



Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee

Meeting details

Date: Wednesday, April 30th, 2025

Time: 2:00 pm –3:00 pm

Location: Zoom

Committee members and alternates present

Employee Representatives

- Cindy Richardson, UNITE HERE Local 8
- John Traynor, Washington State Labor Council
- Brenda Wiest, Teamsters 117

Employer Representatives

- Tammy Hetrick, Washington Food Industry Association (alternate employer rep)
- Josie Cummings, Avista

General Public Representatives

- John Glynn, Washington Workforce Association
- Anne Paxton, Unemployment Law Project

Committee members and alternates absent

- Katie Beeson, Washington Food Industry Association (alternate employer rep)
- Julia Gorton, Washington Hospitality Association (employer rep)
- Monica Holland, Northwest Justice Project (alternate public rep)
- Lindsey Hueer, Association of Washington Businesses (employer rep)
- Joe Kendo, Washington State Labor Council (alternate employee rep)
- Allyson O'Malley-Jones, Northwest Justice Project (alternate public rep)

ESD staff

- Veronica Castro
- Joshua Dye
- Vaughn Ellis
- Stephanie Frazee
- Camille Galeno
- Colin Helsley
- Kennidi Hunsicker
- Reese Hutchison
- Kelli Johnson
- Lawrence Larson

- Brian Levy
- Marypat Meuli
- JR Richards
- Stephanie Sams
- Eve Sheng
- John Trierweiler
- Lora Wood
- Dan Zeitlin

Summary

Meeting Recorded

This meeting was [recorded](#) and livestreamed by TVW. Please reference this recording for further meeting details and full dialogue using the indicated timestamps.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Committee chair JR Richards welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked committee assistant Colin Helsley to call roll.

Agenda

JR reviewed the following agenda items (also see Addendum I)

- Approval of March 19, 2025, meeting minutes
- Trust Fund Report
- Rulemaking Update
- UI Peak Claim Season Report Out
- Legislative Update
- Budget Update
- Public comment
- Adjourn

Meeting Minutes

JR requested that committee members review the March 19, 2025, draft UIAC meeting minutes and provide their feedback. Brenda Weist moved to approve the minutes. John Traynor seconded the motion. All in favor said “aye”. No members were opposed. The March 19, 2025, meeting minutes were approved.

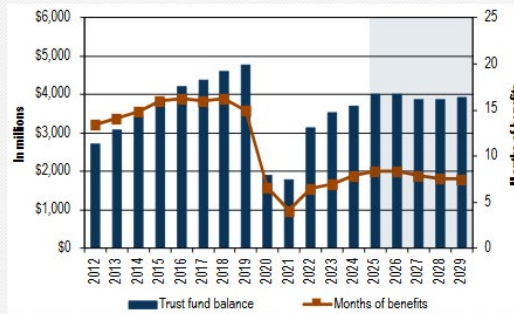
Trust Fund Report

Vaughn Ellis, Actuarial Analyst, ESD provided a report out on the trust fund using the following slides.

Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund



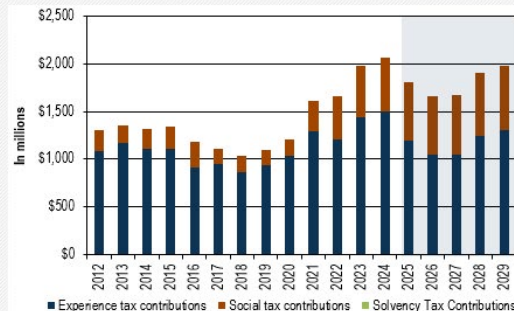
On April 1, the UI trust fund held approximately \$3.47 billion, and we project a balance of \$4.01 billion as end of 2025 based on ERFC march forecast



Employer Contributions



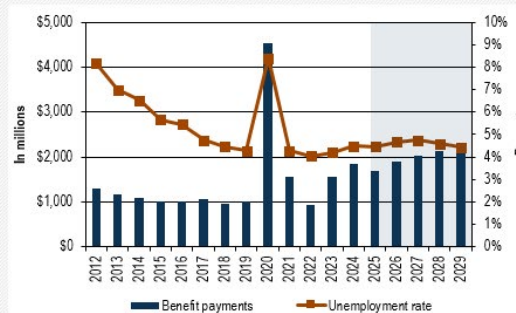
Projected Employer Contributions	November 2024	March 2025
2025	\$2.0 Billion	\$1.8 Billion
2026	\$1.7 Billion	\$1.7 Billion



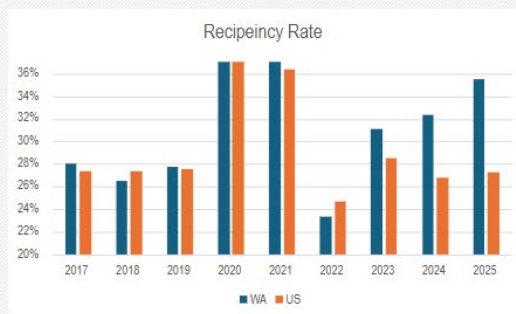
Total Benefit Payments



Projected Benefit Payments	November 2024	March 2025
2025	\$ 1.8 Billion	\$ 1.6 Billion
2026	\$ 1.9 Billion	\$ 1.9 Billion



Increased Claim Volume



No questions were raised.

Rulemaking Update

Stephanie Frazee, Legislation and Rules Coordinator, ESD provided a rulemaking update using the following slides.

Rulemaking



- **Address Change Requirement** – We are adding an explicit requirement that employers provide their new address to the Department within 30 days after an address change. The hearing was held on March 27. We are working on the CR 103 to formally adopt the new rule language.
- **Space Force** – We updated the rule on mandatory military transfers to include all members of the U.S. Armed Forces, including Space Force. The new rule language was adopted on April 1, 2025, and will be effective on May 2, 2025.
- **CRO Filing** – Working on the CR 101 for a rule amendment to clarify filing requirements with the Commissioner's Review Office.

No questions were raised.

UI Peak Claim Season Report Out

JR Richards, Director Insurance Services Director, and Brain Levy, UI Deputy Director, ESD provided a report out on UI peak claim season using the following slides.

Peak Mitigation Goals



- Reduce need for customers to call/email
- Less claimants stopped/stuck in the process
- Increase calls answered
- Improve timely payment of claims
- Proactive communication strategy for claimants, agency leaders and external authorizing environment

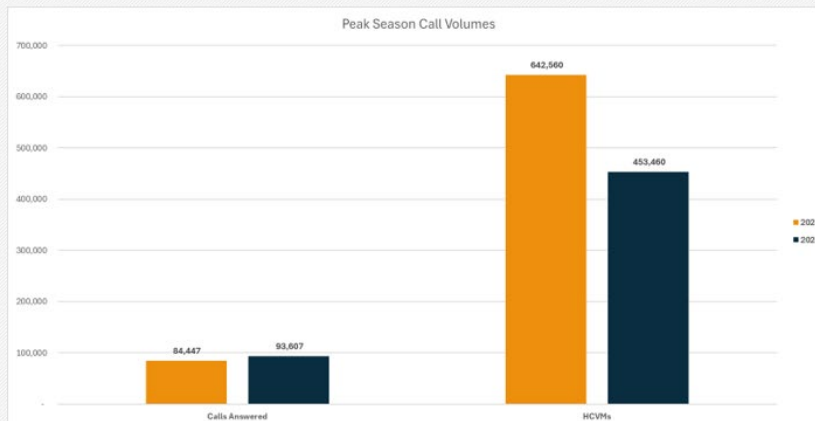
Highest Impact Strategies



People – Process – Technology System

- New approach to call and phone-queue management
- Leverage performance data dashboards and workload data differently
- Implementation of specialized teams in claim center
- Adjudication Process Changes
- Technology system improvements
- Strategic use of overtime

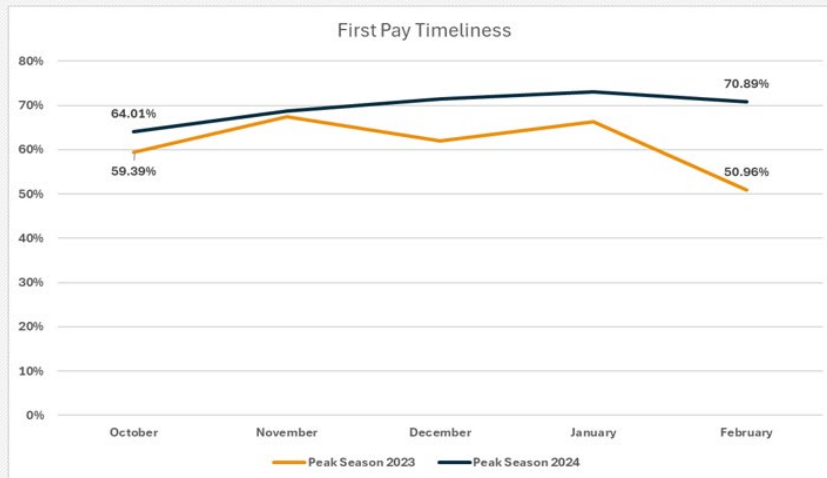
Peak phone performance



Results:

- 56% improvement in call wait times (18 min vs 32 min)
- 10% more answered calls
- 29% reduction in HCVM
- 4% increase calls per FTE
- 31% decrease in calls per customer
- 27% decrease in web notices per customer

Peak performance



Results:

- 46% increase in daily write rate per FTE (Adjudication)
 - Only 2% increase in appeals
- 5% decrease in issues set per customer
- Gains occurred despite
 - 9% increase in initial claims YoY
 - 17.7% increase in weekly claims YoY

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Question from John Glynn: Would you anticipate an increase in the adjudication piece with fed workers having to apply, or would they be? Because we've just finished our second Federal layoff presentation and didn't know inner workings of how that all worked not know how much work has.

Answer from JR Richards: Yeah, great question. We're watching those claim volumes really closely. Early in the year we saw a spike, a pretty significant spike in claims coming in for Federal workers. But in our overall claim volume it was very small. Then we saw that dip back off. But as an agency we're watching really closely to see if it trends up. And you know, John, you just spoke to something that's part of our mitigation strategies is one huge help for claimants navigating a process is to get it right the 1st time. So, if they don't make mistakes on filing that initial claim because they're confused or not quite sure what they need that can slow down the process. So, mitigation strategies in our federal workforce, ee also do it with any other organizations that are doing larger layoffs is to do targeted support and communication and workshops in partnership with our WorkForce offices across the State, and the boards that we partner with to help them navigate through that initial process. So, thanks for that question.

No additional questions were raised.

Legislation Update

Josh Dye, Government Relations Director, ESD provided a legislative update using the following slides.

Legislation update



ESSB 5525 – Concerning business closures and mass layoffs

- Employers with 50+ employees must provide at least 60 day written notice before conducting closure/mass layoff
- Employer may apply for exception from ESD under certain circumstances
- ESD may issue penalties for noncompliance of written notice
- Mass layoffs generally cannot include employees currently on paid family & medical leave (PFML)
- 90 days Sine Die effective date (July 27, 2025)

Legislation update



ESSB 5041 – UI Benefits for striking or lockout workers

- Allows UI benefits during strike or lockout
- Striking workers eligible beginning 2nd Sunday after start of strike; must serve waiting week; allowed for up to 6 weeks
- Overpayment assessment if retroactive wages granted or if strike prohibited by federal or state law
- Benefits paid due to strike apply to employers' experience rating
- ESD to do Legislative report beginning December 2026
- Effective January 1, 2026

No questions were raised.

Budget Update

Dan Zeitlin, Chief of Staff, ESD provided a budget update using the following slides.

ESD Base Funding



The conference budget reduces ESD's "base" funding:

- One-time funding ends
- Reductions in number of management and administrative positions
- Federal revenue has declined, and the availability of CPP and P&I to cover shortfalls has increasingly become less of an option.

ESD Decision Packages (in millions)



Title	Governor Budget	Senate Budget	House Budget	Conference Budget
UI Navigators	\$1.0	\$0.0	\$1.0	\$1.0
Federal Funding Shortfall	\$22.3	\$22.3	\$22.3	\$22.3
UI Customer Improvement Plan	\$11.2	\$9.8	\$11.2	\$11.2
Customer Compliance Integration	\$7.6	\$7.6	\$7.6	\$7.6
UI Customer Improvement Roadmap	\$0.5	\$0.5	\$0.5	\$0.5
Website Modernization	\$0.2	\$0.2	\$0.2	\$0.2

ESD Decision Packages (in millions)



	Governor Budget	Senate Budget	House Budget	Conference Budget
Title				
WorkSource Integrated Tech (WIT)	\$9.2	\$9.2	\$9.2	\$9.2
Agricultural Outreach Services	\$0.6	\$0	\$0.6	\$0.6
<u>EcSA</u> – Expansion	\$5.4	\$0	\$0	\$0
Career Connect Washington	\$14.5	\$4.7	\$2.9	\$4.7

ESD Funding Adjustments (in millions)

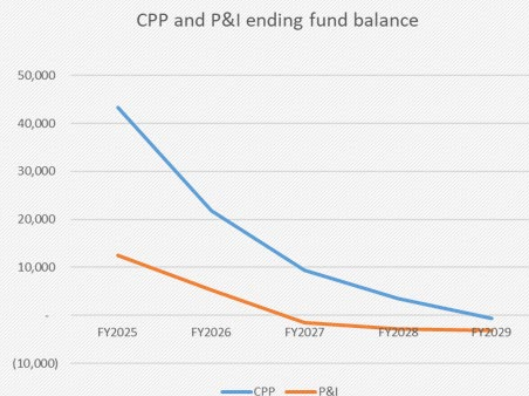


	Fund	Governor Budget	Senate Budget	House Budget	Conference Budget
Title					
Fund Swap- Career Connect Learning	P&I (Fund 120)	\$14.5 M	\$4.7	\$2.9	\$4.7
Fund Swap-Economic Security for All	CPP (Fund 134)	\$12.4M	\$12.3	\$12.4	\$12.3
Fund Swap-Audit Coordination Staff	P&I (Fund 120)	\$0.0	\$0.6	\$0.6	\$0.6
Fund Swap – DSHS	P&I (Fund 120)	\$2.0	\$0.0	\$4.0	\$4.0

ESD State Funding: CPP and P&I



Conference Budget: Employment Service Administrative Account-Fund 134 (CPP) and Administrative Contingency Account-Fund 120 (P&I)



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Question from Anne Paxton: Just wondering if, where does the CORE 21 upgrade for the it system fit in these decision packages, and what is the standing of that.

Answer from Dan Zeitlin: Yeah, it was not funded. So, thanks for the question. As the committee will recall our UI benefits paying system was launched in 2017 (I think). It's the software that we're working off of is, you know, really a decade old at that point. We had put together what's called a CORE 21 upgrade, which was a proposal to upgrade the system so it could be the most recent software, which would have helped do things like allow claimants to apply for use their phone to use the system, and other sort of enhancements. That was not funded in Governor Inslee's budget. The idea there is, let's do the feasibility study first and that carried the day throughout the process. So that's the long answer, the short answer and is, it's not funded. But we certainly want to continue to look at ways to best leverage our technology to serve customers.

Public Comments

Before starting public comment, JR reminded the committee that there will not be a committee meeting for the month of May.

Stephanie Sams elaborated the next meeting will be on June 25th, 2025, at 10 AM and will be the first 2-hour meeting of the year.

JR offered an opportunity for committee members to bring up any topics they would like to discuss before public comments. No committee members brought up any topics they would like to discuss.

JR reminded meeting participants that if they would like their comments captured in the meeting minutes to please email them to camille.galeno@esd.wa.gov.

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**.

No public comments were made.

Adjourned

JR thanked everyone for joining and adjourned the meeting.

Action Items

No action items.

Next meeting

June 25th, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Addendum I



Agenda

Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee (UIAC)

Wednesday, April 30, 2025 | 2:00 pm- 3:00 pm | Via Zoom | 212 Maple Park Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501

Time	Topic
2:00 pm	Welcome from JR Richards, Director, Unemployment Insurance Customer Support, Employment Security Department (ESD) <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Agenda overview
2:00 pm	Approval of March 19, <u>2025</u> meeting minutes – JR Richards
2:05 pm	Trust fund report – Vaughn Ellis
2:10 pm	Rulemaking updates – Stephanie Frazee
2:15 pm	UI Peak Claim Season report out – JR Richards and Brian Levy
2:25 pm	Legislative updates – Josh Dye
2:35 pm	Budget update – Dan Zeitlin and Martin McMurry
2:45 pm	Public Comment
3:00 pm	Adjourn

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

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