

Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee (UIAC) meeting



April 27, 2026

Special work session – Job search activities legislative report

Agenda



- I. Introductions
- II. Background
- III. Qualitative narrative overview
- IV. Introducing quantitative metrics
- V. Sample quantitative artifacts
- VI. Discussion / Q&A

Introductions

Stephanie Sams, Government Relations Deputy Director



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Project team



* Indicates presenter for work session

Stephanie Sams, Government Relations Deputy Director*

Bethany King, Research Economist, Labor Market Info & Research*

Elizabeth Glass, Research Economist, Labor Market Info & Research*

Alex Wolter, UI Data Performance Manager, Insurance Services*

Nicole Walker, UI Quality Assurance Manager, Policy & Integrity*

Jenny Zenkner, Publications Supervisor, Labor Market Info & Research

Shelley Dunning, RESEA Program Operator, Workforce Services

Cheryl Brown, Program Specialist, Insurance Services

Alison McCarty, Benefits Specialist, Insurance Services

Yvonnda Lawton, Tax Policy Specialist, Policy & Integrity

Josh Dye, Government Relations Director

Kris Bowen, Tax Policy Specialist, Policy & Integrity

Marypat Meuli, UI Product Manager, Product, Planning and Performance

Tara Carrithers, Administrative Assistant, Government Relations

Reese Hutchison, UI Communications Manager, Communications

Nadine Nabass, Community Impact Analyst, Executive Programs

Marisa Todd, Publications Manager, Government Relations

Background and data overview

Stephanie Sams, Government Relations Deputy Director



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Background



Prior report provided historical overview on job search activities & improper payments.

- Washington had a high improper payment rate, nearly 66% tied to job search activity issues.
- Required primarily in-person activities.

Pandemic shifted guidance and practice providing flexibilities.

Changes permanently codified in 2023 Legislative session.

Commitments and asks in 2024 report that we'll discuss today.

- Outlining updates to job search requirements.
- Understanding data related to job search activities and the intersections.

This year's report is qualitative and quantitative benchmarking for future analysis and monitoring.

Qualitative narrative



Report will include a timeline of changes 2021 – current.

- Date/Change/Reason(s)/Impact.
 - Ex: July 2021 – Adopted new flexibilities – Legislation permanently codified – More modern/meaningful and applicable job search and less work search issues being set.
 - Ex: April 2024 – Reactivated Job Search Review program – Strengthen program integrity and meet federal requirements – Staff can intervene to support claimants.
- Hope to include high level summary of changes during pandemic.

Anecdotal experience and impacts (staff and claimants).

Future: literature review.

Intro quantitative metrics



Foundation setting for continuing to collect and report on:

- Current state: observational.
- Future state: relational.

Multiple complex variables to account for.

State level policy, state level data.

We pulled data with a desire to understand:

- Differences in claim denial rates among UI claimants.
- How those differences may show up within different claimant populations.
- Any significant differences between pre- and post- work search policy change in 2021.

The quantitative metrics



- Improper payment rates and claimant characteristics.
- Work search requirement related
 - Average length of claim.
 - Exhaustion rate.
 - Age.
 - Education.
 - Occupation or industry.
 - Preferred language English.
- Reciprocity rate (*not work search related; it would be general population*).
- Denial rate (*not work search related; it would be general population*).

Sample quantitative artifacts

Nicole Walker, UI Quality Assurance Manager and
Alex Wolter, UI Data Performance Manager

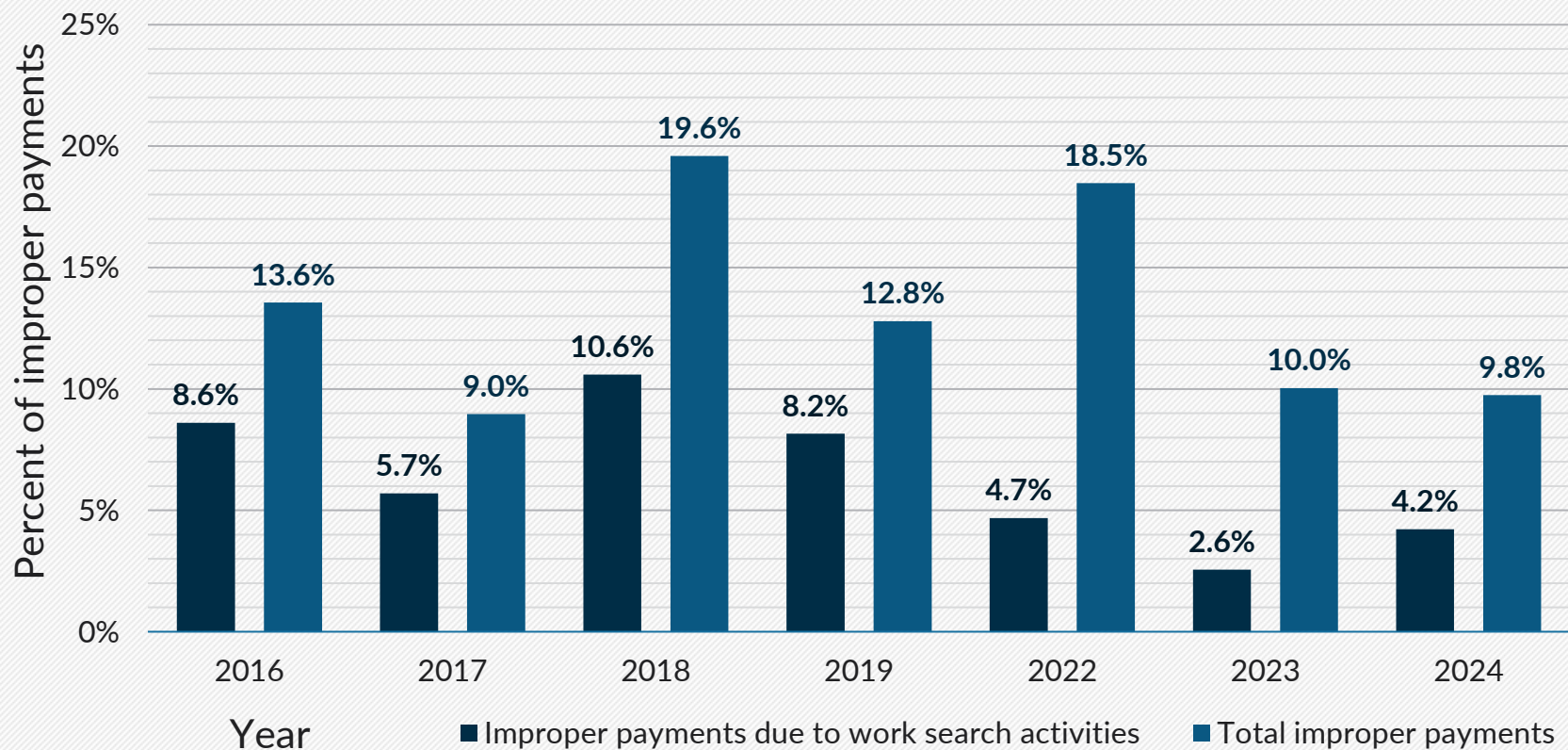


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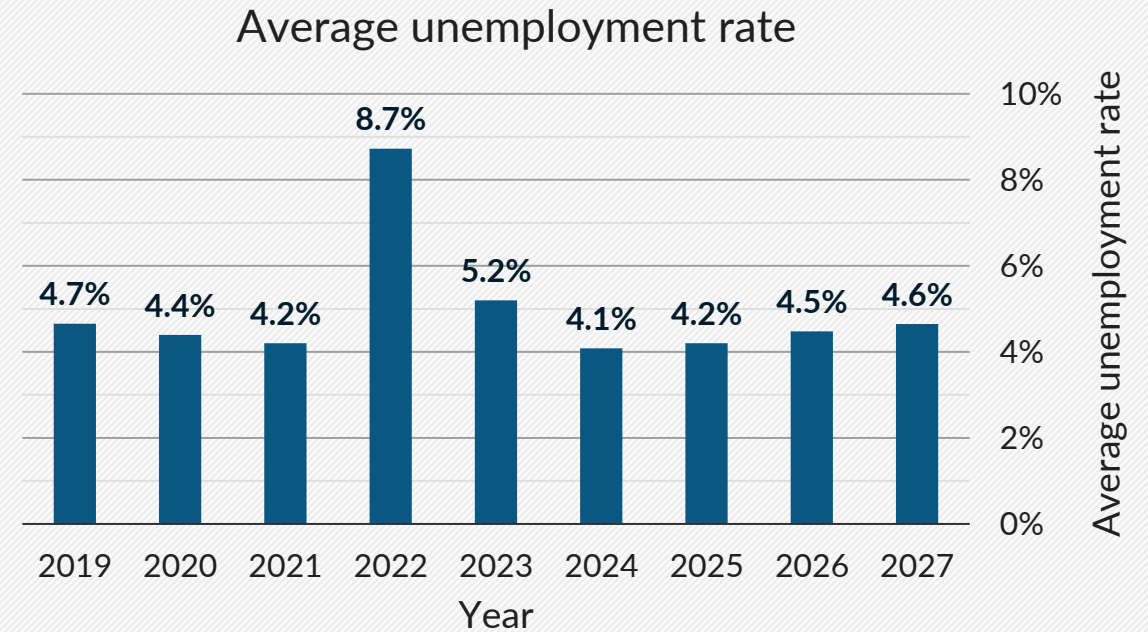
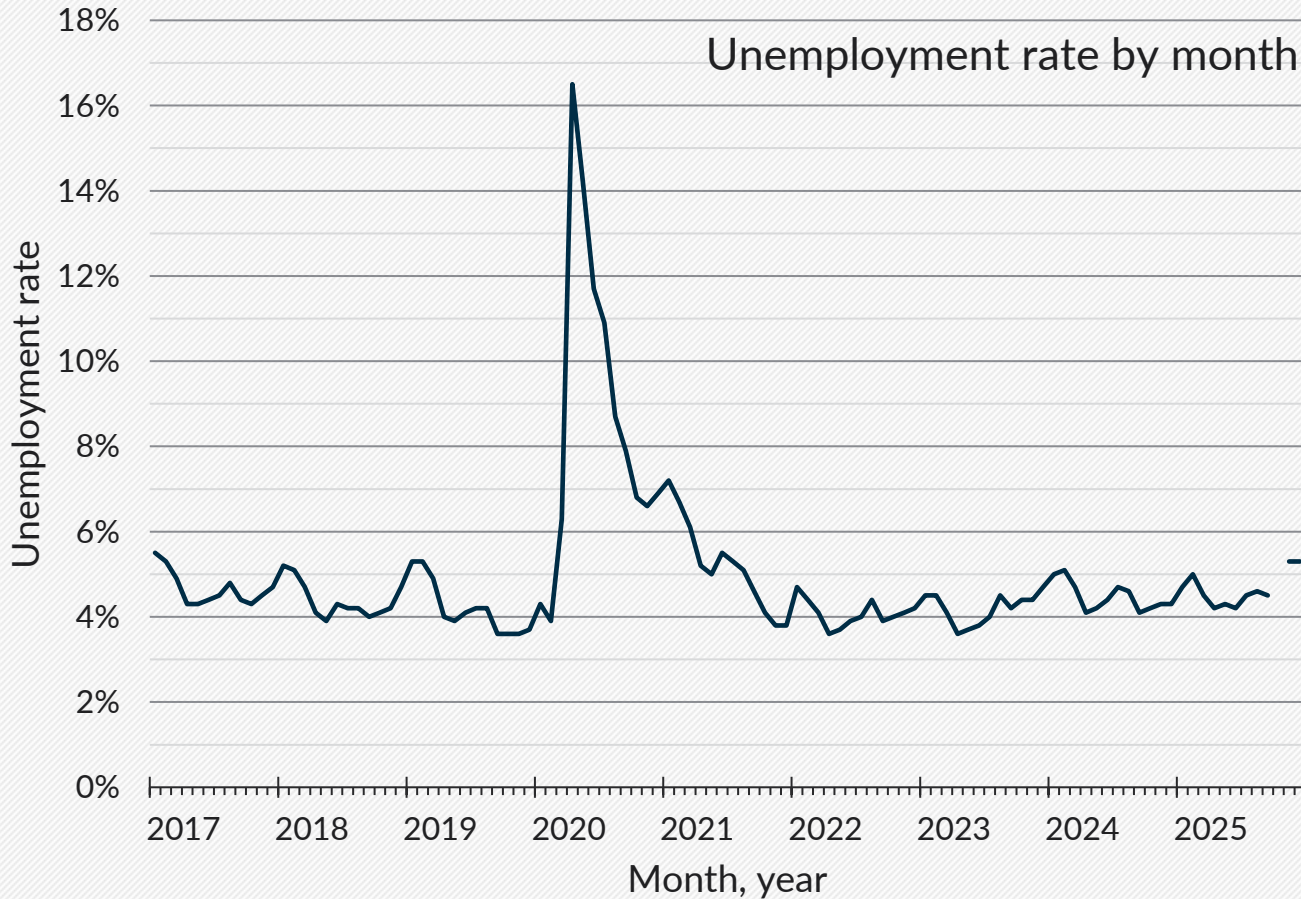
Improper payments update



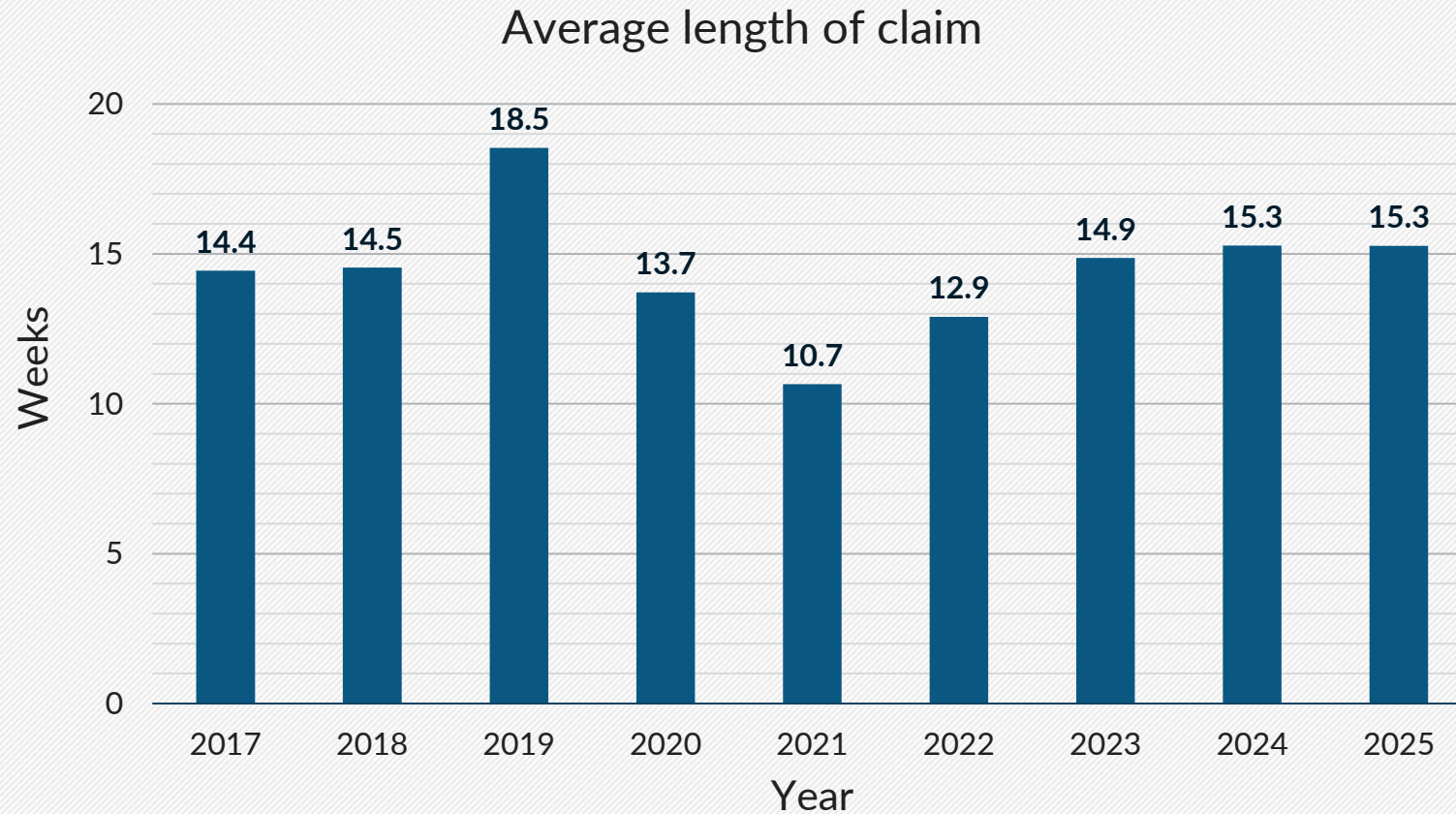
Improper payments due to work search errors



Unemployment rate



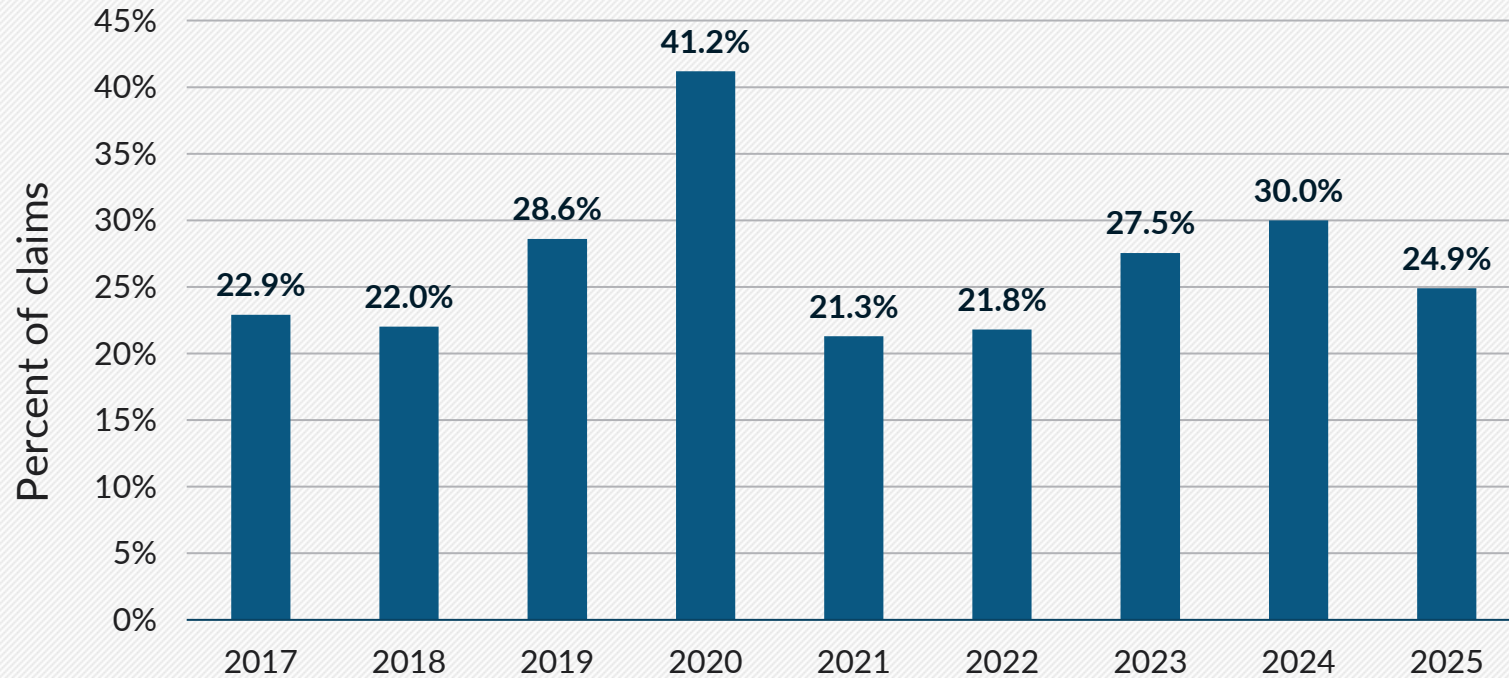
Average length of claim - claimants with work search requirement



Percent of claims exhausted - claimants with work search requirement



Percent of claims exhausted

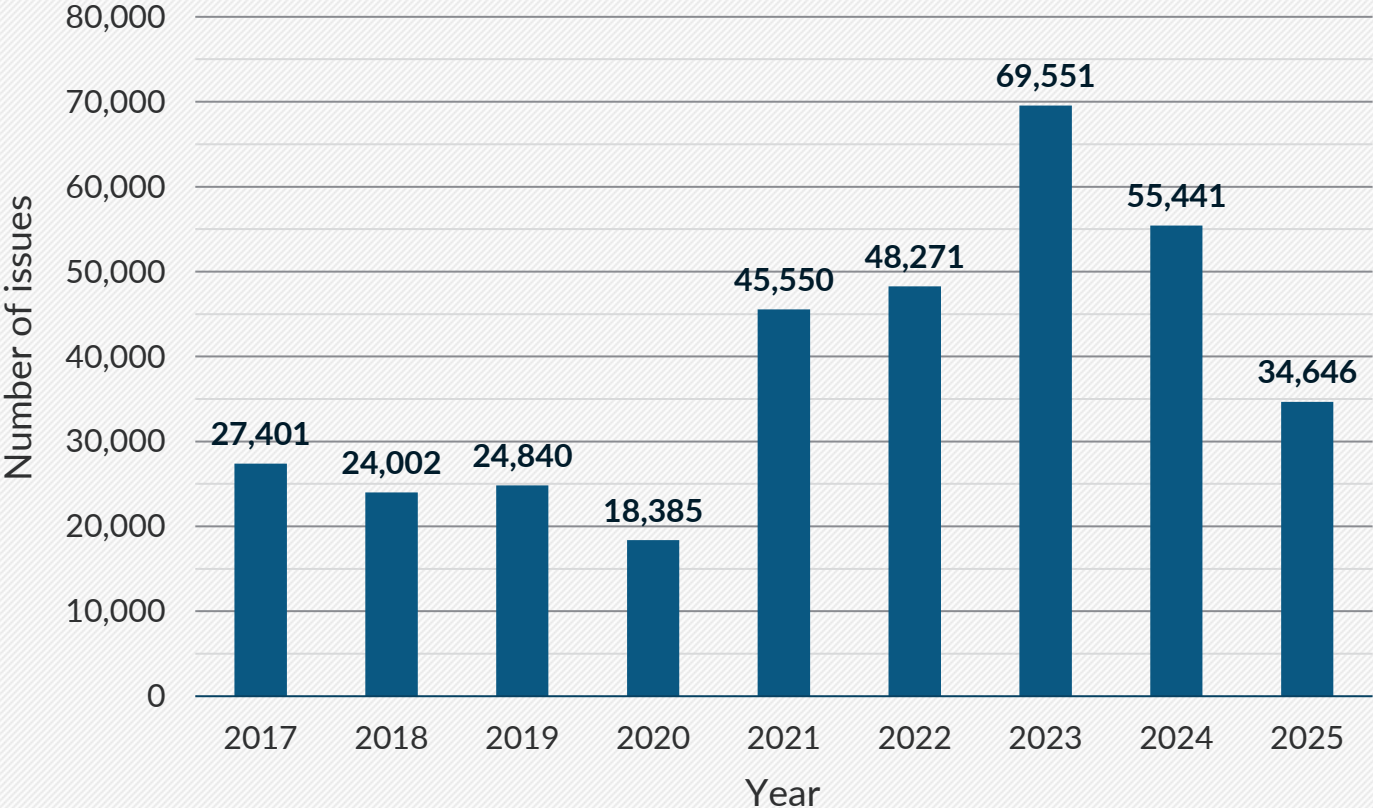


Note: 2025 exhaustion percentage is not yet complete.

Number of work search issues



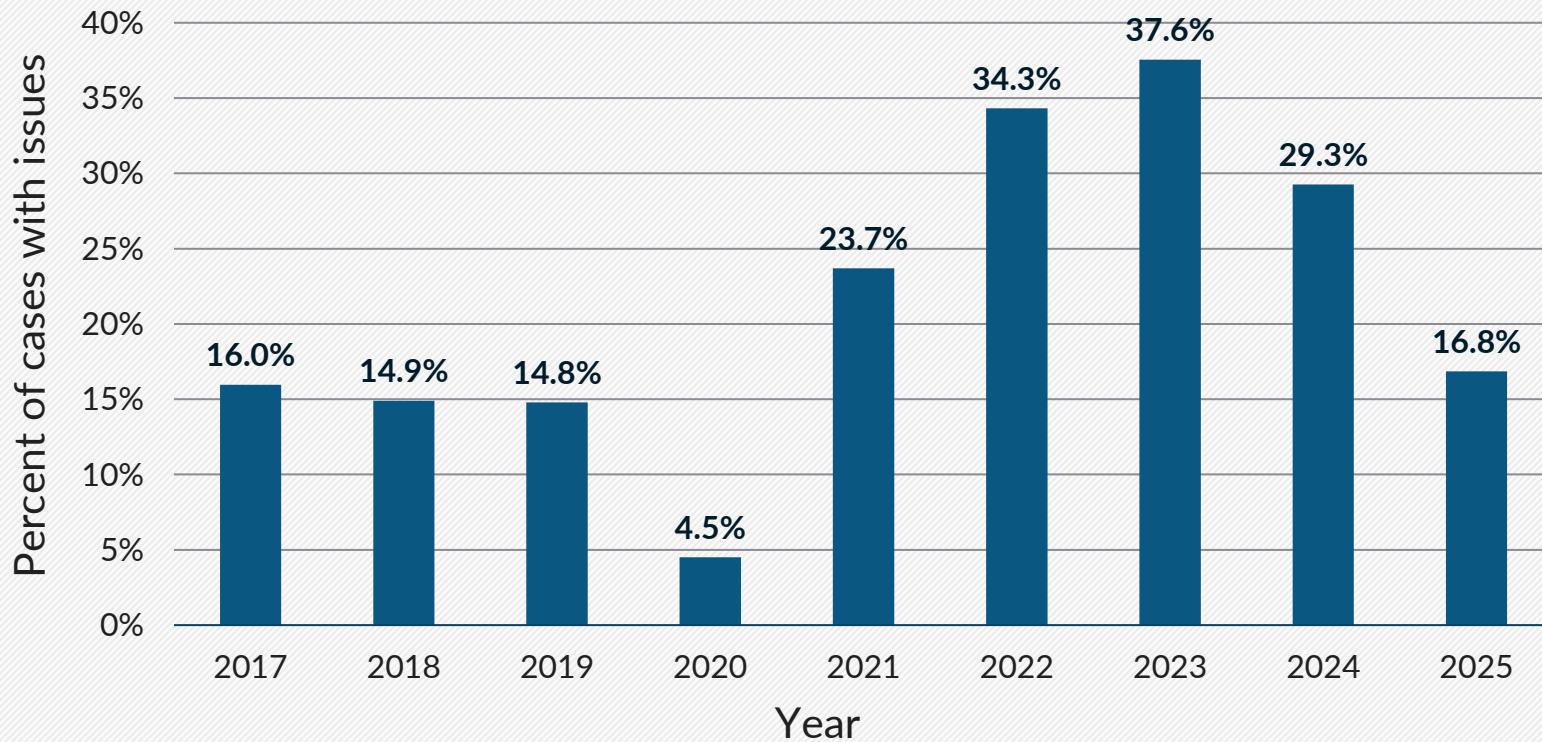
Number of work search issues



Percentage of work search issues



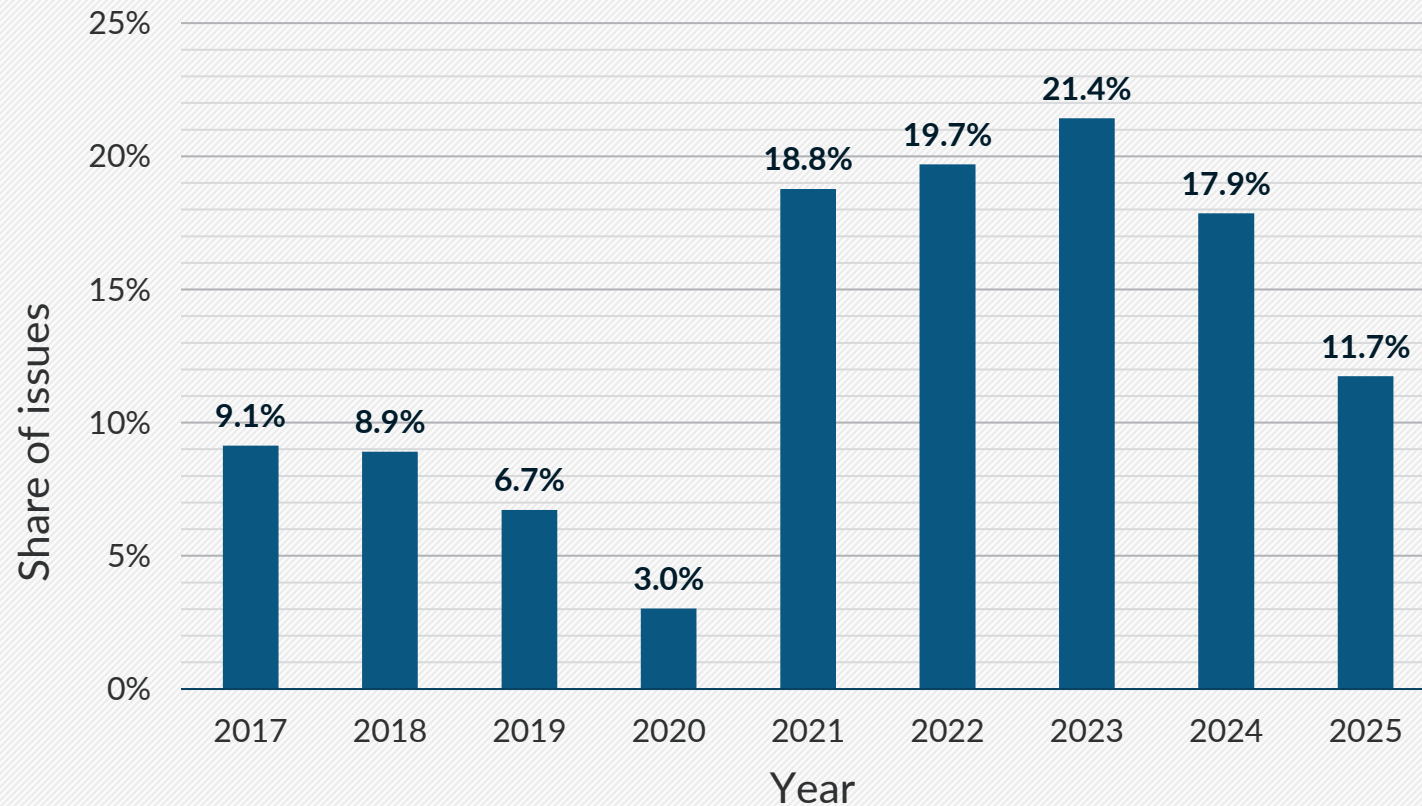
Work search issues divided by the number of claims per year



Share of issues that are work search related



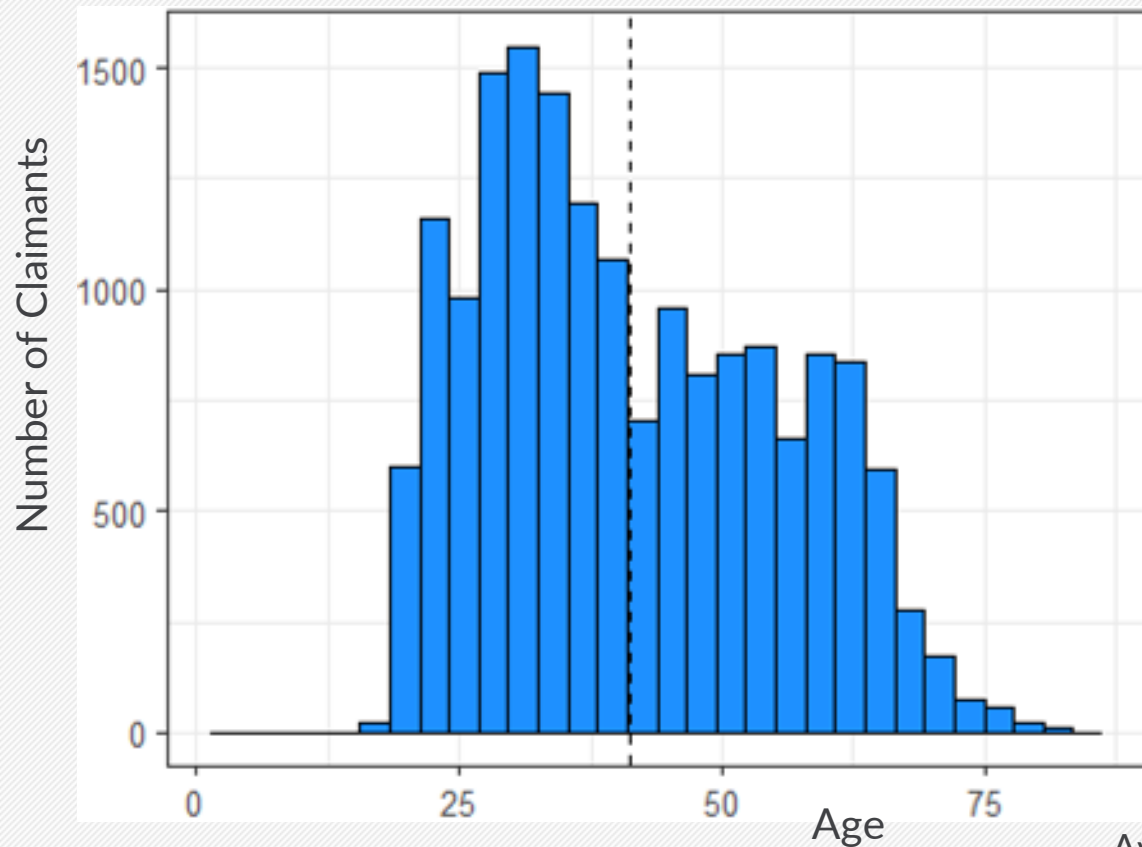
Share of issues that are work search issues



Demographic example – 2025 work search issues by age



Work search issues – claimant age



Average = 41.35

Discussion / Q&A



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Thanks for attending

Next UIAC meeting: June 24, 2026



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Equal opportunity statement



The Employment Security Department is an equal opportunity employer/ program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. We provide free help in many languages. People who need hearing or speech help can dial 711 for the Washington Relay.