

Program Plan Narrative -- PY 2004

UI Claimant Reemployment Services -- Arkansas

Arkansas Employment Security Department will utilize the Reemployment Services Allotment for Program Year 2004 to build on previous Program Year success in increasing services to UI claimants. These resources have provided the means to provide services over and above the regular services to UI claimants. During the 2001 Program Year, 10 intermittent employees were hired, with 2 assigned to each of the state's five districts, each of which is made up of two Workforce Investment Areas. During Program Year 2002, one additional person was hired for each of the five districts, making our total 15 positions for the state. In Program Year 2003 fourteen (14) positions were utilized, with 4 of these responsible for conducting Job Search Workshops of 2-3 days duration. All staff other than Job Search Workshop Coordinators were trained to work with claim pay registers, work search codes, job applications, job orders, call-in and referral processes, and the feedback process to UI in order to expedite claimants return to work.

In Program Year 2004, 14 positions will be used to carry out reemployment services. Four permanent positions will be utilized to conduct Job Search Workshops for UI Profiled Claimants deemed likely to exhaust benefits in order to help these individuals secure employment, with the intention of reducing the Arkansas exhaustion rate.

After a meeting in Austin, Texas this summer, Arkansas was partnered with Oklahoma as our mentor in the RES process. A trip to Oklahoma inspired our state to expand and improve our Job Search Workshop process. We are changing our former Workshops in both content and length to become more effective and to reach more UI Profilees. We are now offering a one day workshop instead of the 2-3 day workshops we were conducting in the past.

We are also in the process of updating the materials used by the Job Search Workshop presenters and given to the UI Profilees attending the workshop. Arkansas has also decided to update their equipment and eventually hire 1-2 more Job Search Workshop Coordinators if funds are available. We are committed to the Job Search Workshops and we consider them to be an invaluable tool that we offer our UI Profilees. Arkansas also expects to continue to decrease our UI exhaustion rate as we are able to include more of our UI Profilees in these workshops.

The workshops will focus on effective ways to locate employment opportunities and secure these opportunities through increased skills in areas including, but not limited to, resume preparation, work application completion, and interviewing techniques. All the Workforce Centers located in the state have been divided into four groups and the 4 Job Search Workshop Coordinators will conduct workshops for UI Profiled Claimants from each of the Centers.

Ten intermittent positions will continue to be assigned two per each of the state's five districts to work with claim pay registers, work search codes, job applications, job orders, call-in and referral processes, and the feedback process to UI.

The planned result of these 14 positions working in the manner described above is:

- Reduction of Quarterly Exhaustion Rates by 2.6%

Following is a chart reflecting target outcomes in this area over the four quarters of PY 2004.

<u>PY03 Exhaustion Rates by Qtr</u>	<u>PY04 Target Exhaustion Rates by Qtr</u>
Quarter 1 – 40.2%	Quarter 1 – 37.6%
Quarter 2 – 38.2%	Quarter 2 – 35.6%
Quarter 3 – 37.6%	Quarter 3 – 35.0%
Quarter 4 – 37.4%	Quarter 4 – 34.8%

During Program Year 2003, 8218 more claimants were registered for work than in Program Year 2001. The efforts of the Reemployment Grant staff contributed significantly to this result.

The plan is to continue the intensified emphasis on job search services for claimants through outreach contacts, resume preparation, help in using the Internet, furnishing job search websites, encouragement to come to Workforce Centers for staff-assisted counseling and job referral services, referral to training opportunities when appropriate. Information will also be provided through outreach mailings to claimants on services available with One-Stop Partner agencies, including but not limited to the Workforce Investment Act Services, Veteran Services, Rehabilitation Services, Arkansas Department of Human Services, Services for Native Americans, Experience Works (Services on Aging), Services for the Blind, Literacy Council, Colleges and Technical Schools as well as regional Community Based Organizations.

These extra efforts made possible by the funded positions will mean a more intensive job services approach for UI claimants. The expanded accomplishments of the 10 intermittent positions and the 4 full-time Job Search Workshop Coordinator positions will result in an increased Entered Employment rate among claimants, leading to the lower targeted exhaustion rates.