Helping the unemployed get back to work quickly

Background

RESEA programming offers an array of services, including in-person interviews, to both review claimants’ eligibility for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits and accelerate their return to employment.

Claimants report to a career center and receive a variety of assistance including:

- Personal engagement with UI staff to examine their state’s labor market and receive additional career information addressing specific needs
- Development of an individual reemployment plan
- Registration with the state’s job bank
- Enrollment in employment services (funded through the Wagner-Peyser Act), such as job search
assistance, employability assessments, and job matching services
- Provision of at least one additional career service (financial literacy services, information about supportive services or about financial aid, assistance with resume writing or interviewing, etc.).

**How States Use Reemployment Services**

During the summer of 2018, NASWA reached out to its members to collect information on reemployment practices across the country and received a response from 44 states.

95% of these states are now utilizing RESEA as a key reemployment strategy.

36% are focusing solely on those claimants most likely to exhaust benefits.

59% are utilizing the flexibility in RESEA, particularly as economic conditions change, to prioritize additional populations including:

- Assisting all claimants
- Claimants least likely to exhaust/fewest barriers to re-employment
- Claimants based on their previous work experience to connect with positions in growing or in-demand industries
- Claimants from occupations in decline
- Claimants with high school diploma/GED or less in job markets where post-secondary skills or experience are in demand
- Returning veteran (UCX) claimants, then most likely to exhaust
- Veterans who qualify for priority of service (beyond UCX claimants)

**Initial results**

This program and earlier related initiatives have been highly successful. In fact, recent studies add to evidence accumulated over the past twenty-five years that intervening early with these approaches shortens UI durations, gets claimants back to work more quickly, reduces long-term unemployment, improves UI trust fund solvency, and yields a high return on investment to the government.

The states continue to support the use of RESEA programs, even in a strong economy, and appreciate the flexibility to design their programs by targeting varying populations and strategies.