



Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee

Meeting details

Date: Thursday, December 16, 2021

Time: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Committee members present

- Robert Battles
- Julia Gorton
- Sybill Hyppolite
- Allyson O'Malley-Jones (NJP)
- Anne Paxton (ULP)
- Josh Swanson
- Jerry VanderWood
- Brenda Wiest

Committee members absent

- Joy Emory
- Tammie Hetrick
- Cindy Richardson

ESD staff

- Joy Adams
- Denice Craig
- Nick Demerice
- Joshua Dye
- Stacia Espinosa
- Wendy Goldmark
- Matt Klein
- Matt LaPalm
- Julie Lord
- Scott Michael
- Nicole Sherman
- Jeff Robinson
- Jill Will
- Dan Zeitlin

Summary

Meeting Recorded

This meeting was [recorded](#).

This meeting was also [livestreamed](#) by TVW.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Employment Security Department (ESD) Director, Dan Zeitlin, welcomed everyone and asked Wendy Goldmark to take roll call. All committee members were present except Joy Emory, Tammie Hetrick and Cindy Richardson.

Agenda

Dan Zeitlin reviewed the meeting agenda and asked if anyone had any questions. (See Addendum I.)

Meeting Minutes

Dan Zeitlin requested that everyone review the meeting minutes for December 1, 2021 and provide their feedback. Josh Swanson made a motion to approve the minutes and Julia Gorton seconded the motion. Dan asked for all members in favor to say, “Aye.” All members responded, “Aye”. Dan asked members that oppose to say, “Nay.” No one responded. The December 1, 2021 meeting minutes were approved.

Opening Discussion

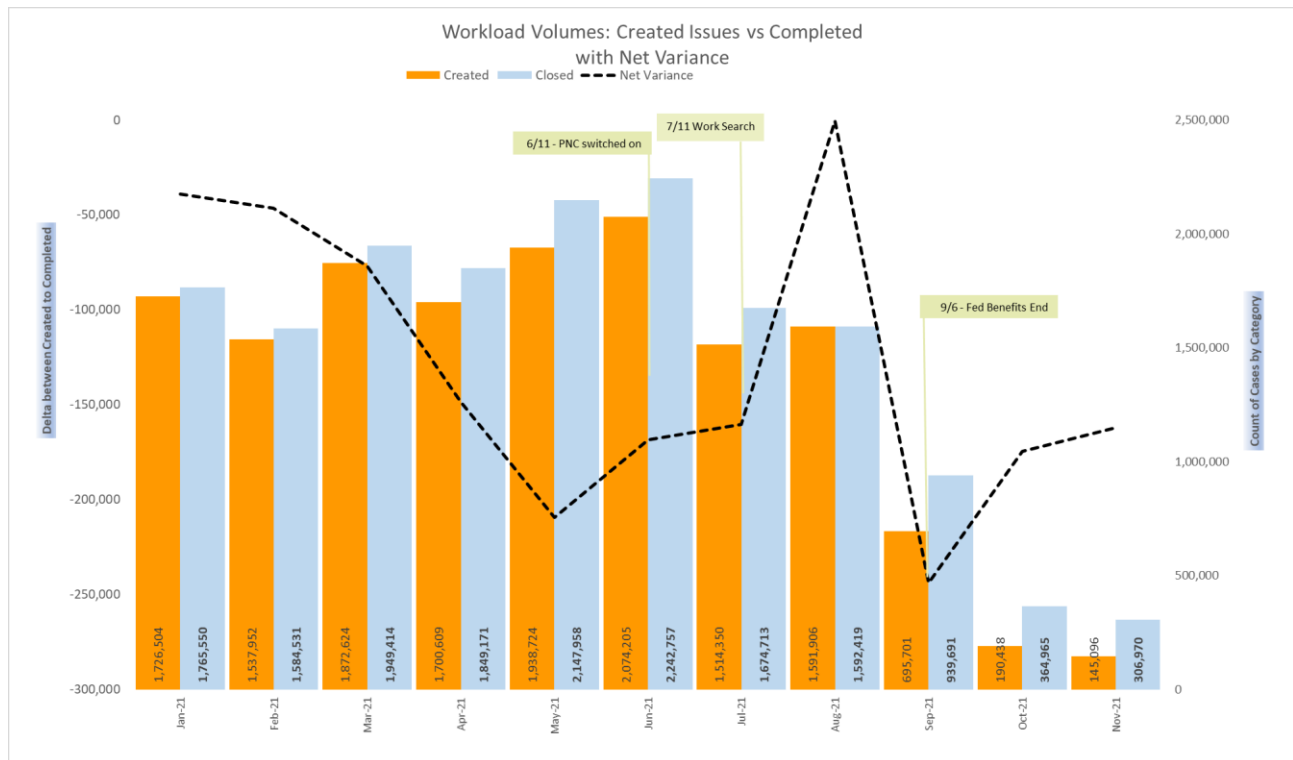
Dan Zeitlin opened the meeting discussion with a [slide presentation](#) and highlighted the below topics to be covered.

- UI Backlog Update
- ESSB 5193 Implementation
- State Quality Service Plan Briefing
- UI Policy Update
- ESSB 5478 Implementation
- Future Meetings Discussion

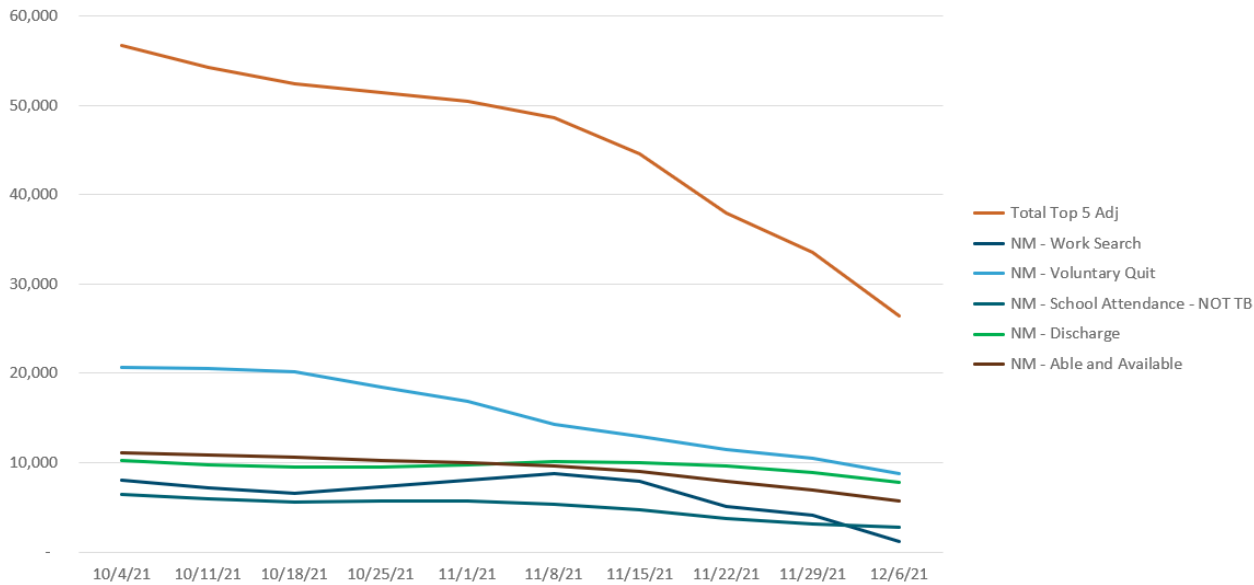
Dan Zeitlin handed the meeting over to Julie Lord, ESD UI Customer Support Director, to continue the discussion.

UI Backlog Update

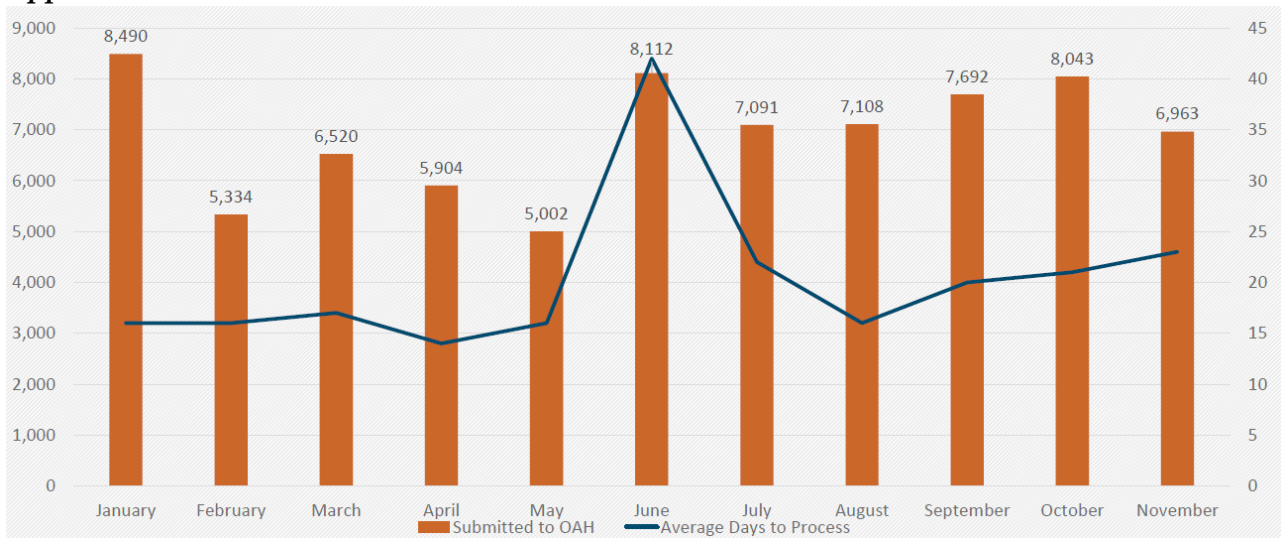
Overall Issues Volume



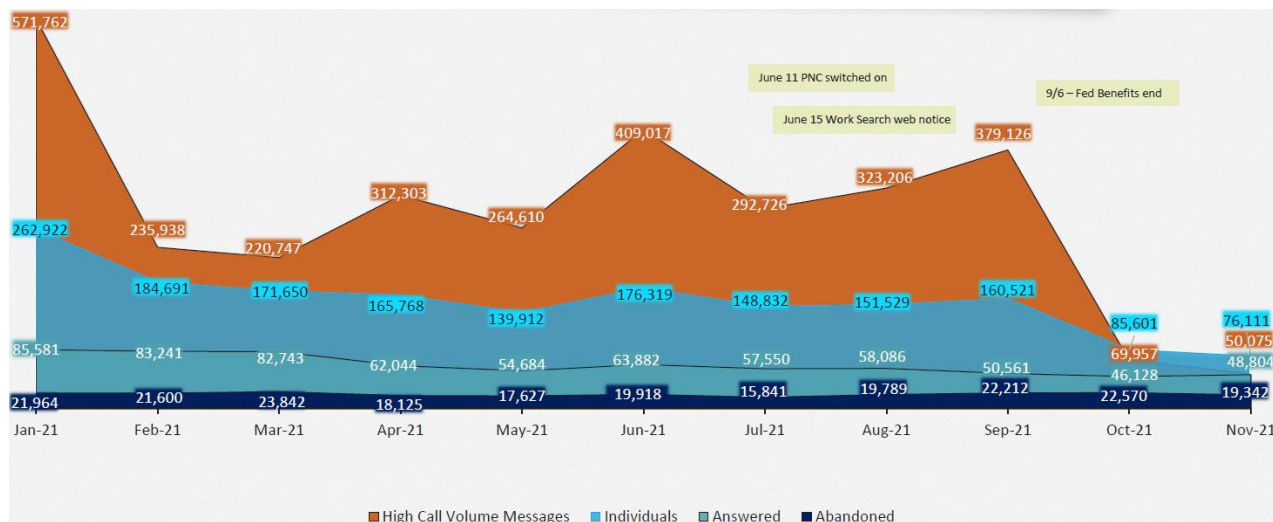
Top Adjudication Issues



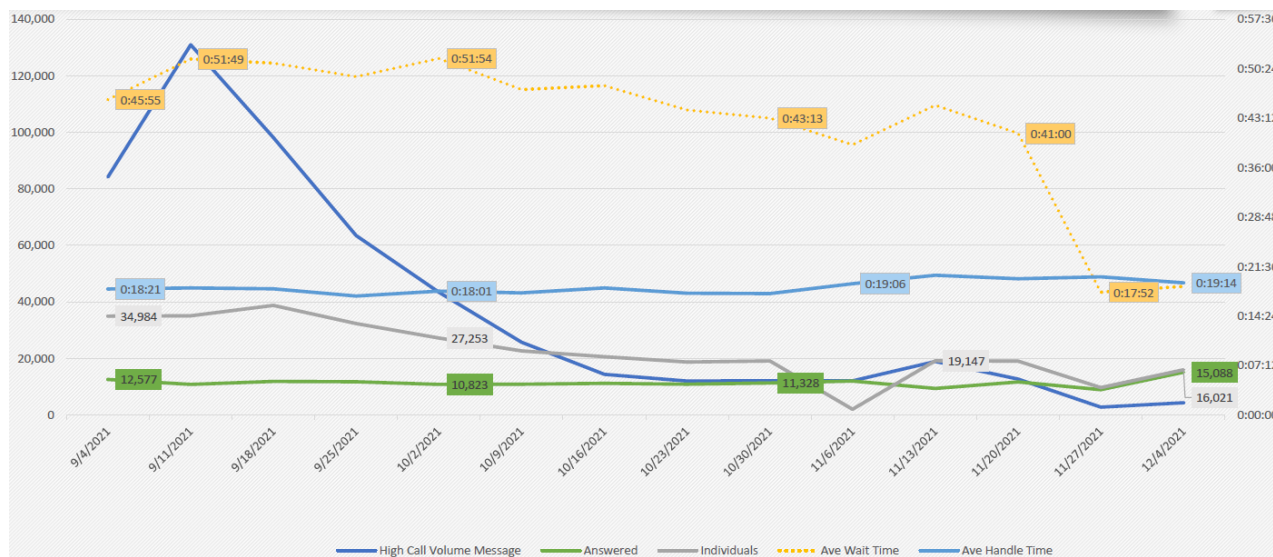
Appeals Sent to OAH



Call Volume



Call Volume Detail



UI Virtual Assistant Project

Provide UI customers with access to a virtual agent, via chat and voice, using Google Contact Center Artificial Intelligence (CCAI) services, to provide answers for commonly-asked questions.

- **Phase 1:**Went live October 4, 2021: Question and Answer Pairs for Chat Virtual Assistant in English.
- **Phase 2:** WentLive October 25, 2021: Answer specific questions about your claim in English, example weekly claim status, by the Chat Virtual Assistant.
- **Phase 3:**Go-Live January 3, 2022: Launch Voice Virtual Assistant in English and Spanish. Spanish is also added to the Chat Virtual Assistant.
- **Phase 4:**Go-Live January 31, 2022: Scheduled Callbacks by Chat and Voice Virtual Assistant.
- **Phase 5:**Go-Live February 24, 2022: Improvement of intelligence behind the Question-and-Answer Pairs. (The Virtual Assistant will become smarter.)

Julie Lord handed the meeting over to Jill Will, ESD UI Policy and Legislative Implementation Manager, to continue the discussion.

ESSB 5193 Implementation

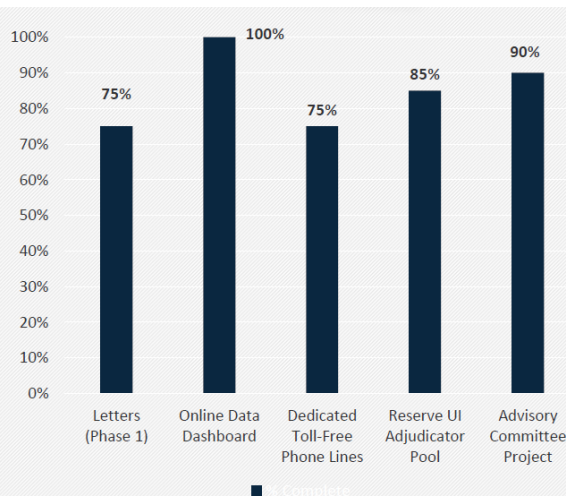
The [ESSB 5193 Sec 3\(3\)](#):

The department will work with an unemployment insurance advisory committee comprised of business and worker advocates to explore:

- (a)Establishing thresholds that will trigger automatic adjustments in department staffing assignments and phone agent staffing levels;
- (b)Establishing a pilot to provide a caseworker approach to the claims of a group of claimants with that casework carrying over to reemployment services;
- (c)Increasing language access, including by providing translation of notices sent to claimants as part of their unemployment insurance claims; and
- (d)(d) Frequency of the initial and continuing training to meet the needs of section 2 [reserve adjudicators] of this act.

Implementation Project Status

- **Letter Project:** Three of four letters and drop-ins will be completed by 12/31/2021. Received feedback on monetary determination template required by legal settlement.
- **Online Data Dashboard Project:** Create online dashboard and provide quarterly reports. [Link here.](#)
- **Dedicated Toll-Free Phone Lines:** Two of three lines established. A pilot project underway to identify more equitable service model for digital non-native.
- **Reserve UI Adjudicator Pool Project:** Establish a training program for pool of trained adjudicators.
 - Annual status report complete, training plan complete
 - SPSCC to assist with e-learning content 50hr/week starting 9/16 -12/31
 - ESD meeting with OFM to resolve HR issues and establish State agency recruiting plan.
- **Advisory Committee Project:**
 - Completed LEP presentation to EDI sub-committee.
 - On track to present Staffing Model and Case Worker Pilot to UIAC this month, December 2021.



Phone Staffing Trigger

Modeled 2022 staffing needs for Intake Phone and Non-Phone Work

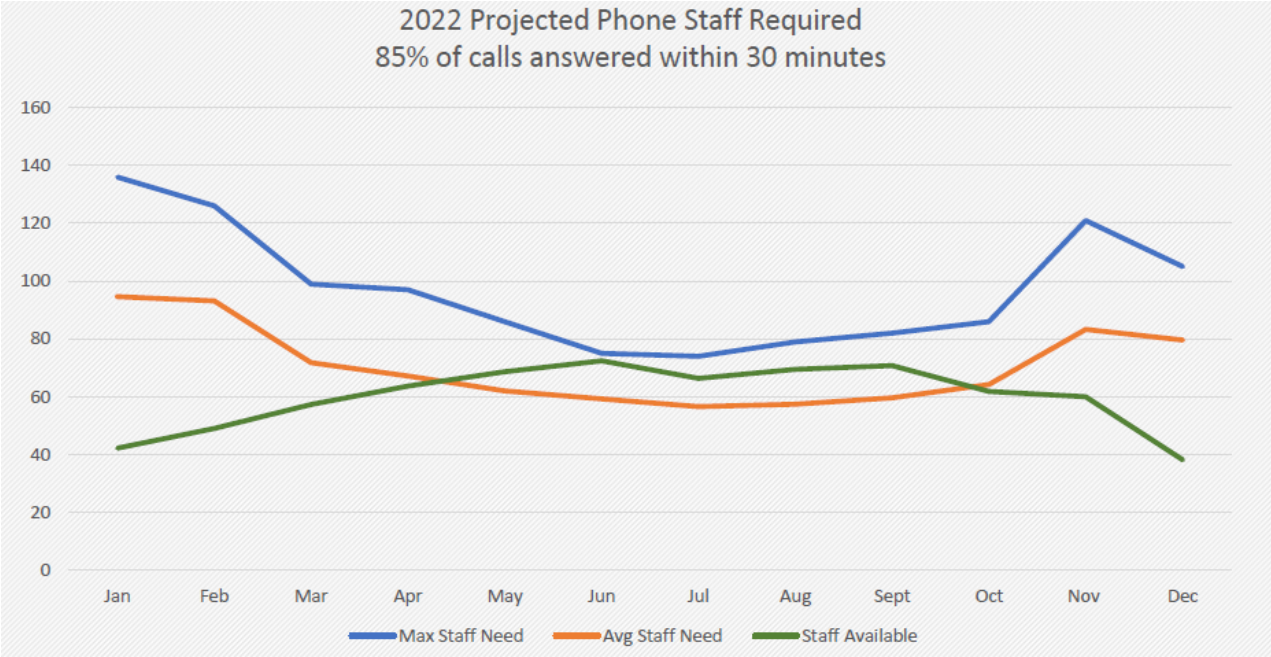
- Model basis –2019 actual workload, 2022 projected UI rate within 1/10 percent point of 2019

Used UI Staffing Model and Erlang C Staffing Model –industry standard

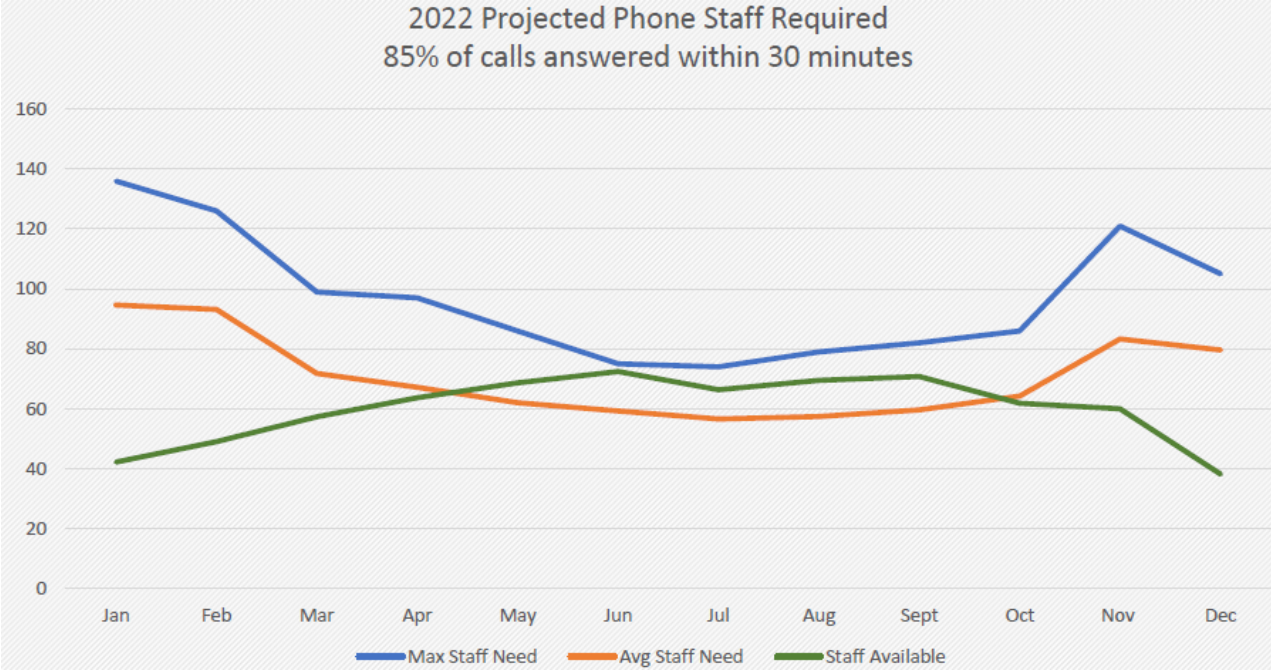
Staffing Assumptions

- 146 permanent UIS1,2, and 3 FTE
- 71.5% utilization rate, 104 effective staff available
- Allocated staff to keep non-phone work current in the month created
- No backlog as of 2022
- Does not include additional PUA work required by USDOL in 2022

Explore Phone Staffing Trigger



Phone Staffing Trigger



Explore Pilot Project

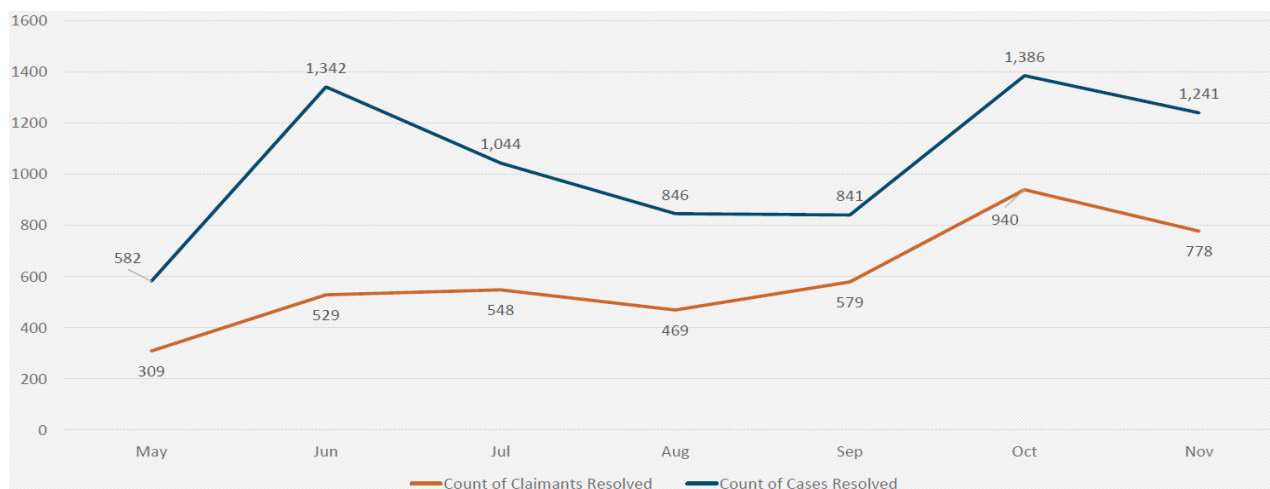
UICS -Case Management Pilot Project

Can we be more efficient and effective in helping claimants with complex problems?

The test – Can all the issues and tasks associated with a claim be resolved within 48 hours of when an adjudicator is assigned a case?

Cross Functional Team – Intake, Adjudication, Office of Special Investigations

- Team has all skills required to resolve issues and work tasks
- Claim moves among different team member if multiple issues require different skill sets
- Microsoft Teams channel to facilitate hand-offs and communication
- Included LEP claimants in the pilot sample



Dan Zeitlin handed the meeting over to Joy Adams, ESD UI Quality Assurance Manager, and Nicole Sherman, ESD UI Process Review Supervisor, to continue the discussion.

State Quality Service Plan (SQSP) Briefing

- The SQSP is the state’s UI performance management and service plan.
- Collaborative approach between USDOL and ESD to track UI performance management and planning.
- Allows for an exchange of information between Federal and state partners to enhance the UI program’s ability to reflect their joint commitment to performance excellence and client-centered services.
- Focus on continuous improvement using a “Plan-Do-Check-Act” approach.
- The SQSP is part of the process by which states receive Federal UI administrative grants.

2022 State Quality Service Plan

- Due to the extraordinary circumstances, [UIPL 24-21](#) adjusted this year’s expectations: no *new* corrective action plans were required for measures that newly fell below standards.
- *Existing* corrective action plans were to be refreshed and reported.
- Washington has existing Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) for the following measures:

- ✓ Nonmonetary determination timeliness
- ✓ Lower authority appeals
- ✓ Tax quality
- ✓ Overpayment recovery and detection
- ✓ Data validation
- ✓ Benefit Accuracy Measurement

2022 SQSP – Where We Stand

- Based on period ending 3/31/2021, the majority of UI program measures did not meet acceptable levels of performance.
- With the impacts of COVID-19 and guidance from UIPL 24-21, ESD will not develop CAPs for all newly failed measures, but will continue reporting on existing CAPs.
- For calendar year 2020, top three root causes for estimated overpayments included Benefit Year Earnings, Separation Issues and Employment Services (ES) Registration.

2022 SQSP – Select Measures

Measure	Acceptable Level of Performance	Performance in March 2020	Performance in March 2021
First Payment Promptness	≥ 87%	87.59%	66.44%
Nonmonetary Determination Timeliness	≥ 80%	65.23%	66.03%
Nonmonetary Determination Quality – Separations	≥ 75%	83.13%	72.34%
Nonmonetary Determination Quality – Nonseparations	≥ 75%	87.60%	44.68%
Improper Payments	< 10%	12.79%	9.78%
Lower Authority Appeals (30 days)	≥ 60%	33.83%	4.89%

2022 SQSP – Other Measures

Areas we have done well

- Higher Authority Appeals (Commissioner’s Review Office)
- Lower Authority Appeals Quality
- New Employer Status Determinations Time-lapse

Areas of concern

- Tax Quality
- Quality Assurance (Tax Performance System, Benefit Accuracy Measurement)
- Data Validation

Looking Forward

Continuing to work with UI Operations to monitor, measure, and improve performance as we recover from the pandemic's impacts

Working with USDOL National and Regional offices, [Tiger Teams](#) (multi-disciplinary team of outside experts), National Association of State Workforce Agencies ([NASWA](#)), and others to innovate, prioritize, and re-set our work in future months and years

Dan Zeitlin handed the meeting over to Joy Adams and Scott Michael, ESD Legal Services Manager, to continue the discussion.

UI Policy Update

Continued Work for Pandemic Programs

- Since March 2020, ESD has developed technology and guidance to operate new benefits programs at a break-neck pace –often ahead of the pace of detailed guidance from USDOL
- We continue to have clean-up work in regard to all pandemic programs, including PUA and PEUC, as well as developing a retroactive implementation of Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation (MEUC).
- We are developing detailed expectations for timelines, but we expect work on PUA ([UIPL 16-20](#) changes [3](#), [5](#) and [6](#)) and MEUC in the first half of 2022.

Vaccine-Related UI Claims

- As of December 10th, UI adjudicators have identified 52 new claims as separations related to the vaccine mandates.

UI Rulemaking Update

Benefit Certification

- Corrects a cross reference.
- Expedited rule filed: November 17, 2021
- Planned permanent rule adoption: January 18, 2022

Lump Sum Retirement Deduction

- SB 5061 (2021) removed the deduction of lump sum pension or retirement benefit payments from UI benefits. The rule repeals the associated WAC.
- Expedited rule filed: December 13, 2021
- Planned permanent rule adoption: February 23, 2022

Dan Zeitlin handed the meeting over to Joy Adams and Denice Craig, ESD Employer Services Manager, to continue the discussion.

ESSB 5478 Implementation

- Provided \$500 million to offset benefit charges from COVID-19 related claims.
- Offsets are split into four categories based on industry, employer size, and a minimum increase in tax-rate class.

- Preliminary numbers shared at November meeting indicate the money will be fully utilized, with Category 1 and 2 employers receiving a high rate of benefit charge offset.
- Category 3 and 4 employers will receive meaningful charge relief as well.
- **The forgiven benefits will not be officially calculated until the tax run the weekend of December 17-19. We will be able to provide the final numbers around December 21st.**

Tax rate notices will be mailed to employers between December 20-29 with a mailing date of December 29th.

Example of tier 1			Example of tier 2		
Your tax rate for 2022 is based on the following benefit charges and taxable wages.			Your tax rate for 2022 is based on the following benefit charges and taxable wages.		
Experience Year	Benefit Charges*	Taxable Wages**	Experience Year	Benefit Charges*	Taxable Wages**
2021 (07/01/20 - 06/30/21)	\$0.00	\$18,970.00	2021 (07/01/20 - 06/30/21)	\$8,308.36	\$426,336.05
2020 (07/01/19 - 06/30/20)	\$280.31	\$22,855.18	2020 (07/01/19 - 06/30/20)	\$190.67	\$473,651.59
2019 (07/01/18 - 06/30/19)	\$0.00	\$2,500.00	2019 (07/01/18 - 06/30/19)	\$0.00	\$556,376.02
2018 (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)	\$0.00	\$0.00	2018 (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)	\$0.00	\$526,899.22
Experience Transferred IN	\$1,010.47	\$15,863.00			
Total	\$1,290.78	\$60,188.18	Total	\$8,499.03	\$1,983,262.88
		= 0.021445			= 0.004285
Benefit Charges divided by Taxable Wages equals Benefit Ratio			Benefit Charges divided by Taxable Wages equals Benefit Ratio		
The forgiveness ratio for the benefit charge offset program is 100.00%. We reduced your total benefit charges by \$1011.41.			The forgiveness ratio for the benefit charge offset program is 87.42%. We reduced your total benefit charges by \$7385.50.		
*Benefit charges are your share of unemployment benefits that we paid to your former employees. **Taxable wages are the total amount of your employees' wages on which you paid taxes.			*Benefit charges are your share of unemployment benefits that we paid to your former employees. **Taxable wages are the total amount of your employees' wages on which you paid taxes.		

Future Meetings Discussion

Dan Zeitlin opened a conversation regarding meeting cadence for 2022. It was agreed by advisory committee members that one-hour meetings be scheduled through the legislative session on the last Friday in January (28th) and February (25th) from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Public Comments

Christina Draper - Claimant

Adjourned

Dan Zeitlin thanked everyone for their continued active participation and for their commitment to this work, then ended the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Next meeting

The next Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee meeting has been scheduled for Friday, January 28, 2022 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Addendum I

Agenda

Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee (UIAC)

Thursday, December 16, 2021 | 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm | Via Zoom

Agenda Items

Time	Topic
2:00 pm	Welcome from Dan Zeitlin, Director, Employment System Policy & Integrity (ESPI) Division, Employment Security Department (ESD)
2:05 pm	Approval of December 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes
2:10 pm	UI Backlog Update and ESSB 5193 Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Julie Lord, UI Customer Support Director, ESD o Jill Will, UI Policy and Legislative Implementation Manager, ESD
2:40 pm	State Quality Service Plan Briefing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Joy Adams, UI Quality Assurance and Operations Manager, ESD o Nicole Sherman, UI Process Review Supervisor, ESD
3:10 pm	Break
3:20 pm	UI Policy Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Joy Adams, UI Quality Assurance and Operations Manager, ESD o Scott Michael, Legal Services Manager, ESD
3:35 pm	ESSB 5478 Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Joy Adams, UI Quality Assurance and Operations Manager, ESD o Denice Craig, Employer Services Manager
3:45 pm	Future Meetings Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Dan Zeitlin, Director, ESD
3:55 pm	Public Comment
4:00 pm	Adjourn

For more information, please visit the UIAC website at <https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/UIAC>

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