

# UI Issues Program

## with

### Invited Speakers

**June 26, 2024**

#### **UI 101 Basics**

10:00 – 11:30 am

**Julie Squire**, Vice President of Policy and General Counsel, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)

**David Harrod**, ADP Alliance Relationship Manager

This session is designed to review the basics with respect to how Unemployment Insurance is funded through federal and state taxes and the fundamentals of administration. It is intended to provide information for individuals who are new to responsibilities related to unemployment insurance and provide a refresher for UI professionals.

#### **Welcome**

1:00 – 1:15 pm

**Alisha Benson**, Chief Executive Officer, Greater Spokane Inc.

#### **National Unemployment Insurance Program Update**

1:15 – 2:15 pm

**Jim Garner**, Administrator, Office of Unemployment Insurance, Employment and Training Administration, US Department of Labor

In this session, the USDOL Office of Unemployment Insurance will provide an update on the primary performance metrics for Unemployment Insurance and the budget proposal and administrative plans for the US Department of Labor concerning unemployment insurance.

#### **National Unemployment Insurance Legislative Update**

2:30 – 3:30 pm.

**Doug Holmes**, President, UWC – Strategic Services on Unemployment & Workers' Compensation.

**Brad Thomas**, Professional Staff, Committee on Ways and Means, US House of Representatives

**Stephanie Ferguson**, Director, Global Employment Policy & Special Initiatives, US Chamber of Commerce

This panel will review current federal legislation that is pending in the US House and Senate and the prospects for enactment of legislation related to Unemployment Insurance in 2024 and 2025.

### **Review of the Economy and Impact on Unemployment**

3:40 – 4:40 pm

**Nicolas Petrosky-Nadeau**, Vice President, Macroeconomic Research, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco

The presenter will provide an outlook on the economy, reviewing current and future macroeconomic conditions and how Fed actions potentially affect unemployment.

### **Roundtable Discussion on UI Law and Policy Issues**

4:40 – 5:40 pm

**Doug Holmes**, President, UWC – Strategic Services on Unemployment & Workers' Compensation

**Stephanie Ferguson**, Director, Global Employment Policy & Special Initiatives, US Chamber of Commerce

**Tony Fiore**, Of Counsel, Kegler Brown Hill + Ritter

**Julie Squire**, Vice President of Policy and General Counsel, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)

The general session will convene as a roundtable discussion of the political climate nationally and state by state and how it impacts the development of improvements to administration and solutions to problems. Topics table by table will include Integrity issues, systems issues, RESEA and return to work coordination.

**Reception** 6:00 – 8:00 pm

**June 27, 2024**

**Improving UI Through Collaboration**

8:30 – 9:30 am

**Doug Holmes** (UWC) Moderator

**Anne Paxton**, Attorney & Policy Director, Unemployment Law Project

**Bob Battles**, General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs

Employment Law, Association of Washington Business

**Jennifer Richards**, Director, Unemployment Insurance Customer Support Division, Washington ESD

**Joy Adams**, Director, Employment System Policy & Integrity Division, Washington ESD

**Wayne Rottger**, Product Intelligence Manager, Experian Employer Services

Representatives of business, organized labor and the Washington ESD will discuss the challenges of administration and policy related to unemployment insurance and how collaboration of the primary stakeholders can be effective in providing solutions.

**UI Trust Fund Solvency – Are you Prepared?**

8:30 – 9:30 am

**Kevin Stapleton**, Division Chief, Fiscal and Actuarial Services, Office of Unemployment Insurance, Employment and Training Administration, US Department of Labor

Kevin Stapleton will review the status of federal and state unemployment insurance trust funds after the pandemic, assess the health of state UI trust funds and provide guidance in preparing for the next recession.

**Labor Disputes and Unemployment Eligibility**

9:40 – 10:40 am

**Rob Moutrie**, Senior Policy Advocate, California Chamber of Commerce

**Paul Sonn**, State Policy Program Director, National Employment Law Project (NELP)

**Bob Battles**, General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs  
Employment Law, Association of Washington Business

In 2023 many collective bargaining agreements were negotiated in the entertainment and automobile industries and resulted in extended labor disputes and work stoppages. The panel will discuss the impact of these disputes on UI benefit eligibility, program administration, and the labor market.

### **UI Transformation - SIDES Modules Update, Benefit Charges, Audit Issues and Solutions Roundtable**

9:40 – 10:40 am

**Claire McKenna**, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Unemployment Modernization, US Department of Labor

**Christina Corbett**, State Information Data Exchange Services (SIDES) Operations Manager, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)

**Meredith Cole**, Supervisor, UI Tax & Wage Employer Services, Washington State Employment Security Department

**Rich Siegel**, President, Association of Unemployment Tax Organizations

As states and employers return to normal benefit charging and auditing procedures there remain system issues to be resolved to assure proper administration and to prepare for the next recession. The panel will discuss the expanded use of SIDES and coordination between states and business representatives.

### **State of Washington Ride Share Program and Gig Worker Safety Nets**

10:45 – 11:45 am

**Joy Adams**, Director, Employment System Policy & Integrity Division, Washington State Employment Security Department

**Allison Ford**, Public Policy Manager, Uber

Federal and state legislation has been proposed and enacted to provide safety net benefits for workers who may not be “employees,” may be undocumented workers, and may not be eligible for regular unemployment compensation. The panel will review the most recent legislation and policy development and particularly the Rides program developed in the state of Washington.

## **Workshare/Short Time Compensation Updates**

10:45 – 11:45 am

**Jim Garner**, Administrator, Office of Unemployment Insurance, US Department of Labor

**Sam Virgil**, UI Strategic Initiatives Manager, Washington State Employment Security Department

**Cheryl Brown**, Program Specialist, UI Customer Support Divisions, Washington State Employment Security Department.

**Bob Battles**, General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs Employment Law, Association of Washington Business

**Amy Evans**, Global Benefits & HR Operations, Unemployment Insurance, The Boeing Company

Beginning in the 1970s some states enacted workshare or short time compensation (STC) programs to provide authority to pay pro rata unemployment compensation to employees who reduced the number of hours of work but continued to be employed. Temporary federal authorization for these programs ended, prompting a need for federal authorization that was enacted in 2012. Such programs are designed to permit employers to retain workers and avoid layoffs that would otherwise be triggered during economic downturns. Representatives from US DOL, state workforce agencies and employers will discuss these programs.

## **Recognition Awards Luncheon**

12 Noon – 2 pm

## **Roll Call of Recent State Law Changes, New UI Legislation, Lawsuits And Rethinking Return to Work**

2:15 – 3:30 pm

**Jim Garner**, Administrator, Office of Unemployment Insurance, US Department of Labor

**Julie Squire**, Vice President of Policy and General Counsel, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)

**Stephanie Ferguson**, Director, Global Employment Policy & Special Initiatives, US Chamber of Commerce

Please join our discussion on recent and potential legislation impacting unemployment insurance. Topics will include the President's proposed FY25 budget, policy issues identified by NASWA and the US Chamber of

Commerce, and an opportunity for you to share information about new UI legislation.

**Expanding Quarterly Wage Report Requirements – Policy and Administrative Issues**

3:45 – 5:00 pm

**Alison Jones**, Director, Government Affairs, Compliance, ADP

**State Workforce Agency Rep**

**Dr. Gina Wolf**, Wolf Chiropractic Clinic

**Jason Tyszko**, Senior Vice President, US Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Legislation has been proposed at the federal and state level to add occupation information and other data elements to be reported by employers. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation has also developed a voluntary, public-private, standards-based approach for how employers share information about jobs and employment in ways that can reduce reporting burden while improving workforce data. The panel will review legislation and the various proposals and discuss the impact on employers and state workforce agencies of administrative burden and the value of information in connecting education with jobs in the labor market.

**5:30 – 8:00 pm Reception**

**Friday, June 28, 2024**

**Identity Theft, UI Benefit Overpayment and Recovery**

8:30 – 9:45 am

**Tim Kolar**, State Office Administrator, Unemployment Insurance Agency, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity

**Mark Mayfield**, Senior Software Implementation Manager, Catalis

**Chris Silvern**, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Branch of Training & Special Programs, US Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General (US DOL-OIG)

In light of the dramatic increase in fraud and UI benefit overpayments, recovery of overpayments has become a priority for legislation and UI administration. The panel will discuss reports reviewing the scale of fraud and overpayments and methods that have been developed for states and federal agencies to avoid fraud, increase benefit overpayment recovery, and prosecute fraud.

**UI Appeals and Mock Hearing**

8:30 – 9:45 am

**James Weant**, Senior Manager, UI Program Relationship, Equifax

**Scott Keim**, Deputy Attorney General, Idaho Attorney General's Office

**Jennifer Pierce**, Attorney and Director of Hearings and Appeals, Michigan Health and Hospital Association, Service Corporation

**Kevin Britt**, Equifax Senior Manager, Claims Services

**Wayne Rottger**, Vice President, UI Tax Services, Experian Employer Services

Unemployment benefit appeals include close examination of the terms and conditions of employment and the development of facts with respect to the justification for employment termination and/or whether an individual may have had good cause to quit work. The panel will conduct a mock hearing and review the key points to address in these administrative hearings.

**UI Tax Filing and Payments – Interface Challenges for 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Providers**

10:00 am – 10:45 am

**Alison Jones**, Director, Government Affairs, Compliance, ADP

Proper administration of Unemployment Insurance requires close coordination between state workforce agencies and employer 3rd party representatives that provide UI quarterly reports and respond to requests with respect to the reason for unemployment and unemployment tax audits.

### **Integrity Best Practices**

10:45 – 11:45 am

**Jim Van Erden**, Senior Policy Advisor, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)

**Andrew Kearney**, Special Agent on Unemployment Insurance Fraud, US Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General (US DOL OIG)

The Integrity of the Unemployment Insurance system has been called into question in light of the significant increase in fraud and overpayments in the state based system. Congress has acted to increase administrative funding available to states to assist in updating old systems that may be vulnerable to fraudsters and to address system capacity and verification of the identity of applicants for unemployment insurance. The panel will provide an update on the NASWA Integrity Center, efforts to reduce fraud in the system, and the status of criminal prosecutions.