

# U.S. Department of Labor

Employment and Training Administration  
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center  
Room 6M12 - 61 Forsyth Street, S.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



August 18, 2004

SWA ISSUANCE NO. 04-12

**SUBJECT:** Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Unemployment Insurance (UI)  
Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) Grants

1. Purpose. To announce anticipated FY 2005 funds for selected State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) to implement UI REA programs; to invite the submission of state proposals; and to provide both the guidelines for developing the proposals and the criteria governing the use of these funds.
2. References. ETA Occasional Papers 2004-01, Internet Initial Claims Evaluation, Section V. Reemployment Assistance and Continuing Eligibility, 2002-09 Significant Improvement Grants for the Provision of Reemployment Services for UI Claimants, and 2000-01 Unemployment Insurance in the One-Stop System.
3. Background. Reemployment of UI claimants and minimizing erroneous payments are high priorities for the UI program. A number of studies have found that attention to UI beneficiaries' efforts to find new jobs and attention to their reemployment service needs result in relatively shorter claim durations and fewer erroneous payments.

In anticipation of an FY 2005 congressional appropriation that includes funds requested in the President's Budget to conduct UI REAs, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is currently soliciting state proposals to ensure that such funds can be distributed as soon as they are available. The UI REA grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to implement programs meeting the criteria described in Section 5 below. These grants will provide funds to selected states to conduct in-person reemployment and eligibility assessments for UI beneficiaries in One-Stop Centers.

4. FY 2005 Funding. The President's budget request included a total of \$20 million for state UI programs to implement UI REAs; however, the House Appropriations Committee markup of the budget reduced this amount to \$10 million.

Pending an appropriation, the Department plans to determine grant amounts for up to 15 states for implementation of UI REA programs. The amount of each selected state's award will be determined by its share of estimated weeks claimed workloads for all selected states, the number of expected assessments, and the state's estimated cost to conduct an assessment. If the final appropriation includes the \$20 million requested, approximately 1.6 million assessments would be expected to be performed. The final appropriation will determine the number of states funded and the level of funding.

5. Guidelines. The following guidelines apply to UI REA Grants:

a. Funds may be used only for in-person reemployment and eligibility assessments for UI beneficiaries that are conducted in One-Stop facilities. The UI REA program does not have to be implemented statewide.

b. Assessments must include:

- ◆ labor market information/work-search plan development/review;
- ◆ referral to employment services and to training when appropriate; and
- ◆ eligibility issue detection and referral to adjudication when appropriate.

c. The SWA must agree to participate in a DOL-funded study of the efficacy of this UI REA initiative.

d. Beneficiaries must be required to report in person to the One-Stop Center within a specified period of time as a part of the assessment.

e. Assessments shall be conducted only for claimants who do not have a definite return-to-work date.

f. UI REA grants must not supplant UI grant funds devoted to eligibility reviews.

g. Proposals scoring below 80 points, of a possible 100 points, will not be funded. SWAs must follow the proposal outline. Each element of the proposal is important and should be addressed completely. Proposals should explain clearly how the proposed program will work and include complete names and titles rather than acronyms and form numbers.

6. Proposal Format and Instructions.

a. The format and instructions for UI REA grants are provided in Attachment B. All pages in the proposal should be numbered.

b. Completed forms SF 424 (Revised 9/2003), 424a, and 424b must be submitted within 10 days of the notification of the grant award. The SF 424a requires a breakout of object class categories in item 6 of Section B - Budget Categories. The breakouts must match the proposed expenditures for the number of UI REA interviews for which the state will be funded.

c. Each proposal should contain the name and telephone number of the person who is to be notified of approval of the grant. In most instances, this individual will be the Administrator of the SWA.

7. UI REA Grant Scoring Criteria. UI REA scoring criteria are explained in Attachment B.
8. UI REA Grant Evaluation Criteria. From the states funded, up to nine states will be selected for participation in a study to determine the effectiveness of the reemployment and eligibility assessments. The nine states will include small, medium and large states from diverse geographic areas. The nine states will represent a variety of approaches and shall collect “reemployment” data from all claimants (i.e., claimants participating in the UI REA project and the remainder of the claimant population) for comparison of the reemployment rates.
9. Regional Office (RO) Review Procedures. The weight of the RO recommendation is 10 percent of the total value. ROs have been asked to give a recommendation score from 1 to 10 points for all proposals that meet the UI REA grant criteria. The RO’s input will be based upon the merits of the proposal and the SWA’s past and current experiences with reemployment services to UI beneficiaries. Only proposals that meet the criteria in this SWA Issuance will be submitted. In addition to the overall quality of the proposal, ROs will consider the following in making recommendations:
  - a. The SWA’s completion of past projects within projected time frames and near projected costs, and successful progress on current projects;
  - b. The appropriateness of the design of the UI REA project to meet the needs of UI claimants;
  - c. The cooperation between UI and One-Stop Center staff in planning, developing, testing, and implementing reemployment projects, and the degree to which such cooperation is expected to continue during the proposed UI REA grant project;
  - d. The efforts of the SWA to evaluate past projects and to identify and implement any changes necessary to ensure future success based on the resolution of identifiable shortcomings;
  - e. The appropriateness of proposed expenditures; and
  - f. The ability of the SWA to provide required data.
10. Time Lines.
  - a. Proposals are due in the regional office by the close of business (c.o.b.) on Friday, September 10, 2004.
  - b. The regional office will review the SWAs’ final proposals and assign a score and recommendation.
  - c. Evaluation panel will complete evaluation and submit recommendations by October 19, 2004.
  - d. Final selection and required notifications will be made by November 5, 2004, or within 20 days after enactment of FY 2005 appropriations for state UI operations, whichever occurs later.

- e. SWAs submit SF 424, 424a and 424b within 10 days of notification of selection.
- f. Grant awards will be made with the final allocation of each selected state's FY 2005 budget if the appropriation includes such funds.
- g. Deadline for UI REA grant obligation, September 30, 2005.
- h. Deadline for UI REA grant expenditure, December 31, 2005.

11. Action Required. SWA Administrators are requested to:

- a. Provide information contained in this Issuance and attachments to appropriate staff.
- b. Submit the following documents to the RO by c.o.b. September 10, 2004, ATTN: Office of System Performance, Division of Workforce Support.
- c. Send the original and three copies of each proposal (or one electronic copy).
- d. Upon notification of the approval of the grant, SWA's will be asked to provide an SF 424, 424A and 424B signed by the SWA Administrator at the appropriate level of funding.

12. Inquiries. Direct questions to Angela W. Davis at (404) 562-2122, e-mail [davis.angela.w@dol.gov](mailto:davis.angela.w@dol.gov); or Dianna Milhollin at 404-562-2122, e-mail [milhollin.dianna@dol.gov](mailto:milhollin.dianna@dol.gov).

13. Expiration Date. December 31, 2006.

*Helen N. Parker*

HELEN N. PARKER  
Regional Administrator

Attachments

- A. UI REA Grant Proposal Outline
- B. Worksheet for UI REA Grant

## UI REA GRANT PROPOSAL OUTLINE

A. The UI REA Grant Project Summary. This format should be used for the proposals for UI REA grants. The SWA's submission of the proposal and the recommendation of the RO will document the SWA's agreement to participate in a U.S. Department of Labor study of the efficacy of this UI REA initiative.

B. Expenditures and Schedule. Proposals **must** include a description of proposed expenditures and a projected schedule for significant project activities. **Any proposed expenditures that do not address all of the required information requested by this Issuance will be deducted from the grant allocation. Proposals must have a score of 80 points or more to be recommended for funding.**

C. Scoring Elements. The following items are used to score the proposal. Each element is important and should be addressed fully in the proposal. Proposals should follow the following format.

1. Project Costs. The proposal should include both fixed minimum costs and incremental costs which, if funded, would allow the state to expand the project to serve a larger number of claimants.

a. Fixed Minimum Costs. The proposal should describe the costs to implement the UI REA program and conduct the first 10,000 assessments. This should include staff costs, contract staff costs and the costs of any equipment needed to implement the system. Costs may include activities such as gathering the required management information described in item 3 and programming the selection of claimants, as well as delivering the services to claimants. The descriptions of staff and contract staff needs should include the information described in item c. Other costs should include the information described in item d.

b. Incremental Costs. The proposal should also provide the costs for performing assessments in addition to the initial 10,000. These costs should be expressed as costs per 10,000 assessments. Small states that do not wish to perform more than 10,000 assessments may omit this information. The information should address costs described in items c. and d. below. Incremental costs will likely consist primarily of costs related to service delivery rather than costs for development and maintenance of management information systems.

c. Staff Needs. The proposal should identify both one-time SWA staff needs (in excess of base staff) and any contract staff needs. Staff needs should include the type of position, the expected number of staff hours, and the projected hourly cost. SWAs should include information in the following format for all staff requests.

Position Title	# Hours	Cost Per Hour	Total Cost
Claims Adjudicator	120	\$50	\$6,000

Any staff costs must be for staff in excess of staff funded by the SWA's base grant. When staff is assigned to the UI REA grant project and the vacated position is backfilled by another individual who is not funded under the base grant, this results in the addition of a second staff member. In this case, the cost of the UI REA grant staff activities can be funded as the backfilled position incurs the base staff funding. Costs incurred by SWA staff assigned to the project on a temporary basis cannot be funded by the UI REA grant unless additional costs are incurred.

If contract staff is requested, documentation should include the type of position, estimated contract staff hours, anticipated costs per hour, and total cost.

d. Other. Include costs for other activities and/or equipment, not identified above. Each cost should be broken down to the specific cost item with a description of each cost and the associated costs for each item requested.

The weight of this item is 10 percent of the total score.

2. Project Design. A description of the UI REA project should address all key aspects of the design. It should answer the following questions addressing an active interaction between UI and any other One-Stop staff providing UI REA services:

- ◆ How will beneficiaries be selected for the assessments?
- ◆ What are the proposed staffing arrangements for assessments at the One-Stop facility (e.g., assessments will be performed by UI staff, "contracted" staff or others)?
- ◆ How will beneficiaries be referred to reemployment services and/or to UI adjudication staff, as appropriate?
- ◆ How will assessments be structured? Describe how the beneficiaries will participate.
- ◆ How will information be shared among UI and other parties and how will the work search/service plans and activities be documented? For example, if service plans are developed, what will they include and what will be the beneficiaries' responsibilities? If service plans are not developed, how will information be documented?
- ◆ What feedback loop will provide information to the UI program about the results of referrals to reemployment services?

Describe any additional factors not covered in this list that will be a part of the project.

The weight of this element is 35 percent of the total score.

3. Management Information. Describe how information will be gathered concerning the UI REA project and the numbers of beneficiaries that are:

- ◆ scheduled for assessments,
- ◆ reporting for assessments/assessment completed,
- ◆ failing to report for assessments,
- ◆ held ineligible or disqualified as a result of an assessment by issue type,
- ◆ held ineligible for failure to report for an assessment by issue type,
- ◆ referred to services and the types of service(s),
- ◆ employed in the calendar quarter in which the assessment is held or the next quarter.

States should also report the average benefit duration for beneficiaries participating in the UI REA project.

The weight of this element is 10 percent of the total score.

4. Projected Performance Improvements. The proposal should identify the areas in which UI program performance is expected to improve through implementation of the proposed project. It should identify the magnitude of the work to be accomplished in terms of the beneficiary population to be served. The proposal should state clearly how the project may improve program operations, including a brief description of what services are generally provided to the selected beneficiary population under current staffing. If the SWA has done any study of the unmet service needs of this beneficiary population, these findings should be included. If the SWA has information to show that the projected assessments should lead to a reduction in overpayments or the average benefit duration, or faster reemployment, this information should also be included in the narrative.

The weight of this element is 20 percent of the total score.

5. Estimated Time and Cost for Each Assessment. Provide an estimate of the time and the cost requirements for each assessment. If appropriate, varying levels of service may be specified in conjunction with varying costs, e.g., beneficiaries who are determined to be "job ready" may cost less to serve. Sufficient information should be provided to illustrate how the SWA determined the projected staff costs and projected staff time for the various components of the assessment that were used to determine the maximum number of assessments that could be accomplished based upon the grant amount requested.

The weight of this element is 5 percent of the total score.

6. Project Timeline. A timeline of the project should be included identifying each significant step, including project design and implementation. Any technology/programming requirements necessary to select and track participating beneficiaries should be included in the timeline.

The weight of this element is 10 percent of the total score.

7. RO Recommendation. The weight of this element is up to 10 percent of the total score.

D. Supporting Materials. SWAs may attach additional materials that will enhance the content of the proposal.

WORKSHEET FOR UI REA GRANT

State

Regional Office Recommendation  
(Maximum Score 10 points)

Project Costs  
(Maximum Score 10 points)

Staff Needs  
Other

Project Design  
(Maximum Score 35 points)

Selection of participants  
Staffing arrangements  
Description of the assessment process  
Referral to reemployment services  
Sharing of information  
Feedback to UI  
Additional factors not addressed above

Management Information  
(Maximum score 10 points)

Projected Performance Improvements  
(Maximum score 20 points)

Estimated Time and Cost for Each Assessment  
(Maximum score 5 points)

Project Timeline  
(Maximum score 10 points)