

**Re-employment Services Plan for Unemployment Insurance  
(UI) Claimants**

***State of Nebraska***

***PY 2004***

***FINAL PLAN***

***November 8, 2004***

## ***PY2004 Plan Outline – Part I***

### ***Introduction***

Nebraska remains dedicated to the creation and evolution of a productive environment that supports employers who are committed to developing their workforce while encouraging workers to take personal responsibility for enhancing their work skills and careers. To this end, Nebraska is leading a collaborative effort that involves business, labor, government, and all other Workforce Investment partners to construct, revise, and ultimately achieve its Workforce Investment goals through an integrated One-Stop system of Workforce Development Career Centers. These goals include:

- Streamlining Services
- Empowering Individuals
- Universal Access
- Increased Accountability
- Local/Private Sector Involvement
- State and Local Flexibility
- Improving Youth Programs

Nebraska's vision of a system in which all partners and One-Stop Career Centers are integrated and linked thereby providing all job seekers and employers with quick, efficient service, regardless of their needs, continues to improve. In that regard, Nebraska has made great strides in bringing that vision into reality. There are now 22 Workforce Development Career Centers in the state, of which three are or soon will be comprehensive sites.

All career centers have resource rooms where job seekers and employers have access to staff assisted career development and high speed internet resources. The Career Center's focal point is Nebraska's JobLink, a state of the art, user friendly, self-service tool, provided at no cost, for job seekers and employers to use to enhance labor exchange services across the state. Job seekers, with or without staff assistance may easily build a resume, search thousands of available jobs and submit their resume on-line, from the comfort of their home or their Career Center. Employers may post their job openings, search the active resumes and contact potential employees from their office. As an Internet based service tool, JobLink is available twenty-four-seven. Since its introduction in February of 2002, JobLink has seen rapid growth and currently maintains 2,446 registered employer accounts, 2,540 active job orders and 134,157 registered job seeker accounts.

The PY2004 Re-employment Services continues to provide opportunities to enhance our Workforce Investment System and build upon the effectiveness of Re-employment Services for Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants.

## Background

### Describe need for funds:

The state of the Nation's economy is mirrored in the rural and urban communities of Nebraska. The weak economy and slow recovery continue to place great pressure on the families and employers within this state. Without question, the Re-employment Services grant funding is needed to enhance and target the labor exchange services to unemployment insurance claimants as incorporated within the framework of our Workforce Development Career Centers. Unemployment Insurance weekly claims continue to remain at increased levels not seen since the early 90's, and the workforce continues to struggle to find adequate jobs at a sustainable and livable wage. These funds are intended to increase the quality and quantity of services to Unemployment Insurance claimants and increase their employability through early intervention and thereby reduce the rate of Unemployment Insurance benefit exhaustion.

### Describe relationship of the PY2004 plan to the PY 2003 plan:

Re-employment Services in the state of Nebraska evolved in PY 2002 and PY 2003. In order to provide earlier intervention and work search assistance, both Unemployment Insurance and Office of Workforce Services implemented a change to the Category two populations to include those claimants who have received five weeks of UI benefits. This allows Nebraska the ability to serve a larger population and continue the goal of increasing claimant employability through early intervention.

As Nebraska is pleased with the manner in which this program has evolved, The Re-employment Services Plan for Program Year 2004 will mirror the Plan established in PY 2003.

### Indicate extent to which PY2004 plan builds on the success or corrects weaknesses in the PY 2003 plan and examines the need for services in 2004:

In PY 2003, the record of re-employment services and participation for the Category two and three claimants was tracked through the SASi system. Category one claimants, however, are tracked through a separate system than Category two and three claimants. In PY 2004, it is the collective goal of Unemployment Insurance and Office of Workforce Services to integrate Category one claimants into the same SASi system that is being used for Category two and three claimants, allowing not only for the unification of the database but better tracking and reporting capabilities

While the new target categories are not directly reflected in the federal Employment and Training (ETA) Report 9048 and 9049 their success in the program will directly affect the overall performance outcomes. The expansion of the target population and inclusion of a volunteer program insured that all twenty-two Workforce Development Centers had a viable and reportable population of Re-employment Services clients during PY 2003. It is anticipated that in PY 2004, Nebraska will continue to serve more than 500 claimants per year with the expansion of the category two claimants

and will insure that Re-employment staff assisted services will be delivered in all Workforce Development Career Centers.

To further strengthen program participation in PY 2004 the Unemployment Insurance Division and the Office of Workforce Services jointly implemented new procedures and provided technical assistance to the Workforce Development Career Centers and U.I. Claim Centers staff. These procedures were followed in those cases where Re-employment Services clients fail to report, refuse to participate or choose to discontinue services. During PY 2004 these joint procedures and efforts will remain in force and continue to be enhanced and built upon. Some of the joint procedures and technical assistance that will be continued in the PY 2004 plan include: joint training between UI Adjudicators and Re-Employment Services staff, roundtable discussions, program monitoring, and monthly management meetings at the Administrative level. System enhancements have also been implemented which allow both the UI and SASi systems to communicate information. A system for communicating UI payment vs. registration has been created, as well as a reporting system that allows both divisions to view the status of Re-employment Services clients who do not comply with services and what U.I. determination has been made. A current focus continues to be on building reports to streamline communications between the Unemployment Division and the Office of Workforce Services. One such report will allow the U.I Office to receive information from the SASi system regarding claimants who have received a payment, but are not actively registered with the Employment Services office. A second report will allow the U.I office and Office of Workforce Services to track Re-employment services claimant's response with regard to employment opportunities. With this increased energy on the development of more detailed reporting statistics for the Re-employment claimant populations, the PY 2004 plan promises to build on these joint procedures and system enhancements.

## ***Program Design***

Explain how the funds will be used including a description of specific activities:

The focus of the Re-employment Services funds will be centered on job search services that will continue to decrease the length of unemployment claims for at risk workers and UI recipients. 85% of these funds will be extended to the One-Stop/Workforce Development Offices, who will serve UI recipients, with a focus on those that are profiled recipients. It is believed that early intervention is a proven factor in a successful re-employment plan. Staff-assisted services from the Career Centers include:

- Applicants will receive a one-on-one orientation within two weeks of being identified in the RES applicant pool. Each applicant will also be assigned a designated staff person to work with as their point of contact. Group settings may be utilized for this process if the number of recipients is too large for the one-on-one process.
- Staff will conduct an in-depth assessment of the applicant. Assessment tools that may be used include; Skills Inventory, O'net Work Interest profiler, O'Net Work Importance Locator, CASAS, The Career Game, The Career Exploration Inventory, Career Compass, and Internet Explorer.
- Create an individualized employment plan (IEP) that is specific and tailored to each worker's needs. Goals and requirements will be set for the successful completion of this plan.
- Follow-up services and a minimum of bi-weekly contact between the applicant and a re-employment counselor will be utilized to monitor applicant participation and provide assistance as needed.
- Referral to One-Stop partner services will be determined by the individual assessment and employment plan.
- Group counseling, individual counseling and career planning will be available to each applicant.
- Applicants can receive training services such as, communication, interviewing, punctuality, personal maintenance, and professional conduct skills training.
- Staff-assisted services are available to assist applicants with literacy activities for job readiness.

- Applicants may be assisted with out of area job searching or relocation assistance.

The remaining 15% of the funds will be utilized for monitoring of the program, state administration and systems building.

### ***Timeline***

#### Provide milestones to mark progress:

- 9/24/2004: Submitted PY 2003 program report using ETA Form 9100.
- 11/8/2004: Forward final PY2004 Re-Employment Services Plan in accordance with ETA Training, Employment and Guidance Letter No. 05-04, September 24, 2004
- Ongoing: Continue staff visits to designated Workforce Development Career Centers to review and provide technical assistance regarding Re-employment Services policy, procedures and reporting requirements.
- 09/30/05: Submit PY 2004 program report using ETA form 9100.

### ***Program Linkages***

#### Indicate program linkages with partners and other organizations inside and outside of the One-Stop that will be involved:

Each of the 22 One-Stop locations in Nebraska has multiple agency partners, which will better serve the Re-employment applicant. There are comprehensive, affiliate, and access point One-Stop delivery systems statewide. The linkage of services between the One-Stop and each of the partners is established through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Attachment A of the Memorandum of Understanding discusses the cost sharing agreement between the partners. Attachment B of the Memorandum of Understanding identifies services that are offered, the service delivery method, and the referral process required for these services.

Partners and services that are outside of the One-Stop system such as domestic violence intervention, substance abuse treatment, and temporary assistance providers will be utilized as needed and available for each participant.

## ***Service Delivery***

### Describe how services will be delivered through the one stop:

Nebraska will target the majority of its Re-employment grant funds on more intensive and staff-assisted services in the Workforce Development Career Centers statewide. Nineteen of Nebraska's Career Centers are considered rural and may deliver staff-assisted services to the client on a one-on-one basis. Lincoln and Omaha Career Centers are considered urban centers and may deliver services through a more structured group workshop method. All geographic areas serve both profiled and non-profiled UI claimants. Services will be seamless to the customer. There will be an integration of planning and service delivery across multiple programs and partners managed through the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). There will be a dedicated focus on reduction of duplication of efforts in providing service to the customer and decreasing the lengths of U.I. claims.

Both category one and two UI claimants will be individually notified in order to inform them of an appointment date to start their re-employment services. Participants will receive an orientation at which time they will receive a detailed explanation of the Re-employment Program. The Re-employment service applicant will initially be registered through the Nebraska Workforce Access System (NWAS) and tracked through the Staff Assisted Services Interface (SASi).

After an initial assessment of the applicant is completed they will be assigned a Workforce Coordinator, who will provide staff-assisted intensive services, such as the creation of an individual employment plan (IEP), job hunting skills, resume assistance, networking techniques, tapping into the hidden job market, and interviewing skills. Applicants will also receive follow-up services from the re-employment service staff, such as bi-weekly phone calls or personal appointments until their case is closed. This expanded follow-up is intended to significantly reduce the number of weeks the applicant receives U.I. benefits. All re-employment services provided to the job seeker will be documented through the IEP and case management notes. When job seekers receive staff assisted interface services they will also be logged and tracked by the SASi management information system.

## **Performance Outcomes**

Describe how program outcomes will be obtained and measured; program goals should reflect the experience of PY 2003. Plan must identify the specific program performance outcomes anticipated and method to measure attainment of those outcomes:

- Maintain and/or increase the number of U.I. claimants reporting to Re-employment Services during PY 2004 as reflected on the SASi Management Information Reporting system.
- Reduce the duration of profiled U.I. claimants receiving benefits by one week as reflected on the ETA 9049 report.
- Reduce the rate of U.I. benefit exhaustion by as much as 5% as reflected on the ETA 9049 report.

## **PY2004 Plan Outline – Part II**

### **Utilization of Remaining PY2003 Funds**

Describe how remaining funds will be used. Explain why funds have not been expended during the year and how the State Workforce Agency plans to expend funds during PY 2004:

The remaining PY 2003 grant funds will continue to be utilized in accordance with the program services described in the PY 2003 State Plan. The 85% of funds extended to the Workforce Development/One Stop Career Centers in PY 2003 has been fully expended. The remaining funds exists at the Administrative level. Some of these funds were transferred into the program and it is anticipated that with the continued focus on the expansion of the Re-employment services program, increased claimant categories and the need for continued system enhancement and program development that this will require, that these remaining funds will be expended within the first six months of PY 2004.

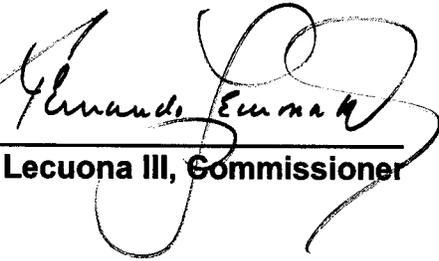
Describe any changes from the current plan, why changes are needed and how the modified plan will assure that funds will be expended during the year:

Nebraska is confident that with the expansion of the Re-employment Services Program and projected enhancements to the reporting system that funds will be expended in a timely manner. SF-424A Budget showing PY 2004 grant expenditures is attached.

***Inquiries***

Questions or comments related to this plan should be directed to the Office of Workforce Services, ATTN: Cecilia Coatney, NDOL, Lincoln, NE 68509  
402-471-1932.

***Signature***

**SIGNED:**   
Fernando Lecuona III, Commissioner

11/4/04  
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**Date**