



# Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee

## Meeting details

**Date:** Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Time:** 3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

**Location:** Zoom

### Committee members

- John Traynor, Washington State Labor Council (employer representative)
- James Crandall, Association of Washington Business (employer representatives)
- Josie Cummings, Avista
- Julia Gorton, Washington Hospitality Association
- John Glynn, Washington Workforce Association
- Anne Paxton, Unemployment Law Project

### Committee members absent

- Brenda Wiest, Teamsters 117 (employer representative)
- Cindy Richardson, UNITE HERE Local 8 (employer representative)

### ESD staff

- Joy Adams
- Josh Dye
- Colin Helsley
- Stephanie Frazee
- Martin McMurry
- JR Richards
- Tatjana Roberts

## 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 Agenda Review

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 December 10, 2025, meeting minutes
- Legislative Updates
- Rulemaking
- Governor's Budget Update
- Call Center Pilot Update

- Public comment
- Adjourn

**Meeting Minutes**

JR requested that committee members review the December 10, 2025, draft UIAC meeting minutes and provide their feedback. James Crandall moved to approve the minutes. Josie Cummings seconded the motion. All in favor said “aye”. No members were opposed. The December 10, 2025, meeting minutes were approved.

**Legislative Updates**

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

**Legislative Updates**

- SB 6106: ARL Modifying the Washington WARN Act**
  - Removes Tribes from the WA WARN Act's definition on employer
  - Excludes the names and addresses of employees from the Public Records Act
- HB 2563: Concerning UI notices**
  - Allows OAH to provide certain appeal notices electronically
- SB 5887 : UI employer reporting**
  - Allows ESD to waive certain incomplete wage report penalties
- SB 6134: Overpayment notifications for striking workers**
  - Directs Employment Security to notify claimants involved in a strike of the potential for overpayments when receiving backpay

No questions were raised.

## Rulemaking Updates

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

### Rulemaking



- **CRO Filings** – We amended our rules to make filing requirements with the Commissioner's Review Office more consistent. The rules were adopted on October 29 and became effective on November 29.
- **Transportation Network Companies** – We amended our rules on quitting for reduction of hours or compensation of 25% or more for TNC drivers and added a rule on relief of benefit charges for employers who offer part-time work. The rules were adopted on January 15 and will become effective on February 15.

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### Rulemaking



#### ESSB 5525 – Securing Timely Notification and Benefits for Laid-off Employees Act

- **Rule Governance Statement** – We updated WAC 192-01-001 to include administration of the mass layoffs program under Title 49 RCW. The rule was adopted on December 11 and became effective on January 11.
- **Use of Employee Information** – We have proposed rule language clarifying that employee information obtained by the Department will be used to administer the Employment Security Act. The hearing will be on January 30 at 9:00 AM via Zoom.
- **Documentation for Exceptions** – We are drafting rule language in accordance with Section 7 of the bill, which requires the Department to adopt rules that include documentation requirements for exceptions to the notice requirement.
- **Definitions** – We are looking at terms in the bill that may benefit from further definition, such as “unforeseeable.”

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During the rulemaking update, **Joy Adams, Employment System Policy & Integrity Director, ESD**, provided a rulemaking update using the following slide.

## Rulemaking



### Coming Soon – rulemaking on work registration

- Federal law requires that unemployment claimants are registered for work in the state’s labor exchange system. ESD currently register claimants directly into the WorkSource case management platform, ETO. With the implementation of the new WIT system, we are addressing this discrepancy.
- Before WIT is launched in May, we must update WAC 192-180-005 to correctly place responsibility on claimants to register. We also are updating internal policies, procedures, and communications to claimants to ensure folks are properly directed to register for work. This work is scoped to solely ensure that WAC and technology are aligned.

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No questions were raised.

### Governor’s Budget Update

Martin McMurry, Chief Operating Officer, ESD, provided an update on the Governor’s budget using the following slides.

## Governor Ferguson’s 2026 Supplemental Budget



### Federal funding shortfall –

- Federal funding to support the Unemployment Insurance programs has been reduced. ESD request authority to use the remaining \$19 million in Reed Act funds to support the Unemployment Insurance Administrative grant shortfall.
- Governor’s budget fully funds this request.

### UI Strikes and Lockouts (ESSB 5041):

- A technical correction is requested to reflect the full costs of ESSB 5041 that was funded at an earlier version of the bill.
- Governor’s budget fully funds this request.

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## Governor Ferguson's 2026 Supplemental Budget



- **Fund transfers to DSHS:** Administrative Contingency (Penalties & Interest – P&I) funding increases from \$4 million to \$18 million, with an additional \$2 million in the Employer Services account (Claimant Placement Program – CPP).
- **OAH billing rate increase:** The increase is incorporated into the federal shortfall funding.
- **EcSA:** Includes a \$2 million fund swap from CPP to the WIOA Governor's Reserve for 25–27. The EcSA program also receives an additional \$1 million in FY27 only.

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No questions were raised.

### Call Center Pilot Update

Tatjana Roberts, Claims Center Enterprise Manager, ESD, provided an update on the Call Center Pilot using the following slides.

## UI Call Center Pilot



### What changed?

Effective Oct 27, 2025, the UI claims center reduced phone hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays to 8am – 12 pm.

### Pilot Goals:

- Through modified staffing:
  - Increase overall weekly call capacity by 8%
  - Increase FTE hours dedicated to intake non-phone work (NPW) to help reduce backlog in these tasks
- Increase first-pay timeliness
- Increase efficiency by reducing switching costs
- Increase employee morale and reduce burn-out

# UI Call Center Pilot



	Pre-Pilot	Current Performance (non-holiday weeks)
Average weekly call capacity	5,000	5,800 (16% ↑)
Average FTE dedicated daily to phone staffing	34.59	37.9 (↑ 3.5 FTE)
Average calls per FTE per month	144.6	153.9 (6% ↑)
Weekly Intake NPW capacity	11,150	15,270 (37% ↑)
YOY Q4 First Pay Timeliness	67.4% (Q4 2024)	70.4% (Q4 2025)

*Based on the results of the pilot, UI workload and no funding for overtime we will continue the pilot through the end of the fiscal year.*

**Recording timestamp 00:23:13**

**Question from Josie Cummings:** Thanks. I just have a quick question. Are we also looking at the amount of time that, claimants or customers are spending on the phone pre-pilot? And post-pilot, and what those numbers look like.

**Follow up comment from Tatjana Roberts:** Yes. So, I don't have the numbers in front of me. I don't know, JR, if that's something we could, we would share out later or could share out later.

**Answer from JR Richards:** We can follow up if Josie is interested.

**Answer from Tatjana Roberts:** Our goal right now is to try to answer 80% of our calls in 20 minutes or less. There are times during the pilot we have hit that. That's definitely not the norm. I believe we're floating around 60% of our calls are answered in 20 minutes or less.

**Follow up comment from Josie Cummings:** Okay, thanks. I think, I'd be interested in getting more information on that in the future when you guys have time.

**Answer from JR Richards:** We can do that.

**Public Comments**

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](mailto: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](mailto:camille.galeno@esd.wa.gov). (Camille's email will be posted in the chat)
- Please limit your comments to **two minutes**.

No comment was made

**Adjourned**

JR thanked everyone for joining and adjourned the meeting.

**Action Items**

- Provide follow-up data on pre- and post-pilot caller wait times and call-answer performance when available.

### 2025 Meetings

The next Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee meeting is on:

**February 27, 2026 – 3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. - Zoom Meeting**

### Addendums

ADDENDUM I.



Agenda

Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee (UIAC)

Jan. 30, 2026 | 3:30 to 4 pm | Via Zoom | 212 Maple Park Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501

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Time	Topic
3:30 pm	Welcome from JR Richards, Director, Insurance Services Division, Employment Security Department (ESD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Agenda overview</li></ul>
3:32 pm	Approval of December 10, 2025, meeting minutes – JR Richards
3:35 pm	Legislative Updates – Josh Dye
3:40 pm	Rulemaking - Stephanie Frazee
3:45 pm	Governor's Budget update - Martin McMurry
3:50 pm	Call Center Pilot update – Tatjana Roberts
3:55 pm	Public Comment
4:00 pm	Adjourn

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

**RECORDING DISCLAIMER:**

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ADDENDUM II.

