

## REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT

STATE: North Carolina

DATE: November 16, 2005

STATE SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE REPORT (Add additional sheets if necessary.)

*Describe activities and an overview of how the activities were accomplished. Include milestones, and positive outcomes achieved. Compare accomplishment of planned performance goals with the attainment of the performance indicators identified by the State in the annual plan*

### Activities Overview

For Program Year 2004, North Carolina continued to deliver reemployment services in accordance with the annual plan. To optimize the program's impact, North Carolina targeted the areas with high unemployment, allocating staff to nineteen Employment Security Commission offices, both urban and rural. Due to a reduction in the reemployment services grant, one office was eliminated from participation at the beginning of the program year .

A major strength of the Federal Reemployment Initiative (FREI), as it is called in North Carolina, is the emphasis on collaboration with local JobLink Partners (a.k.a One-Stop Partners in other states) to provide a full range of seamless services to all unemployment insurance (U.I.) claimants. In North Carolina, the majority of the ESC local offices have been designated JobLink Career Centers, thereby facilitating cooperation with our JobLink Partners. Also, local ESC staff provides services at all JobLink Centers operated by other service providers, such as the Community College System, the Department of Commerce and the Division of Social Services. Half of the nineteen FREI offices utilize partner agency staff to operate the workshop phase of the program.

The eight week FREI Program begins when the customer files an initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits. North Carolina has always had a strong commitment to returning claimants back to work. The Employment Service and Unemployment Insurance programs have always been housed under one roof, operating in tandem to offer referrals and other services to claimants when they apply for benefits. The thrust of FREI is early intervention and frequent customer contact. The Program goals are 1) Providing those services which will result in the most expeditious reemployment of FREI Program participants; 2) Maintaining reduced levels of employer taxes by generating Trust Fund savings through shortening the duration of the average unemployment insurance claim; 3) Helping North Carolina employers meet their labor needs by referring qualified job candidates with recent work experience; and 4) Expediting employers' interviewing processes as a result of FREI participants having better job seeking skills (interviewing, resume' preparation).

Due to the diversity of the local labor markets in North Carolina, the Federal Reemployment Initiative Program was implemented in a manner that encourages flexibility and control at the local level. Broad operational guidelines were developed so that local management and staff could customize the FREI program to meet the needs of the community being served. The lack of a regimented process for every location has proven to be another program strength. Local flexibility in developing the specifics of FREI has resulted in creativity and innovation in the delivery of meaningful services to customers.

Each of the nineteen FREI offices is unique with a unique labor force and employer base. The flexibility to customize services gives local offices the ability to focus on services that will expedite reemployment in that respective labor market. This program development flexibility has proven to be a motivation to staff, which has been reflected in positive customer outcomes.

While all the workshops include instruction on job search techniques, application/ resume development, interviewing skills, and related available services, some offices add instruction on coping skills, such as managing finances and handling stress. Some offices enroll every claimant in the FREI program, some give the claimant the choice, while others allow the employment consultant to make the decision based on specific criteria. In some ESC offices, the workshops may be held once or twice a week, whereas other offices may offer them as many as seven times a week.

Some offices use the ESC Counselors to provide the workshops whereas other offices have Community College staff conduct the entire workshop. Another variation has the community college and other partner staff providing a portion of the workshop. The workshops may be held at the ESC office, the community college, or at a different JobLink partner site. Employers with large layoffs have allowed the workshops to be held onsite at the place-of-business.

A monthly year-to-date management information report was developed specifically to measure reemployment activity in those offices allocated staff as a result of the reemployment grant. This report affords management the opportunity to examine outcomes and monitor the effectiveness of program services. Additionally, information obtained from this report is used to target those offices that may be in need of staff support assistance.

The FREI Program is comprised of three components: *Orientation*, *Job Seeking Skills Workshops*, and *Intensive Job Search and Follow-up*. These components are designed to maximize exposure to the local labor market and to expedite the job matching process.

- The ***Orientation*** component is designed to familiarize customers with the services they will be receiving and to inform them about the automated service systems which can assist in their job search efforts. Questionnaires are frequently used in the Orientation component to assess the customers' strengths and needs. The information is used to customize elements of the Job Seeking Skills workshops. Referrals may also be made to other service providers.
- After the prerequisite Orientation, all participants attend a ***Job Seeking Skills Workshop*** to learn new and more effective job search methods. As mentioned earlier, half of the offices in the state utilize their community college partners in providing the workshops. In some offices, the entire workshop is conducted by the community college staff, whereas in other offices, the community college representative is one of many presenters. Employers are sometimes utilized