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September 30, 2005

Gay Gilbert
Office of Workforce Investment
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Room S-4231
Washington, D.C. 20210

RE: Unemployment Compensation Reemployment Services Performance Report PY2004

Dear Ms. Gilbert:

Please find enclosed Ohio's UC Reemployment Services Performance Report for PY2004.

If you should have any questions please feel free to contact me at 614-995-5623.

Thank you,

Chad Moore
UC Reemployment Services
Program Coordinator
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

cc: Mr. Byron Zuidema
Mr. Alvin Gordon

An Equal Opportunity Employer

UC REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT

State: **OHIO**

Date: 09-30-05

STATE SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE REPORT

Overview of Activities

In Program Year 2004, ODJFS Unemployment Compensation Division implemented a new UI benefit delivery system, Ohio Job Insurance (OJI) that housed the data entry for UC Reemployment Services (UCRS). All staff that were involved with UCRS were trained on the data entry procedure, and given refresher training on the policy and procedure of UCRS at that time. During the implementation of the OJI system there was a decline in activity for the months of August through October 2004 (Attachment "A"). In October 2004 many of the OJI defects that affected UCRS were resolved or improved. The system improvements created a gradual increase in total participants that steadily rose to a high of 1,900 participants per month for June 2005.

The number of partners and referrals to partners increased with the increase in participants. The number of ODJFS staff involved with the UCRS program has also increased with the rising number of participants. We worked closely with ODJFS Veterans Services to assist them in the redesign of their Ohio Transitional Assistance Program (OTAP). The redesign included the required pieces for UCRS to allow veterans who participate in the OTAP to obtain exemption from UCRS and to reduce duplication for participants and the One Stop staff.

The Assistant Deputy Director of Local Operations and UCRS Statewide Coordinator completed a research trip to the state of Georgia to review their Reemployment Service program. The State of Georgia provided many resources and insights that were adopted for the UCRS program in the State of Ohio.

As reported in PY 2003 report, the number of orientations increased in several counties. In PY 2004 a majority of counties offered a minimum of two orientations a month, with a significant amount (27) of the counties offering four orientations a month. The success of the programs, coupled with input from the state of Georgia led to a minimum mandate of orientations for each county of no less than two per month.

In August 2004, we received notice of a grant opportunity that we felt would be an excellent complement to our current UCRS program. The Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) grant. The REA Grant became the major focus of the PY 2004 UCRS activities throughout the state. The grant required a face-to-face one-on-one meeting with

a minimum of 10,000 claimants by September 30, 2005. The face-to-face meeting includes an identification of any barriers or possible eligibility issues that would hinder a quick return to work or affect a claimant's benefits. Duration can be affected both by returning a claimant to work more quickly or by holding or retracting a claimant's benefit for any week that they are not able, available or actively seeking work.

The web-based tool used to identify these barriers to employment and possible issues is called the *Barriers to Employment Success Inventory* (BESI). The results of the BESI are formulated from answers that the claimant provides to 50 questions. Those results guided our customer service representatives in a one-on-one interview with the claimant and allowed them to develop a customized job search plan. The job search plan included referrals to partner agencies in the One Stops as well as goals for the claimant to obtain in order for them to return to work (i.e. update resume, research 5 companies and send resume and cover letter, attend interviewing workshop etc.) The results and job search plans are housed in our Labor Exchange system known as SCOTI – *Sharing Career Opportunities and Training Information*. The SCOTI system allows the claimant, as well as the Customer Service Representative (CSR) and select partners to access at anytime the claimants account. This assists the CSR to follow-up on the customers progress and supports the customer as they can see what needs to be done at any time.

At the 14th day and 30th day after the job search plan has been entered, the claimant receives a follow up call from ODJFS. (call centers) Studies show that accountability increases the likelihood of success. We ask them a series of questions that include: What employers have you submitted your resume to? How many and with whom have you had interviews with, etc. At the 30th day they are asked the same questions with the addition of: "Do you have any additional barriers that you have encountered since your assessment?" If the answer is yes, the barrier is recorded and the claimants follow up is directed back to the One Stop Customer Service Representative (CSR) to do a follow up and assist with the additional barrier.

An analysis of Ohio's initial claims workload (Attachment "B") comparing the past two recessions, indicates that Ohio has not fully recovered from the most recent recession. We anticipate that initial claims will continue at a rate of 10% higher for SFY2006 (PY2005). This demonstrates the need for continued federal funding of the UCRS program.

Milestones & Positive Outcomes Achieved

1. The Assistant Deputy Director of the Office of Local Operations and the UCRS Statewide Coordinator visited the Georgia Department of Labor in April 2005 to study how their state was implementing their reemployment service program and the Georgia Works initiative. Georgia is the renowned leader in having the lowest duration in the United States due, in part, to their aggressive reemployment services program.

2. We increased the goals for monthly UCRS orientations to one per week in the full service One-Stops, and one every other week in the part-time One-Stop offices. In addition to stepping up the number of orientations we altered our procedures to assign all customers a minimum of two occupational codes to increase employment opportunities.
3. All staff involved with UCRS were trained on the data entry procedure, and given refresher training on the policy and procedure of UCRS. We trained 150 staff.
4. We continue to promote the increase of One-Stop partner participation in reemployment services. Examples include:
 - "...the job hunting tips, website info and other resources and help doing her resume was just outstanding! She moved here from South Carolina a year or so ago and said *she had no idea we had such a terrific job service.*"
...Donna McCann, CSR, Lucas County One Stop.
 - "A customer had a medical condition that had plagued her for quite a while. She had no health insurance and could not get medical attention. I gave her a list of community agencies, free clinics and United Way's referral line. The customer followed up and went to one of the free clinics she didn't know existed. Later, she said she would probably be battling the condition today if it weren't for the information she received that day. She felt 100% better and was ready to go job hunting. "
...Wanda Baltzly, CSR, Stark County One Stop
 - "I completed work search plan for customer, Andrea V. ... took her resume to the Business Service Manager at *The Employment Source*. They were looking for Job Developer, full time, permanent position with *WIA* [department]. After interviewing her along with several candidates, he chose her! She started June 27, 2005!!!"
...Laura Kopfstein, CSR, Stark One Stop
 - "While going thru the follow-up assessment with my customer, the assessment uncovered that he had some physical barriers. I quickly introduced him to the BVR's Rehabilitation Service Rep next to my office...In a matter of one month, BVR assisted the customer in finding a sales job with a starting salary of \$40,000! ..."What a great example of cooperation between agencies and great service to our Customers!"
...Pat Carr, CSR, Ashtabula County One Stop
5. After completing orientation, participants are surveyed on the value of the program (see Attachment "C"). Over 80 % of claimants served stated that the program was either very or extremely valuable. The results were surveyed on-site from over 12,000 claimants (97% of all participants) who were a part of the program this past year. This is a valuable indicator on the success of Ohio's UCRS program.

Accomplishments/ Performance Indicators

For PY 2004, 12,927 claimants completed orientation sessions. This is a 40% increase over the 9,211 claimants who completed orientation sessions in PY 2003.

In answering the question, "Was this program beneficial to you?", (see Attachment "D"), 96% of the claimants stated that the services received were beneficial. We also solicited free-flow comments on the survey. Many of the claimants indicated that they could have used the service earlier in their unemployment. The customers as well as the One-Stop staff feel empowered to succeed by the USRS program as indicated by the following success story submitted by Kathy Derheimer, CSR, Harrison, Carroll, and Jefferson county One Stops. The customer stated that, "...it really opened my [claimant's] eyes as to everything I didn't really think of but it still affects me." The CSR stated that the others [in the class] agreed.... enabled us to identify additional resources for them."

Due to the timing of Wage Record reporting, the Entered Employment rate for PY2004 cannot be calculated until after November 30. We experienced some difficulty in calculating the entered employment rate for PY2003. There were mis-communications as to the calculation period for the entered employment. For claimants served by this program we received data for both one quarter and two quarters after the quarter of orientation. However, for the statewide universal population to compare to, we only received the rate for two quarters after entry into the labor exchange system. Our program results are 39% entered employment after one quarter, and 61% entered employment after two quarters. This compares to the statewide universal rate of 58% for entered employment after two quarters. This indicates that the reemployment service program adds value to the statewide efforts. The claimants deemed most likely to exhaust benefits returned to work 3% faster than those in the population as a whole.

Changes Implemented or in development in PY 2005

In PY 2004, on August 17, 2004, ODJFS implemented the new UI benefit delivery system. As the new system continues to improve, enhancements in the area of UCRS reporting will result in more frequent and improved monitoring of the UCRS program.

In PY 2005 we will establish a goal for a statewide minimum participation rate of 1,000 per month. In conjunction with this goal, we will be broadening the minimum criteria of the profiling screen that will expand the participant pool.

Other significant changes under development include presentation training of all One-Stop staff that make oral presentations at the orientations. This will improve the quality of the information and assure that all claimants remain enthused about their job search prospects.

We are also in the final development stages for a UCRS website for staff. It will include, but not be limited to, a frequently asked question page, forms, policy and best practices.

We submitted a supplemental budget request to USDOL for FFY 2005 under the category of Improve Performance. If this funding is received, then in the coming program year we will make the following improvements.

Reporting Improvements: The following system reports will be created to improve our efforts at measuring performance and producing accurate timely reports for USDOL:

- Average Duration in Weeks of UI Benefits by County for both the whole claimant population and the claimant receiving reemployment services;
- Entered Employment Rate of UI Claimants as defined in TEGL 15-03;
- ETA report 9048 issued monthly;
- ETA report 9049 issued annually;
- Profiling Pool report improvements: 1) issued weekly, 2) adding NAICS occupation codes to the pool criteria to narrow the pool to specific job titles within declining industries, and 3) tracking the number of claimants receiving services by county of residence;
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys automated into the OJI system;
- Decreasing the “report back” time for reemployment participants from 20 weeks to 12 weeks and then later to 6 weeks. This will increase the overall size of the pool by capturing a greater number of claimants to serve. This will improve performance by bringing claimants in for services earlier in their term of unemployment.

Equipment Improvements:

We will purchase laptop computers with DVD drives and LCD data projectors for use in each of the 88 counties, plus for the four district coordinators and the statewide coordinators. This new equipment dedicated to the delivery of reemployment services will allow for power-point presentations in all orientation sessions. This is a proven enhancement to learning and increases the retention of information.

Also required to improve the quality performance of the reemployment service orientations is an upgrade in the job-search video’s shown at the sessions. We will purchase the following titles in DVD format; “Use Your Skills for an Ideal Career”, “Getting a Positive Response” (an introduction to interviewing), and “Getting Good Answers” (advanced interviewing). The DVD format will better serve multiple uses, improve the presentation and reduce the cost for replacing VHS tapes.

To improve the quality of the orientation sessions we will offer two additional booklets to the claimants; “Out of Hock”, and “Stop Thinking Like an Employee.” The first booklet helps the claimant work through the financial aspects of diminished income while receiving UI benefits and the second provides the claimant with job retention skills after they are newly hired. Both of these booklets will increase the performance quality of the orientation session.

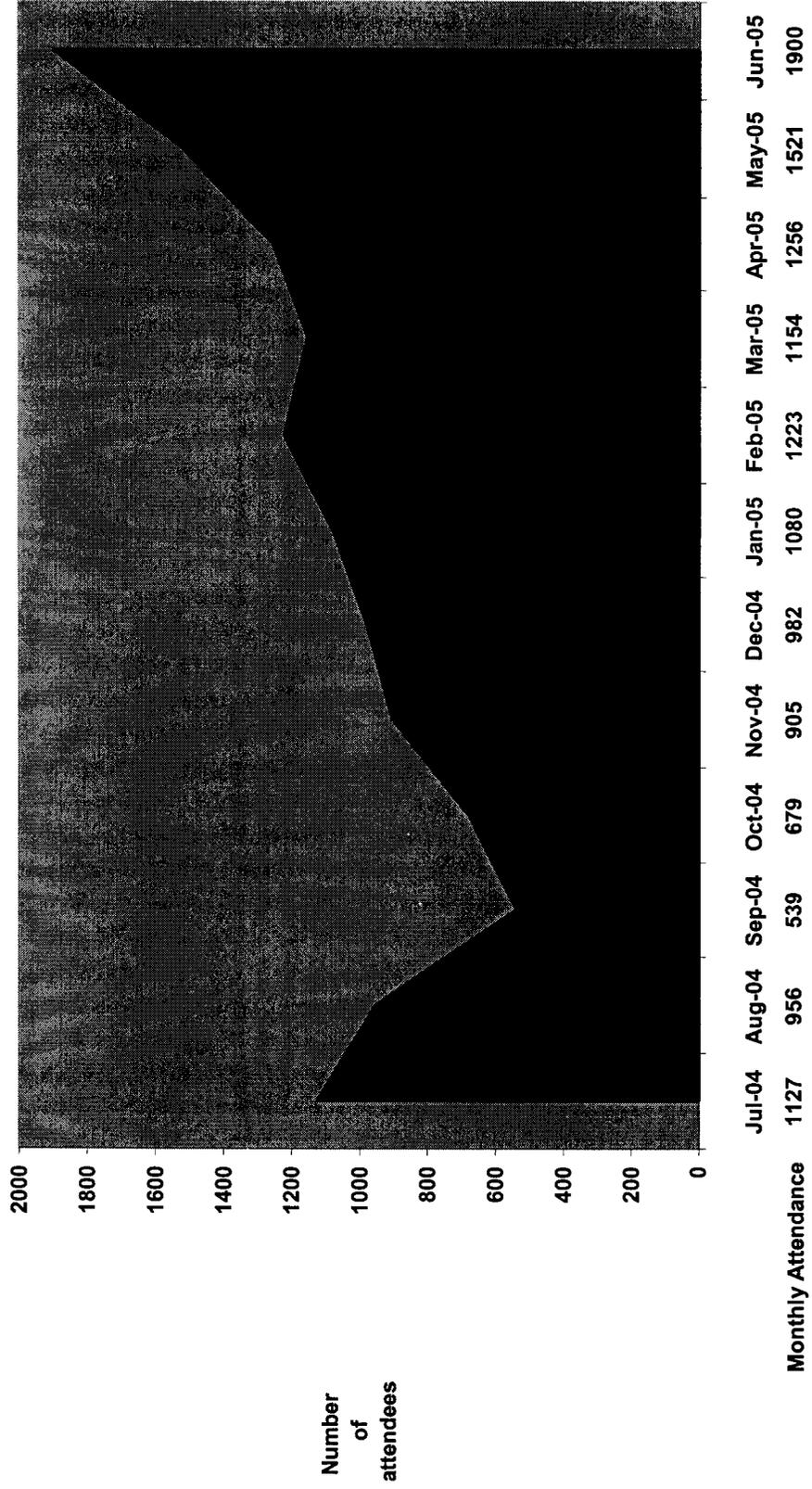
We anticipate that in PY 2005 ODJFS will:

- 1) increase the number of claimants served by 25% over PY 2004,
- 2) accurately produce the reports listed in “Reporting Improvements”.

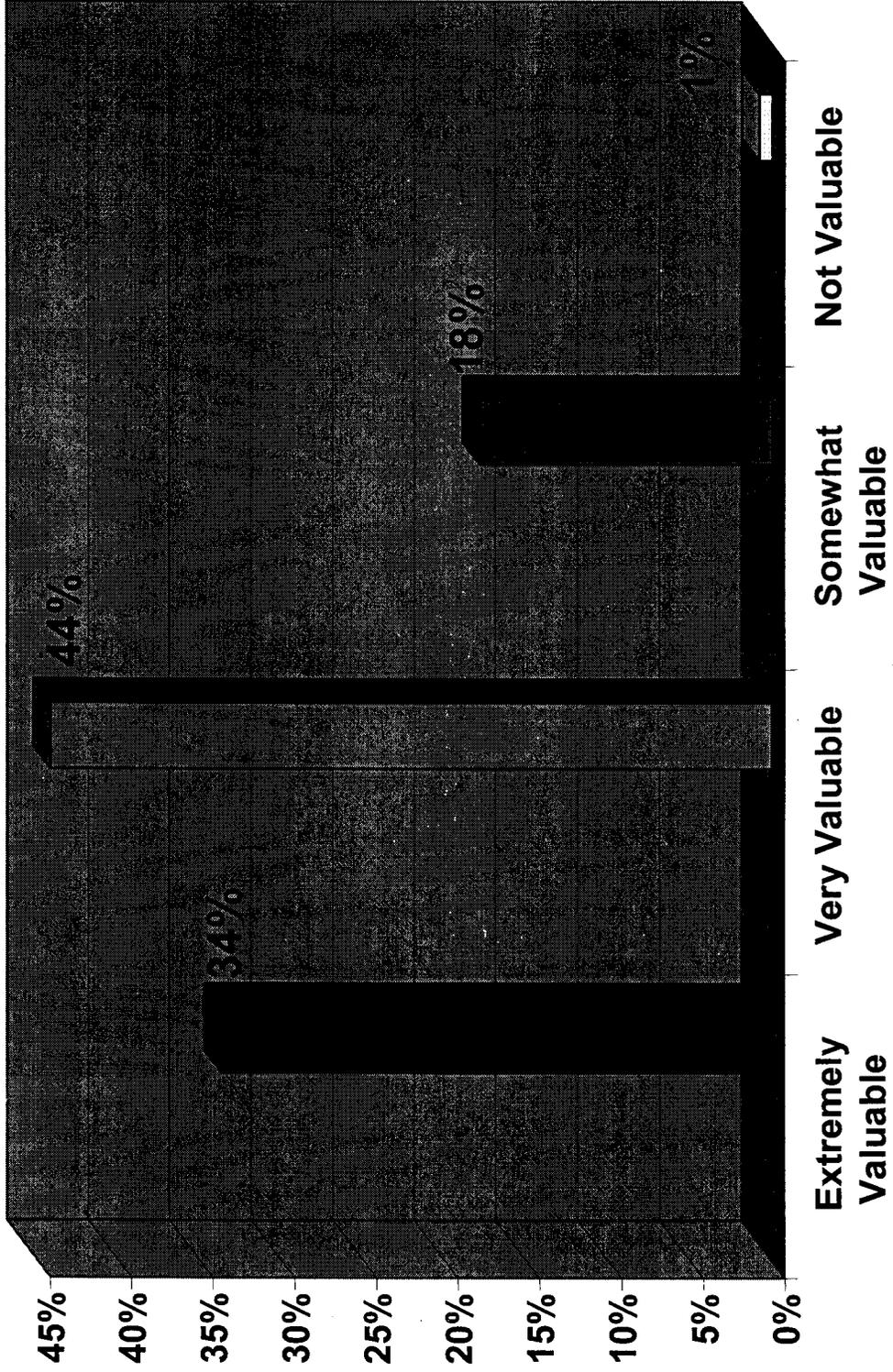
Ohio's UCRS Orientation Participation Trend

PY 2004

Attachment "A"



**Ohio's UCRS Customer Satisfaction Survey
Rated by Value - PY 2004**
Attachment "C"



Ohio's UCRS Customer Satisfaction Survey Rated by Benefit - PY 2004

Attachment "D"

