



Unemployment Insurance ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Employment Security Department

WASHINGTON STATE

Agenda



- I. Approval of Dec. 6, 2023 meeting minutes
- II. Rulemaking update
- III. Leg updates / Context of UI Bills
- IV. Navigator Grant
- V. Overpayments
- VI. Public comment
- VII. Adjourn

Rule Making

Stephanie Frazee, Legislation and Rules Coordinator, ESD



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Rulemaking



- **Overpayment Waivers** – Formally adopted permanent rules on December 1, 2023. Rules became effective January 1, 2024.
- **Conditional Benefit Definition** – Formally adopted rules on December 7, 2023. Rules became effective January 7, 2024.

Rulemaking



- **Wildfires and Other Disasters** – Filed emergency rules in response to wildfires in the state. Held a hearing on adopting the rules permanently on January 23, 2024. Working on formally adopting the permanent rules.
- **Expanded Voluntary Quits (HB 1106)** – Officially proposed rules with definitions of “family member” consistent with PFML definitions and incorporating updates from the bill that are effective September 3, 2023. Held hearing on December 8, 2023. Working on formally adopting rules.
- Also working on drafting rules incorporating quitting due to inaccessible care for a child or vulnerable adult and defining a split shift.

Rulemaking



- **Transportation Network Companies (HB 1570)** – Working on drafting rules concerning relief of benefit charges for part-time workers and potential other rules needed to implement bill.
- **Cross-Program Payment Allocation** – Pre-proposal inquiry filed. Drafting rules to address how employer payments are allocated across UI, WA Cares, and PFML.
- **Overpayments Correction** – Began expedited rulemaking to update an outdated cross-reference. Objection was submitted, and we are now working on officially proposing the rule change.

Legislation update

Caitlyn Jekel, Government Relations Director, ESD



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Legislation update



Agency request legislation

HB 1975 & SB 6028

Pandemic-era overpayment interest

Both bills voted out of their policy committees unanimously

Waives interest accrued on pandemic-era overpayment interest (Feb 2020 – Sept 2021). Interest on these overpayments will not resume until Jan 1, 2025.

HB 1898

Benefit Charging

Voted out of House (93 yeah, 0 no, 5 excused)

Cleans up the benefit charging statutes for clarity. Does not make substantive changes.

HB 1901

Voluntary Contributions

Voted out of LAWS unanimously

Removes the sunset to temporary changes to voluntary contributions program from 2021:

- Removed the 10% surcharge
- Reduced the amount of the contribution required to participate.



Legislation update



Agency request legislation: Pandemic-era overpayment interest

The bills impact claimants that are not successful in getting a waiver.

- Currently, 96% of waiver applications have been approved
- If the waiver is approved, the overpayment + accrued interest is waived

Bases on the current waiver approval rate, ESD anticipates:

- \$6M in interest being waived
- \$8.2M in paid interest will be refunded to individuals that have already paid interest



Legislation update



Bills we are tracking

HB 1095 and 5109

Concerning unemployment insurance benefits for striking or lockout workers

HB 1095 (2023) – Reintroduced in Appropriations

SB 5109 (2023) – Reintroduced in Ways and Means

HB 1893 and SB 5777

Concerning unemployment insurance benefits for striking or lockout workers

HB 1893 – Scheduled for executive session in LAWS earlier this morning

SB 5777 – Passed out of Labor & Commerce on Jan 17

HB 2230

Economic Security for All (EcSA)

Scheduled for executive session in LAWS on Jan 30

Navigator Grant



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Rafael Colón, Navigator Program Manager, ESD



Navigator Grant



- **21 bidders across the state requesting over \$7.9 million**
- **Selected nine CBO successful bidders**
 - **Total grant \$2,051,623**
 - **Period of performance is 18 months from Jan. 2, 2024 to June 14, 2025**
- **CBO Summit**
 - **January 24 & 25, 2024**

CBO	Counties	ESD Regions & WDC areas
Chinese I&SC	Pierce, King & Snohomish	Central Sound – (4, 5, 6)
Korean CSC	Pierce, King & Snohomish	Central Sound - (4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12)
La Oficina, LLC	Yakima & Tribal Lands – Toppenish and White Swan	Central – (9)
Native Action Network	Clallam, Lewis, Jefferson, Cowlitz, Pierce, Skagit, Yakima, Whatcom, Clark, King, Snohomish, Kitsap, Thurston, & Spokane	Central Sound, North Sound, Southwest Coastal, Central, Eastern (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12)
Neighborhood House	King	Central Sound – (5)
People for People	Correction made from virtual presentation on 12/18. Yakima, Kittitas, Klickitat, and Skamania – South Central Workforce Region	North Sound, Southwest Coastal, Central and Eastern (1, 3, 9, 11)
TRAC Associates	Pierce, King, Snohomish, Kitsap & Thurston	Central Sound – (1, 2, 4, 5, 6)
Washington State Labor Council	Statewide	Central Sound, North Sound, Southwest Coastal, Central, Eastern - (all 12)
Drivers Union	Franklin, Pierce, Clark, Kitsap, King, Whatcom, Snohomish, Spokane – Metro areas	Central Sound, North Sound, Southwest Coastal, Central, Eastern (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12)

Navigator Grant



- Two-day summit to onboard CBO staff:
 - Eight online UI learning modules
 - Work Tool Kit
 - Policy
 - Contract Updates
 - Expectations & Reporting
 - Next Steps

Overpayments Update



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JR Richards, Unemployment Insurance Customer Support Director, ESD



Overpayments Update



- Total scope at state of this work: 210,000 claimants totaling 1.2 Billion
- Phase 1: 21,000 were waived through federal blanket waivers, providing \$13 million in debt relief
- Phase 2 (Current state): To date, ESD has received 44 thousand waiver requests from individual claimants. Requests received represent \$200 million in overpayments
 - We have processed 18 thousand applications and waived 36 million in overpayment debt
 - 5% have been denied due to not meeting waiver criteria
 - What remains: 165,000 customers have pandemic era overpayments, did not receive a blanket waiver, and have not applied for an individual waiver. Of that,
 - 77,000 customers currently have a zero balance. Generally speaking, this is due to either customer repayment or offsets.
 - 88,000 customers currently have a balance

Public Comment



- If you would like to make public comment, please state your name and spell it so we can capture it correctly for the minutes, as well as the organization you represent if any.
- **Reminder:** Your comments are being recorded.
- If you would like your comments to be included in the meeting minutes, please submit them in writing via email to Camille Galeno at camille.galeno@esd.wa.gov. *(Camille's email will be posted in the chat)*
- Please limit your comments to **two minutes**.

A photograph showing the silhouettes of several people standing around a table in a meeting room, with a bright light source creating a lens flare effect. The image is used as a background for the top left portion of the slide.

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