has substantive questions or requests additional services, the person is directed to the AJC’s front desk.

E.4 Wisconsin

Wisconsin randomly assigned individuals into three treatment groups: Multiple REA, Partial REA, and Control. The following sections provide a detailed summary of the requirements for and the services provided to participants of the Full REA (Multiple REA) and the Partial REA treatment groups.

E.4.1 Full REA—Multiple REA Treatment Condition

Wisconsin’s Multiple REA treatment arm is nearly identical to the services the state was providing prior to the start of the REA2 Impact Study. This section outlines the program as implemented during the study period.

Pre-Orientation Requirements

Wisconsin has created a series of online steps that must be completed prior to participants’ attending their initial REA meeting. They must:

- Register with the Job Center of Wisconsin (the state’s labor exchange system);
- Complete a Job Match profile and upload a resume to the JCW site;
- Complete an online orientation to the state’s reemployment resources; and
- Complete an online assessment.

The state’s online assessment focuses on the claimants’ work search activities, work readiness, career plans, skills, A&A status, and barriers to employment. In addition, all claimants must enter three work searches into UI’s online system weekly when they certify to receive benefits.

REA participants are asked to bring to their initial REA meeting copies of their resumes and online assessments, the previous week’s work search logs, and a recent job posting to which they applied.

Initial REA Meeting

Wisconsin’s initial REA meeting begins with a group orientation to AJC services. The orientation lasts between two and three hours, and all AJCs use the same PowerPoint presentation. The first 30–40 minutes of the orientation is delivered by an REA staff member, who provides an introduction to the range of reemployment services available at the Job Center. The next 20–30 minutes is delivered by the UI adjudicator assigned to the REA program in that office. The UI adjudicator explains the participants’ UI obligations (e.g., looking for work, being able and available, and complying with REA program requirements).

The remainder of the orientation is focused on conveying tips and strategies for completing work search activities. The presentation covers upcoming workshops and events at the AJC, effective use of social media and other online resources, sources for additional labor market information, strategies for identifying and overcoming barriers to employment, and best practices for conducting a work search. Local REA staff have some freedom in deciding how deeply they will cover each topic of the orientation.

During this second half of the orientation, another REA staff member begins to hold one-on-one meetings with participant attendees, pulling them out of the orientation in the order they arrived. The UI adjudicator also participates in these individual meetings.

In the one-on-one meetings, REA staff review the materials that participants brought with them to assess whether they are work ready (i.e., is their resume well written; are they applying for appropriate jobs; are they receiving interviews; did they comply with all pre-orientation requirements). The UI adjudicator reviews the participants’ work search activities and listens carefully for any UI eligibility issues. When needed, the UI adjudicator discusses work search rules to help participants stay in compliance going forward. These sessions take 10–15 minutes, depending on whether the participant has questions and the number of barriers the person faces to employment.

REA staff require all participants who are not deemed work ready to come back for a second REA meeting (this meeting is described in Chapter 5). Each of these participants is given a *Re-Employment Appointment Notice* (Wisconsin’s version of the required reemployment plan) that includes several steps the person must complete prior to the next meeting. Common action steps include referrals to workshops (e.g., resume or LinkedIn) and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation services, and directions to complete a mock interview with REA staff, apply for Individual Training Account (ITA) funds, or attend a job fair. Staff typically determine which action steps to include in the plan based on their perception of participant

need, though participants can also express interest in specific services, such as WIOA funds for training. The *Re-Employment Appointment Notice* is signed and is considered mandatory.

Emphasis on UI Eligibility

Across all four states, UI involvement is the most intense in Wisconsin. A UI adjudicator is present at all REA meetings and takes the lead in answering participants' UI-related questions and conducting the work search reviews. The adjudicator listens throughout conversations for any potential issues around eligibility for UI, including A&A violations. If the adjudicator identifies any eligibility issues, including problems with previous weeks' work searches, the adjudicator can initiate an inquiry and an adjudication process to determine whether or not the claimant should have benefits denied for those weeks retroactively.

E.4.2 Partial REA

In Wisconsin, the Partial REA treatment arm was a significant departure from the existing Full REA program. The Partial REA was designed at the state level, and staff in participating Job Centers were trained on the requirements. Local centers were given little flexibility in implementation. The description below represents the program as implemented under the study.

Pre-Orientation Requirements

The Partial REA's pre-orientation requirements are very similar to those of the Full REA. Participants completed the same series of online steps listed above and, like all claimants, are required to enter three work searches into UI's online system when they certify for benefits weekly.

Partial REA participants are also asked to bring copies of the previous week's work search log to their initial REA meeting. However, unlike the Full REA, the Partial REA does not require copies of participants' resume, online assessment, or a recent job posting to which they applied.

Initial REA Meeting

The initial REA meeting for the Partial REA lasts 10–15 minutes. During the meeting, an REA staff member reviews the participant's work search tracking log from the previous week, ensuring that the participant is compliant with UI's work search rules and continued eligibility. The staff member might also provide guidance on valid work search activities and how to accurately complete a work search log, but there is no discussion of participants' other needs or referrals to additional assistance. A UI adjudicator is not present for the meeting; there is no orientation to the Job Center; and in the event that a participant asks for any additional services, REA staff refer the claimant to the resource room. Based on our observations, this model was implemented consistently across the state.

Appendix F: Detailed Service Receipt Exhibits

This appendix provides detailed tables summarizing the reemployment services delivered to study participants in each state, by treatment group (including the Control group). We present both the volume of each service category and the share of participants in each study group that received each service. The discussion of these results focuses on the extent to which service delivery is consistent with the design of the study in each state, comparing the pattern of service delivery across study groups.

The appendix has two sections. The exhibits in the first section include all reemployment services delivered from the point of random assignment, including services delivered before, during, and after the initial REA meeting. The exhibits in the second section restrict the service data to only those services delivered to members of the treatment groups after the initial REA meeting. (See below for how services are tabulated for those who never had an REA meeting.)

In support of the impact study design, it is important to establish the level of services received by claimants assigned to the various treatment conditions and to confirm that they differ in expected ways. The study was designed so that Control group members would receive the least intensive package of services, and the Multiple REA group members would receive the most intensive package of services. Moreover, the Partial REA group was to receive minimal services beyond those received by control group members, and the Single REA group would receive much more than the Partial REA group but less than the Multiple REA group.⁸⁷

This section reviews service receipt by state to assess the extent to which these design goals were achieved. To this end, we created five service type categories, common across states (Exhibit F.1), to allow for consistent comparisons across treatment conditions and across states.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ All of these relative differences in service receipt were designed to be measured on average between study groups, allowing for service delivery to deviate from this design for the occasional participant but not for the groups as a whole.

⁸⁸ Before creating these categories, we consulted DOL's existing service definitions used in the Labor Exchange Reporting System (as described in the *Labor Exchange Reporting System Handbook*), as well as for the WIOA and Wagner-Peyser funding streams. Wherever the data allowed, we aligned our categorizations.

Exhibit F.1: Common Service Type Categories

Service Type	Examples of Services
Staff-Assisted Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career guidance and counseling • Job search assistance • Assessment of skills and/or needs • Orientation, outreach, and general case management • Provision of labor market information
Training Services and Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged in adult basic education activities • Engaged in occupational skills and/or on-the-job training • Engaged in short-term pre-vocational services
Workshop Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with topics such as: • Job search strategies • Work readiness • Financial literacy • Specialized assessment/diagnostic testing proctored in group setting
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to job search workshops • Referral to additional supportive services • Referral to employment
Self-Service and Facilitated Self-Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessed information for job search • Accessed labor market information • Completed skills/career interest assessment (not in group setting)

F.1 Comparison of Overall Service Receipt, by Treatment Condition

Using the five categories in Exhibit F.1, this section examines *all* services received by REA participants starting the day after their date of random assignment (as recorded in the state’s data systems). The analysis does not consider the source of the referral for the services (i.e., from an REA meeting, self-referral, or something else). This analysis provides insights into the net increase in service receipt that can be associated with assignment to a particular treatment condition. Section 6.3 discusses these results by state. This appendix provides tabulations underlying the figures in there. Below, in Section F.2, we present tabulations of services received after the REA meeting.

Overall, individuals received the appropriate level of services given the treatment to which they were assigned. Control group members accessed the fewest services, followed by Partial and Single REA participants. Multiple REA participants received the greatest number of services, particularly in terms of direct staff assistance and referrals to training and services. The few exceptions to this pattern tended to be related to self-accessed services or automated employment referrals that are generated through the states’ online workforce portals.

Exhibit F.2: Detailed Table of Service Receipt among Indiana Participants during Study Period, by Treatment Condition

Service Type	Control (N=25,423)		Partial REA (N=25,423)		Single REA (N=25,423)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	1,317	(5)	1,965	(8)	4,769	(19)
Career guidance and counseling	786	(3)	1,107	(4)	3,049	(12)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	845	(3)	1,217	(5)	3,019	(12)
Assessment of skills and/or needs	442	(2)	866	(3)	2,665	(10)
Provision of labor market information	297	(1)	362	(1)	853	(3)
Job search assistance	156	(1)	303	(1)	598	(2)
Training Services and Supports	363	(1)	478	(2)	754	(3)
Engaged in short-term pre-vocational services	123	(0)	200	(1)	425	(2)
Received supportive services and/or needs-based payments	166	(1)	215	(1)	250	(1)
Engaged in occupational skills and/or on-the-job training	189	(1)	172	(1)	234	(1)
Engaged in adult basic education activities	21	(0)	35	(0)	27	(0)
Engaged in other service or activity	0	(0)	3	(0)	2	(0)
Workshop Attendance	612	(2)	3,252	(13)	13,070	(51)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	397	(2)	1,734	(7)	10,055	(40)
Work readiness topics	156	(1)	441	(2)	6,057	(24)
Other workshop topics	103	(0)	1,704	(7)	3,183	(13)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	121	(0)	110	(0)	1,158	(5)
Financial literacy topics	16	(0)	380	(1)	1,020	(4)
Labor market information topics	0	(0)	267	(1)	0	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	5,811	(23)	9,972	(39)	12,249	(48)
Referral to job opening	5,482	(22)	9,686	(38)	11,677	(46)
Referral to additional supportive services	229	(1)	231	(1)	795	(3)
Referral to pre-vocational services	32	(0)	138	(1)	619	(2)
Referral to diagnostic testing or other specialized assessment	272	(1)	331	(1)	486	(2)
Referral to other services	91	(0)	113	(0)	293	(1)
Referral to adult education activities	76	(0)	79	(0)	123	(0)
Referral to additional job search assistance	5	(0)	11	(0)	43	(0)
Referral to additional employment counseling	4	(0)	21	(0)	20	(0)
Referral to occupational skill training or on-the-job training	0	(0)	0	(0)	3	(0)

Service Type	Control (N=25,423)		Partial REA (N=25,423)		Single REA (N=25,423)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
Self-Services and Facilitated Self-Help	7,390	(29)	18,843	(74)	17,778	(70)
Accessed information on job search or attended an open resource lab	6,139	(24)	11,339	(45)	16,109	(63)
Assessed labor market information	2,713	(11)	15,652	(62)	14,995	(59)
Completed an assessment of skills or career interest (not proctored in a group setting)	1,705	(7)	16,813	(66)	14,422	(57)
Accessed information on training and service providers	904	(4)	1,358	(5)	2,649	(10)
Accessed resource room	134	(1)	163	(1)	197	(1)

Note: Indiana did not implement the Multiple REA treatment condition.

Exhibit F.3: Detailed Table of Service Receipt among New York Participants during Study Period, by Treatment Condition, Four-Arm Sites

Service Type	Control (N=6,631)		Partial REA (N=6,643)		Single REA (N=6,650)		Multiple REA (N=6,997)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	296	(4)	4,995	(75)	4,897	(74)	5,185	(74)
Provision of labor market information	112	(2)	278	(4)	4,822	(73)	5,140	(73)
Job search assistance	160	(2)	774	(12)	4,794	(72)	5,137	(73)
One-on-one assessment of skills and/or needs	201	(3)	289	(4)	4,848	(73)	5,113	(73)
Career guidance and counseling	178	(3)	226	(3)	4,717	(71)	5,019	(72)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	129	(2)	4,937	(74)	796	(12)	1,170	(17)
Training Services and Supports	24	(0)	38	(1)	68	(1)	212	(3)
Engaged in pre-vocational services	20	(0)	34	(1)	62	(1)	208	(3)
Received supportive services and/or needs-based payments	4	(0)	4	(0)	6	(0)	4	(0)
Engaged in entrepreneurial training	0	(0)	0	(0)	1	(0)	0	(0)
Workshop Attendance	62	(1)	114	(2)	324	(5)	592	(8)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	52	(1)	90	(1)	225	(3)	470	(7)
Other topic	19	(0)	40	(1)	112	(2)	154	(2)
Work readiness topics	11	(0)	25	(0)	43	(1)	111	(2)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	1	(0)	4	(0)	10	(0)	11	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	206	(3)	334	(5)	4,040	(61)	4,726	(68)
Referral to job listing	147	(2)	220	(3)	3,833	(58)	4,606	(66)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	78	(1)	141	(2)	622	(9)	1,084	(15)
Referral to additional supportive services	4	(0)	10	(0)	20	(0)	33	(0)
Referral to occupational skill training or on-the-job training	1	(0)	2	(0)	2	(0)	5	(0)
Self-Services and Facilitated Self-Help	167	(3)	370	(6)	431	(6)	647	(9)
Accessed labor market information	167	(3)	370	(6)	431	(6)	647	(9)

Exhibit F.4: Detailed Table of Service Receipt among New York Participants during Study Period, by Treatment Condition, Two-Arm Sites

Service Type	Control (N=8,741)		Multiple REA (N=37,563)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	626	(7)	27,959	(74)
Job search assistance	401	(5)	27,705	(74)
Provision of Labor Market Information	310	(4)	27,677	(74)
One-on-one assessment of skills and/or needs	441	(5)	27,653	(74)
Career guidance and counseling	291	(3)	27,218	(72)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	222	(3)	8,668	(23)
Training Services and Supports	40	(0)	1,693	(5)
Engaged in pre-vocational services	38	(0)	1,651	(4)
Received supportive services and/or needs-based payments	2	(0)	48	(0)
Workshop Attendance	113	(1)	6,286	(17)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	90	(1)	5,364	(14)
Other, nondescript topic	29	(0)	1,422	(4)
Work readiness topics	17	(0)	805	(2)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	14	(0)	165	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	474	(5)	26,367	(70)
Referral to job listing	365	(4)	24,729	(66)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	190	(2)	10,568	(28)
Referral to additional supportive services	15	(0)	1,566	(4)
Self-Services and Facilitated Self-Help	354	(4)	4,657	(12)
Accessed labor market information	354	(4)	4,657	(12)

Note: New York 2-arm did not implement the Partial REA treatment condition or the Single REA treatment condition.

Exhibit F.5: Detailed Table of Service Receipt among Washington Participants during Study Period, by Treatment Condition

Service Type	Control (N=4,612)		Partial REA (N=5,298)		Single REA (N=5,463)		Multiple REA (N=5,618)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	350	(8)	1,033	(19)	2,733	(50)	2,943	(52)
Job search assistance	89	(2)	239	(5)	2,094	(38)	2,350	(42)
Provision of labor market information	193	(4)	709	(13)	1,681	(31)	1,914	(34)
Career guidance and counseling	241	(5)	548	(10)	1,567	(29)	1,774	(32)
Assessment of skills and/or needs	72	(2)	123	(2)	224	(4)	318	(6)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	30	(1)	41	(1)	46	(1)	69	(1)
Training Services and Supports	58	(1)	75	(1)	247	(5)	290	(5)
Engaged in adult basic education activities	27	(1)	24	(0)	197	(4)	215	(4)
Engaged in worker re-training or skill upgrading services	19	(0)	30	(1)	35	(1)	48	(1)
Received additional supportive services and/or needs-based payments	16	(0)	27	(1)	29	(1)	48	(1)
Engaged in short-term pre-vocational services	6	(0)	2	(0)	5	(0)	7	(0)
Workshop Attendance	295	(6)	699	(13)	976	(18)	1,263	(22)
Job search strategies topics or job finding club	134	(3)	294	(6)	746	(14)	1,019	(18)
Other workshop topics	90	(2)	184	(3)	280	(5)	395	(7)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	46	(1)	59	(1)	164	(3)	251	(4)
Employer-led workshops and networking events	44	(1)	49	(1)	89	(2)	97	(2)
Work readiness topics	28	(1)	56	(1)	75	(1)	108	(2)
Labor market information topics	117	(3)	314	(6)	57	(1)	46	(1)
Financial literacy topics	1	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	187	(4)	373	(7)	1,702	(31)	1,975	(35)
Referral to job posting	112	(2)	158	(3)	1,108	(20)	1,309	(23)
Referral to additional supportive services	53	(1)	200	(4)	722	(13)	965	(17)
Referral to educational services, job readiness supports, and/or occupational skills training	48	(1)	122	(2)	284	(5)	384	(7)

Service Type	Control (N=4,612)		Partial REA (N=5,298)		Single REA (N=5,463)		Multiple REA (N=5,618)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
Referral to on-the-job training or worker retraining	0	(0)	1	(0)	0	(0)	1	(0)
Self-Services and Facilitated Self-Help	13	(0)	28	(1)	63	(1)	91	(2)
Accessed information related to job readiness topics	10	(0)	21	(0)	53	(1)	77	(1)
Completed an assessment of skills or career interest (not proctored in a group setting)	3	(0)	7	(0)	10	(0)	14	(0)

Exhibit F.6: Detailed Table of Service Receipt among Wisconsin Participants during Study Period, by Treatment Condition

Service Type	Control (N=4,292)		Partial REA (N=4,299)		Multiple REA (N=4,297)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	124	(3)	3,476	(81)	3,403	(79)
Assessment of skills and/or needs	3	(0)	3,463	(81)	3,390	(79)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	89	(2)	3,271	(76)	2,952	(69)
Career guidance and counseling	48	(1)	62	(1)	2,936	(68)
Job search assistance	58	(1)	64	(1)	357	(8)
Other	28	(1)	39	(1)	324	(8)
Provision of labor market information	3	(0)	1	(0)	45	(1)
Training Services and Supports	25	(1)	26	(1)	138	(3)
Engaged in occupational skills and/or on-the-job training	20	(0)	22	(1)	120	(3)
Referral to additional supportive services	6	(0)	4	(0)	12	(0)
Engaged in short-term pre-vocational services	0	(0)	1	(0)	11	(0)
Engaged in adult basic education activities	3	(0)	2	(0)	4	(0)
Workshop Attendance	79	(2)	111	(3)	443	(10)
Job search strategies topics	67	(2)	94	(2)	387	(9)
Work readiness topics	51	(1)	61	(1)	251	(6)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	6	(0)	8	(0)	13	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	11	(0)	16	(0)	356	(8)
Other referral	1	(0)	3	(0)	304	(7)
Referral to additional supportive services	5	(0)	6	(0)	145	(3)
Referral to training services (including online workshops)	0	(0)	2	(0)	97	(2)
Referral to job search workshops	3	(0)	6	(0)	7	(0)
Referral to employment	3	(0)	1	(0)	1	(0)
Self-Services and Facilitated Self-Help	2,267	(53)	2,269	(53)	3,084	(72)
Provision of labor market information	2,266	(53)	2,268	(53)	3,084	(72)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	2	(0)	2	(0)	13	(0)
Skills training	0	(0)	1	(0)	0	(0)
Other service	1	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)

F.2 Comparison of Receipt of Reemployment Services Delivered After the Initial REA Meeting, by Treatment Condition

The tables in this section summarize the delivery of reemployment services after attendance at an initial REA meeting among those individuals assigned to the REA treatment conditions. Thus, these tables include only a subset of all services shown in Section F.1 above.

For an individual who fails to report to an initial REA meeting but subsequently reschedules and attends, the tables below capture only services delivered after attendance at the rescheduled initial REA meeting. Any services delivered to participants who never attend an initial REA meeting are excluded from these tables. The percentages are reported as a share of all participants assigned to each treatment group.

Exhibit F.7: Post-Orientation Service Receipt among Indiana Participants during Follow-Up Period, by Treatment Condition

Service Type	Partial REA (N=25,423)		Single REA (N=25,423)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	1,281	(5)	3,281	(13)
Career guidance and counseling	835	(3)	2,180	(9)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	767	(3)	1,959	(8)
Assessment of skills and/or needs	547	(2)	1,795	(7)
Provision of labor market information	294	(1)	770	(3)
Job search assistance	184	(1)	454	(2)
Training Services and Supports	364	(1)	655	(3)
Engaged in short-term pre-vocational services	142	(1)	382	(2)
Received supportive services and/or needs-based payments	181	(1)	214	(1)
Engaged in occupational skills and/or on-the-job training	120	(0)	181	(1)
Engaged in adult basic education activities	33	(0)	25	(0)
Engaged in other service or activity	0	(0)	2	(0)
Workshop Attendance	944	(4)	12,009	(47)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	536	(2)	9,154	(36)
Work readiness topics	310	(1)	5,105	(20)
Other workshop topics	239	(1)	2,390	(9)
Financial literacy topics	61	(0)	772	(3)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	66	(0)	702	(3)
Labor market information topics	41	(0)	0	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	5,445	(21)	8,163	(32)
Referral to employment	5,214	(21)	7,671	(30)
Referral to pre-vocational services	84	(0)	525	(2)
Referral to additional supportive services	171	(1)	390	(2)
Referral to diagnostic testing or other specialized assessment	266	(1)	347	(1)
Referral to other services	79	(0)	238	(1)

Service Type	Partial REA (N=25,423)		Single REA (N=25,423)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)
Referral to adult education activities	47	(0)	92	(0)
Referral to additional job search assistance	6	(0)	33	(0)
Referral to additional employment counseling	15	(0)	18	(0)
Referral to occupational skill training or on-the-job training	0	(0)	3	(0)
Self-Services and Facilitated Self-Help	6,481	(25)	10,020	(39)
Accessed information on job search or attended an open resource lab	5,246	(21)	8,621	(34)
Assessed labor market information	2,607	(10)	4,121	(16)
Completed an assessment of skills or career interest (not proctored in a group setting)	1,709	(7)	3,044	(12)
Accessed information on training and service providers	765	(3)	1,715	(7)
Accessed resource room	105	(0)	136	(1)

Note: Indiana did not implement the Multiple REA treatment condition.

Exhibit F.8: Post-Orientation Service Receipt among New York Participants during Follow-Up Period, by Treatment Condition – Four-Arm Sites

Service Type	Partial REA (N=6,643)		Single REA (N=6,650)		Multiple REA (N=6,997)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	994	(15)	1,236	(19)	3,896	(56)
Job search assistance	681	(10)	921	(14)	3,819	(55)
Accessed labor market information	205	(3)	250	(4)	3,611	(52)
One-on-one assessment of skills and/or needs	192	(3)	216	(3)	513	(7)
Career guidance and counseling	173	(3)	224	(3)	510	(7)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	139	(2)	104	(2)	233	(3)
Training Services and Supports	34	(1)	59	(1)	203	(3)
Engaged in pre-vocational services	30	(0)	55	(1)	201	(3)
Received supportive services and/or needs-based payments	4	(0)	4	(0)	2	(0)
Engaged in entrepreneurial training	0	(0)	1	(0)	0	(0)
Workshop Attendance	105	(2)	262	(4)	540	(8)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	80	(1)	173	(3)	421	(6)
Other workshop topics	38	(1)	101	(2)	145	(2)
Work readiness topics	20	(0)	39	(1)	110	(2)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	3	(0)	10	(0)	8	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	206	(3)	316	(5)	3,067	(44)
Referral to job listing	116	(2)	195	(3)	2,918	(42)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	109	(2)	156	(2)	700	(10)
Referral to additional supportive services	4	(0)	5	(0)	17	(0)
Referral to occupational skill training or on-the-job training	0	(0)	0	(0)	2	(0)
Self-Services and Facilitated Self-Help	280	(4)	257	(4)	487	(7)
Accessed labor market information	280	(4)	257	(4)	487	(7)

Exhibit F.9: Post-Orientation Service Receipt among New York Participants during Follow-Up Period, by Treatment Condition – Two-Arm Sites

Service Type	Multiple REA (N=37,563)	
	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	20,555	(55)
Job search assistance	19,735	(53)
Accessed labor market information	18,582	(49)
One-on-one assessment of skills and/or needs	2,879	(8)
Career guidance and counseling	4,147	(11)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	1,489	(4)
Training Services and Supports	1,501	(4)
Engaged in pre-vocational services	1,478	(4)
Received supportive services and/or needs-based payments	28	(0)
Workshop Attendance	5,663	(15)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	4,983	(13)
Other workshop topics	1,205	(3)
Work readiness topics	621	(2)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	155	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	17,859	(48)
Referral to job listing	16,526	(44)
Job search strategies topics and/or job finding club	6,934	(18)
Referral to additional supportive services	353	(1)
Referral to occupational skill training or on-the-job training	31	(0)
Self-Services and Facilitated Self-Help	3,930	(10)
Accessed labor market information	3,930	(10)

Note: New York two-arm did not implement the Partial REA treatment condition or the Single REA treatment condition.

Exhibit F.10: Post-Orientation Service Receipt of Washington Participants during Follow-Up Period, by Treatment Condition

Service Type	Partial REA (N=5,298)		Single REA (N=5,463)		Multiple REA (N=5,618)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	426	(8)	577	(11)	1,758	(31)
Job search assistance	99	(2)	131	(2)	1,217	(22)
Career guidance and counseling	268	(5)	369	(7)	1,110	(20)
Provision of labor market information	242	(5)	313	(6)	1,013	(18)
Assessment of skills and/or needs	70	(1)	79	(1)	196	(3)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	31	(1)	32	(1)	45	(1)
Training Services and Supports	50	(1)	67	(1)	94	(2)
Engaged in adult basic education activities	17	(0)	32	(1)	38	(1)
Received additional supportive services and/or needs-based payments	16	(0)	21	(0)	37	(1)
Engaged in worker re-training or skill upgrading services	21	(0)	29	(1)	34	(1)
Engaged in short-term pre-vocational services	1	(0)	1	(0)	6	(0)
Workshop Attendance	283	(5)	826	(15)	1,135	(20)
Job search strategies topics or job finding club	202	(4)	647	(12)	942	(17)
Other workshop topics	121	(2)	239	(4)	349	(6)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	45	(1)	143	(3)	227	(4)
Work readiness topics	48	(1)	65	(1)	93	(2)
Employer-led workshops and networking events	35	(1)	57	(1)	70	(1)
Labor market information topics	8	(0)	23	(0)	20	(0)
Financial literacy topics	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	156	(3)	213	(4)	946	(17)
Referral to job posting	83	(2)	127	(2)	526	(9)
Referral to additional supportive services	67	(1)	71	(1)	476	(8)
Referral to educational services, job readiness supports, and/or occupational skills training	45	(1)	55	(1)	187	(3)
Referral to on-the-job training or worker re-training	1	(0)	0	(0)	1	(0)
Self-Service and Facilitated Self-Help	23	(0)	58	(1)	87	(2)
Accessed information related to job readiness topics	18	(0)	50	(1)	74	(1)
Completed an assessment of skills or career interest (not proctored in a group setting)	5	(0)	8	(0)	13	(0)

Exhibit F.11: Post-Orientation Service Receipt of Wisconsin Participants during Follow-Up Period, by Treatment Condition

Service Type	Partial REA (N=4,299)		Multiple REA (N=4,297)	
	#	(%)	#	(%)
Staff-Assisted Services	234	(5)	772	(18)
Orientation, outreach, and general case management	184	(4)	644	(15)
Career guidance and counseling	47	(1)	163	(4)
Job search assistance	44	(1)	103	(2)
Other	29	(1)	92	(2)
Assessment of skills and/or needs	3	(0)	16	(0)
Provision of labor market information	0	(0)	8	(0)
Training Services and Supports	21	(0)	108	(3)
Engaged in occupational skills and/or on-the-job training	18	(0)	93	(2)
Engaged in short-term pre-vocational services	1	(0)	9	(0)
Referral to additional supportive services	2	(0)	9	(0)
Engaged in adult basic education activities	1	(0)	2	(0)
Workshop Attendance	81	(2)	273	(6)
Job search strategies topics	69	(2)	202	(5)
Work readiness topics	38	(1)	201	(5)
Specialized assessment or diagnostic testing proctored in a group setting	7	(0)	9	(0)
Referrals to Employment, Training, and Services	10	(0)	41	(1)
Other referral	2	(0)	19	(0)
Referral to additional supportive services	4	(0)	15	(0)
Referral to job search workshops	3	(0)	6	(0)
Referral to employment	1	(0)	0	(0)
Self-Services and Facilitated Self-Help	1,572	(37)	1,788	(42)
Accessed labor market information	1,571	(37)	1,788	(42)
Completed an assessment of skills or career interest (not proctored in a group setting)	2	(0)	5	(0)
Other service	0	(0)	0	(0)

Note: Wisconsin did not implement the Single REA treatment condition.

Appendix G: Compliance and Duration-Related Text Used in Notification Letters

States send letters to UI claimants notifying them of what is required from them by the REA program. This appendix quotes the key parts of those letters for our four study states (Indiana, New York, Washington, and Wisconsin). Specifically, Exhibits G.1–G.4 provide the language related to compliance with the each state’s program requirements (one exhibit for each state). Similarly, Exhibits G.5–G.8 provide the language related to the expected duration of the initial REA meeting (again, one exhibit for each state).

Exhibit G.1: Indiana’s Compliance-Related Text Used in Notification Letters

Group	Text
Control	[n/a; no notification sent]
Partial REA	“If you do not complete an in-person review at WorkOne your benefits may stop.” “Please note: you are required by Indiana law to keep a log of your weekly work searches. If you cannot present a work search log when requested, you could lose your weekly benefits. If you do not complete the above requirements before your in-person visit you may have to reschedule your visit and possibly risk losing benefits.”
Single REA	“Your UI benefits may be disrupted if you fail to attend this orientation as scheduled without contacting me within 48 hours of the date and time listed above, or if you fail to comply with any portion of the program or any of its components.”
Multiple REA	[n/a; no multiple REA treatment group]

Exhibit G.2: New York’s Compliance-Related Text Used in Notification Letters

Group	Text
Control	“When certifying for unemployment insurance benefits you are required to look for work and maintain a record of your work search activities.”
Partial REA	“If you miss this appointment, your unemployment insurance benefits will stop immediately. To start receiving benefits again, you must come in person to your Career Center located at the above address on a weekday between 9:00am and 3:00pm. Each day you wait could cause you to lose benefits.”
Single REA	“If you miss this appointment, your unemployment insurance benefits will stop immediately. To start receiving benefits again, you must come in person to your Career Center located at the above address on a weekday between 9:00am and 3:00pm. Each day you wait could cause you to lose benefits.”
Multiple REA	“If you miss this appointment, your unemployment insurance benefits will stop immediately. To start receiving benefits again, you must come in person to your Career Center located at the above address on a weekday between 9:00am and 3:00pm. Each day you wait could cause you to lose benefits.”

Exhibit G.3: Washington’s Compliance-Related Text Used in Notification Letters

Group	Text
Control	[n/a; no notification sent]
Partial REA	“If you miss your appointment, Employment Security will send a questionnaire that you must complete to explain why you did not attend. We will decide whether you had good cause for missing the orientation, as well as review your availability for work and your job-search activities. This may result in your benefits being denied and you may have to repay some or all of any benefits you’ve received.”
Single REA	“If you miss your appointment, Employment Security will send a questionnaire that you must complete to explain why you did not attend. We will decide whether you had good cause for missing the orientation, as well as review your availability for work and your job-search activities. This may result in your benefits being denied and you may have to repay some or all of any benefits you’ve received.”
Multiple REA	“If you miss your appointment, Employment Security will send a questionnaire that you must complete to explain why you did not attend. We will decide whether you had good cause for missing the orientation, as well as review your availability for work and your job-search activities. This may result in your benefits being denied and you may have to repay some or all of any benefits you’ve received.”

Exhibit G.4: Wisconsin’s Compliance-Related Text Used in Notification Letters

Group	Text
Control	“Initial Mailed Notice: “Your deadline to complete both the online orientation and assessment is [INSERT DATE]. Note: After the deadline, you will not receive unemployment benefits until you complete both the online orientation and assessment elements.”
Partial REA	“Initial Mailed Notice: “Your deadline to complete both the online orientation and assessment is [INSERT DATE]. Note: After the deadline, you will not receive unemployment benefits until you complete both the online orientation and assessment elements.” Online Meeting Requirement: “If you fail to schedule, fail to attend a scheduled session or fail to complete any follow-up requirements, your Unemployment Insurance benefits may be denied until you comply with all requirements.”
Single REA	[n/a; no single REA treatment group]
Multiple REA	“Initial Mailed Notice: “Your deadline to complete both the online orientation and assessment is [INSERT DATE]. Note: After the deadline, you will not receive unemployment benefits until you complete both the online orientation and assessment elements.” Online Meeting Requirement: “If you fail to schedule, fail to attend a scheduled session or fail to complete any follow-up requirements, your Unemployment Insurance benefits may be denied until you comply with all requirements.”

Exhibit G.5: Indiana’s Duration-Related Text Used in Notification Letters

Group	Appointment Duration Text
Control	[n/a; no appointment held]
Partial REA	No text about appointment duration included
Single REA	“The Orientation and Assessment Interview process may take < > hours.” ^a
Multiple REA	[n/a; no Multiple REA treatment group]

^a The duration included in the letter varies from office to office, as each office inserts the duration into the bracketed space. The state standard is 45 minutes.

Exhibit G.6: New York’s Duration-Related Text Used in Notification Letters

Group	Appointment Duration Text
Control	[n/a; no appointment held]
Partial REA	“Your visit may take up to 1 hour.”
Single REA	“Your visit can take up to two hours.”
Multiple REA	“Your visit can take up to two hours.”

Exhibit G.7: Washington’s Duration-Related Text Used in Notification Letters

Group	Appointment Duration Text
Control	[n/a; no appointment held]
Partial REA	“DURATION: 2 hours”
Single REA	“DURATION: 3 hours”
Multiple REA	“DURATION: 3 hours”

Exhibit G.8: Wisconsin’s Duration-Related Text Used in Notification Letters

Group	Appointment Duration Text
Control	[n/a; no appointment held]
Partial REA	“Each REA-Partial Session will last approximately 15 minutes and will include a 1:1 meeting with Job Service staff.”
Single REA	[n/a; no single REA treatment group]
Multiple REA	<p>“Each REA-Full session will last approximately three (3) hours and will include a group presentation, including a short presentation from a UI adjudicator, and 1:1:1 where each participant receives 5-10 minutes of individual assistance from Job Service and Unemployment Insurance staff”</p> <p>“Each 1:1:1 session should last approximately 5-10 minutes. If additional time is needed to fully assist the participant, a Continuing Eligibility Assessment (CEA) should be scheduled using the Re-employment Appointment Notice.”</p> <p>“The CEA appointment should be scheduled for 15-30 minutes (at the discretion of local office staff.)”</p> <p>“The FEA appointment should be scheduled for 15-30 minutes (at the discretion of local office staff.)”</p>