



Unemployment Insurance (UI) Benefit Operations Self-Assessment Tool: *Adjudications and Benefits Timeliness and Quality Reviews (BTQ)*

REVIEW PERIOD: **Begins**

Ends

Unless otherwise noted, all questions are applicable to the review period.

Enter your state's Nonmonetary Determination timeliness and quality scores for each quarter of the review period.

Link to UI PERFORMS ALPs/Performance Criteria: [Acceptable Level of Performance](#)

1. Nonmonetary Determination Time Lapse
(Acceptable Level of Performance = 80%)

1st Quarter: % 2nd Quarter: % 3rd Quarter: % 4th Quarter: %

2. Nonmonetary Determination Quality – Separations
(Acceptable Level of Performance = 75%)

1st Quarter: % 2nd Quarter: % 3rd Quarter: % 4th Quarter: %

3. Nonmonetary Determination Quality – Non-Separations
(Acceptable Level of Performance = 75%)

1st Quarter: % 2nd Quarter: % 3rd Quarter: % 4th Quarter: %

SECTION 1: Procedures, Policies, and Confidentiality

Resources may include manuals, handbooks, desk aids, computer help screens, training guides, organized collections of procedures or policies, or other readily accessible instructions that can help staff do their work correctly, including [ETA Handbook No. 301](#). Instructions will normally include general information such as compilations of relevant laws and regulations, as well as detailed instructions for carrying out individual jobs in the agency. Reviewers may need to look in many places to examine all relevant instructions.

1. Does the state have written policies and procedures for adjudicating unemployment insurance claimant eligibility?
 - 1a. If yes, were the policies and procedures related to adjudication updated or modified during the review period?

2. Does the state have written policies and procedures specifically for conducting fact finding related to determining an unemployment insurance claimant's eligibility?
 - 2a. If yes, were the policies and procedures related to fact-finding updated or modified during the review period?

3. How are policies and procedures for fact-finding and adjudicating issues made available to staff?
(check all that apply)
 - Online
 - Hard-copy handbook
 - Training materials
 - Other *(explain)*

3a. Are all formats consistent and up-to-date?

3b. What practices does the state utilize to ensure all formats are consistent and up-to-date?

4. Were there any law changes during the review period that affected the state's adjudications policies and procedures?

4a. If yes, what law changes did the state implement, when were they implemented, and what was the effect on the state's adjudications policies and procedures?

4b. If yes, have the state's policies, procedures, and training materials been updated to reflect these changes?

4c. If no (to question 4b), explain

5. Were there any organizational changes during the review period that affected the state’s adjudications policies and procedures?

5a. If yes, what organizational changes did the state implement, when were these changes implemented, and what was the effect on the state’s adjudications policies and procedures?

5b. If yes, have the state’s policies, procedures, and training materials been updated to reflect these changes?

5c. If no (to question 5b), explain

6. Were there any automation or technology upgrades or releases during the review period that affected the state’s adjudications policies and procedures?

6a. If yes, what automation or technology upgrades did the state make?

6b. If yes, when were the technology upgrades made and what was the effect of the change?

6c. If yes, have the state's policies, procedures, and training materials been updated to reflect these changes?

6d. If no (to question 6c), explain

7. Does the state utilize any automation in its fact-finding processes?

7a. If yes, what automated fact-finding processes are available to collect claimant information without staff intervention?

7b. What automated fact-finding processes are available to collect employer information without staff intervention?

8. Do the state's policies and procedures for fact-finding include guidance regarding rebuttal opportunity for a claimant or employer when there is a controversy in the information provided?

8a. If yes, are the automated processes described above available for the rebuttal process?

8b. If the state uses other automated processes to obtain rebuttals, describe.

9. Provide the following adjudications workload data during the review period for the following categories:

Separation

Issues Created:

Issues Adjudicated:

Non-Separation

Issues Created:

Issues Adjudicated:

- 10.** Do the state’s policies and procedures provide guidance for investigating and adjudicating the following separation issues? *(check all that apply)*

Voluntary Quit
Discharge for Misconduct
Gross Misconduct
Leave of Absence
Other *(explain)*

- 11.** Do the state’s policies and procedures provide guidance for investigating and adjudicating the following non-separation issues? *(check all that apply)*

Able and Available
Alien worker, authorization for employment
Athlete – reasonable assurance – between seasons
Claim timeliness – backdating of initial claims and untimely filed continued claims
Disqualifying/deductible income – vacation pay, holiday pay, pension, severance pay, bonus or other special payments
Failure to participate in the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program
Failure to participate in Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services
Fraud Administrative Penalty
Job Service/Employment Service Registration
Multi-claimant (e.g., Labor Dispute)
Refusal of suitable work
Removal of Disqualification, when a controversy exists
Reporting requirements
Educational Institution Employee (reasonable assurance, between or within terms)
School/approved training
Seasonality – wages earned during specified periods of time are not useable
Unemployment Status – work or remuneration sufficient to be “not unemployed”
Work search requirements

12. If an employer submits potentially disqualifying information after the last day for providing a timely response, how is this matter handled?

13. Do the state’s policies and procedures require written determinations that contain the following information? *(check all that apply)*

The reason for the disqualification or ineligibility

Applicable requalification requirements

An explanation of the appeal rights and timeframe for filing a timely appeal

14. Do the state’s policies and procedures define the detection date of an issue in accordance with [ETA Handbook No. 301](#)?

14a. Is the issue detection date input into the system manually or is it created automatically?

Automatic Manual

14b. If automatic, is the system following the proper policies and procedures to define the detection date?

15. Do the state’s policies and procedures define the standard for a “reasonable attempt” to obtain information by phone deemed to be critical to the outcome of a determination to be forty-eight (48) hours from the time of the request?

16. Do the state’s policies and procedures correctly define a determination for reporting purposes using the following criteria in accordance with [ETA Handbook No. 401](#)? *(check all that apply)*

A decision which has the potential to affect the claimant’s past, present, or future benefit rights and for which a determination of eligibility was made

Determinations made because of misrepresentation, fraud, and/or overpayments

A claimant’s separation for a reason “other than lack of work” that results in a nonmonetary determination

Question 16 check boxes continue on next page

If controversy exists about whether the claimant satisfies the conditions of an indefinite disqualification (i.e., until re-employed for a specific period or has earned a specific sum of money) that results in a nonmonetary determination
Investigation of a claimant's explanation for late reporting or failure to report as directed that results in a nonmonetary determination

- 17.** Are the following determinations defined as being not reportable in accordance with [ETA Handbook No. 401](#)? (check all that apply)

Determination, relative to issues, made solely for deciding whether changes should be made to an employer's experience-rating account

Routine exploration of fact or questioning claimants associated with the claims taking process, except under circumstances of controversy

Claimant's acceptance of the claims taker's conclusion that the week's earnings require a reduction in the benefit amount for that week

Claimant's acceptance of benefits for only a portion of a week claimed, when the state law provides for reduced benefits in cases where the claimant was ill or otherwise unavailable for work during part of the week

A determination on whether or not a stated period of time elapsed since a disqualifying act, satisfying the disqualification, which is part of the function of taking claims

A determination on whether or not the claimant meets the minimum wage and employment qualifying requirement to establish a benefit year

Determinations on the existence of and/or number of dependents

A determination on whether the claimant meets state requirements for establishing a subsequent benefit year (e.g., 30 days of bona fide work since exhausting a benefit series)

- 18.** Does the state have policies and procedures for adjudicating issues for Extended Benefits claims?

18a. If yes, when were the policies and procedures last updated?

- 19.** Does the state have policies and procedures for adjudicating claims under any temporary Federal additional or extended benefit program in effect during the review period?

19a. If yes, when were the policies and procedures last updated?

- 20.** Does the state have procedures to inform claimants that confidential information provided for the unemployment compensation claim may be requested and utilized for other governmental purposes, including verification of eligibility under other governmental programs, in accordance with [20 CFR 603.11](#)?

20a. If yes, how and when is this information provided to the claimant?

21. Does the state have procedures to inform employers that wage information and other confidential information provided relating to an unemployment compensation claim may be requested and utilized for other governmental purposes, including verification of an individual's eligibility for other governmental programs in accordance with [20 CFR 603.11](#)?

21a. If yes, how and when is this information provided to employers?

SECTION 1: Comments

Document any issues that were identified when completing this section. This comment section may also be used to provide additional information relating to any specific question(s) in this section.

SECTION 2: Training

Managers/employees should possess and maintain a level of expertise that enables them to accomplish their assigned duties. Training systems should be sufficient to ensure that personnel understand and perform their duties properly. When reviewing training systems, reviewers must look for formal training procedures (e.g., the training is conducted using an established schedule and using set guidelines to make judgments about the quality of work being produced). There should be procedures for identifying general and specific training needs and for delivering training as needed.

1. Does the state have a dedicated training staff or unit to deliver training on:

Adjudications:

Benefits Timeliness and Quality (BTQ):

- 1a. Have all staff conducting adjudications completed a defined training program for adjudicators?
- 1b. Have all staff that conduct BTQ reviews completed the U.S. Department of Labor's training course for BTQ reviewers prior to conducting reviews?

2. Does the state utilize the U.S. Department of Labor's online training modules for:

Adjudications:

Benefits Timeliness and Quality (BTQ):

3. Does the state have a training curriculum for fact-finding?

4. Does the state have a formal training plan for new adjudication staff?

- 4a. If yes, what is the total time required for the formal training?

Less than one week One to two weeks More than two weeks

Total training time (in hours):

5. Does the state have a "refresher" training plan to provide continuing training to adjudication staff?

5a. If yes, how often is the continuing training conducted?

Monthly Quarterly Annually On an as-needed basis
Other (*explain*)

N/A

6. How does the state deliver staff training for adjudications? (*check all that apply*)

Classroom setting
On-the-job training
Self-guided online course
One-on-one training
U.S. Department of Labor's online training
Other (*explain*)

6a. How does the state deliver staff training for BTQ? (*check all that apply*)

Classroom setting
On-the-job training
Self-guided online course
One-on-one training
Other (*explain*)

- 7.** Does the state’s adjudications training cover the detection date of a nonmonetary issue as defined in [ETA Handbook No. 301](#)?

- 8.** Does the state cross-train certain non-adjudication staff to use as backups to the adjudications processes?
 - 8a.** If yes, in what types of functions do these staff members participate and are they in compliance with merit staffing requirements based on the services they perform?

- 9.** Describe any technology or operational changes that were made during the review period that affected adjudications or BTQ review processes.
 - 9a.** Were all affected staff trained on these technology or operational changes prior to implementation of the changes?

 - 9b.** If no, explain

10. Describe any new laws, program implementations, policy or procedural changes that occurred during the review period that affected adjudications processes.

10a. Were all affected staff trained on the new laws, program implementations, and policy and procedural changes prior to implementation of the changes?

10b. If no, explain

11. Is there a systematic method to obtain feedback from adjudications staff regarding the effectiveness of the training given?

11a. If yes, how is feedback obtained from participants?

12. Is there a means to obtain feedback from management staff on the effectiveness of the training, based upon staff performance following training?

12a. If yes, how is feedback obtained from management staff?

13. What means are used by the state to determine training topics and content? (*check all that apply*)

- Call Center Performance
- Benefits Timeliness and Quality review results
- Benefit Accuracy Measurement results
- Claimant feedback/complaints
- Detected error monitoring
- U.S. Department of Labor guidance
- State law/policy changes
- Appeal/court decisions
- Supervisor feedback/input
- Other (*explain*)

14. If BAM and/or BPC staff is responsible for adjudicating issues, are they provided training to ensure consistency of knowledge and policy application?

15. Is there a standard process for adjudications staff to access appropriate program subject matter experts or other resources, as needed, to answer questions regarding procedures, policies, laws and regulations?

SECTION 2: Comments

Document any issues that were identified when completing this section. This comment section may also be used to provide additional information relating to any specific question(s) in this section.

SECTION 3: Workload Analysis / Management Controls

The state's ability to manage adjudications workloads, particularly through periods of unforeseen spikes in workload, is analyzed. Methods used to mitigate backlogs, when they occur, substantially affect the state's ability to provide timely, quality adjudications. Reviewers will address process-improvement initiatives aimed at minimizing adjudications backlogs. Qualified staff must be available to conduct periodic BTQ reviews.

1. Does the state have a systematic method for tracking workload backlogs of adjudications?
 - 1a. If yes, is the data collection automated?
 - 1b. If yes, are the backlogs identified by category? (e.g., separations, non-separations, etc.)
2. If the state tracks adjudication backlogs, how often are these reports generated?

Real-time	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	As needed	N/A
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3. Does the state's system generate reports on timeliness of adjudications based upon the issue detection date?
4. What practices does the state use to handle a sudden increase in the volume of adjudications? *(check all that apply)*
 - Hire additional temporary staff
 - Assign qualified staff from different units
 - Overtime
 - Adjusted work schedules, including extended and weekend hours
 - Temporary adjustments to fact-finding and adjudications methods *(explain)*

Question 4 check boxes continue on next page

Other (*explain*)

5. What practices does the state use to handle workload backlogs in adjudications? (*check all that apply*)
- Hire additional temporary staff
 - Assign qualified staff from different units
 - Overtime
 - Adjusted work schedules, including extended and weekend hours
 - Temporary adjustments to fact-finding and adjudications methods (*explain*)

Other (*explain*)

6. Did the state experience non-seasonal backlogs in adjudications during the review period?

6a. If yes, what was the cause of the adjudications backlogs? *(check all that apply)*

Operational issues related to facilities, budget or staffing *(explain)*

Information Technology hardware or software issues *(explain)*

Economic downturn, localized or statewide *(explain)*

Law or policy changes *(explain)*

Question 6a check boxes continue on next page

Other (*explain*)

7. Does the state monitor adjudications workloads to identify potential problem areas?

7a. If yes, is this monitoring process automated or manual?

Automated Manual

7b. At what unit of operation is the state's reporting system capable of providing performance data?
(*check all that apply*)

Statewide

Office

Adjudicator

Other (*explain*)

8. During the review period, did the state conduct any business process analysis efforts to identify issues and recommend improvements of fact-finding and/or adjudications processes to increase efficiency?

8a. If yes, what changes have been made and what was the result of those changes?

8b. If yes, what (if any) changes were recommended but not made? (*explain why*)

9. What staff is responsible for conducting the fact-finding for adjudications? (*check all that apply*)

Adjudicators

Claims takers

Fact-finding specialists

Other (*explain*)

10. What staff is responsible for conducting BTQ reviews? (*check all that apply*)

Adjudicators

Claims takers

Fact-finding specialists

Management staff

Performance Management staff

Other (*explain*)

SECTION 3: Comments

Document any issues that were identified when completing this section. This comment section may also be used to provide additional information relating to any specific question(s) in this section.

SECTION 4: Performance Management

The state's practices for monitoring program performance and compliance with Federal and state law and regulations is examined. Preparation and monitoring of corrective action plans are necessary functions to further program performance improvements.

1. Was the state on a Corrective Action Plan(s) (CAP) or Narrative during the review period?

2. If yes, what performance areas required a CAP or Narrative?

CAP

Core Measures:

Nonmonetary Determination Time Lapse

Nonmonetary Determination Quality – Non-separations

Nonmonetary Determinations Quality – Separations

Narrative

Secretary's Standards:

Incorrect recording of issue detection date or determination date

3. If the state was required to submit CAP(s) during the review period, did the state meet their milestones for its CAP(s) during each quarter of the review period?

3a. If no, explain which milestones were not met and why.

4. If the state has submitted multi-year CAP(s), identify the areas covered by the multi-year CAP(s).

4a. What progress has the state made in addressing the issue(s) that resulted in the multi-year CAP?

5. What unit or office is responsible for monitoring the performance of the state's Adjudications operations?

5a. What methods are used to monitor the UI Adjudications operations to ensure the program is operated in accordance with Federal and state law and regulations?

6. Does the state monitor UI program activity and performance in addition to monitoring set out in Federal requirements?

6a. If yes, explain what areas are monitored and the methods used.

SECTION 4: Comments

Document any issues that were identified when completing this section. This comment section may also be used to provide additional information relating to any specific question(s) in this section.

SECTION 5: Information Technology (IT)

The state's IT projects relating to UI adjudications completed during the review period and unmet IT needs are addressed. The reviewer will assess the technology tools used to support adjudications and the IT department's delivery of programming and technical support to the UI Benefits Section.

- 1.** During the review period, were there any IT projects that impacted the state's adjudications system?
 - 1a.** If yes, what were the projects, are they completed or on-going? If on-going, what is the expected completion date for each?

- 2.** Have adjudication staff members been fully trained on any technology changes that have been implemented during the review period?

- 3.** During the review period, were there IT needs for the adjudications systems that were not met that affected program performance?
 - 3a.** If yes, describe what IT needs were not met, the reason they were not met, what effect it had on the program, and the state's plans to meet these needs, if any?

4. Does the state use the State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES) Web Services to exchange claim and separation information with employers and their representatives in support of the adjudication process?

4a. If no, explain.

5. Does the state use the SIDES E-Response to exchange claim and separation information with employers and their representatives in support of the adjudication process?

5a. If no, explain.

6. Does the state use a “Smart Scheduler” or some other tool for scheduling calls to employers or claimants for fact-finding interviews?

6a. If yes, what system does the state use and what are its features?

- 7.** What IT system(s) does the state use for fact-finding or adjudications that may be in addition to or that support direct telephone calls by staff? (*check all that apply*)

Internet systems

Interactive Voice Response (IVR)

Kiosks

Auto-dialer technology for outbound calls

Mainframe terminals

Online assistance for claims takers

Other (*explain*)

- 8.** Does the state have a designated SUN System Administrator that is responsible for maintaining the SUN computer system, used for BTQ and other reporting?

- 9.** Is the adjudications system operated on a single computer platform?

9a. If multiple platforms are in use, is there seamless integration between the systems being used?

- 10.** Describe the measures that the UI agency has in place to ensure that only the claimant or someone authorized by the claimant can access claim information online or via phone (e.g., passwords, codes, Personal Identification Number (PIN), etc.).

11. Do the state’s fact-finding systems integrate real-time with the UI Legacy or operating system?

11a. If not, what is the schedule for batch processing?

12. Does the state’s computer system allow for shifting adjudications between offices for load-balancing purposes?

13. Does the state utilize a “virtual hold” system that provides a caller the option to leave a message and set a callback when staff is available?

14. Does the state have any other noteworthy technologies that impact their adjudication process (e.g., digital recording, etc.)?

14a. If yes, explain.

SECTION 5: Comments

Document any issues that were identified when completing this section. This comment section may also be used to provide additional information relating to any specific question(s) in this section.

SECTION 6: Claimant / Employer Access & Communication

The state's methods for conducting fact-finding and issuing automated adjudications, if applicable, must comply with requirements set forth in Federal law. User-friendly, customer-facing systems and integrated operating systems provide the best customer experience and efficient operations. The state must have efficient procedures to conduct fact-finding, to handle incoming documentation submitted by mail and/or fax, to retrieve and store paper documents, and for staff to open/sort/distribute adjudications-related documents for processing.

1. What methods does the state use to collect fact-finding statements from claimants and employers?

(check all that apply)

- Internet
- In-person
- Telephone
- Mail
- E-Fax
- Other *(explain)*

2. How are forms submitted to the state when fact-finding is conducted using the following methods?

(check all that apply for each method used)

Internet:

Online Mail Email Fax E-Fax

Other *(explain)*

N/A

Question 2 continues on next page

Telephone:

Online Mail Email Fax E-Fax
Other (*explain*)

N/A

In-person:

In-person Online Mail Email Fax E-Fax
Other (*explain*)

N/A

- 3.** How are forms provided to claimants and employers to complete when using the following contact methods? (*check all that apply for each method used*)

Internet:

Downloadable forms
Online web form
Mailed
Other (*explain*)

Question 3 check boxes continue on next page

Other (*explain*)

N/A

Telephone:

Downloadable forms

Online web form

Mailed

Other (*explain*)

Other (*explain*)

N/A

In-person:

Online web form

Mailed

Handouts

Question 3 check boxes continue on next page

Other (*explain*)

Other (*explain*)

N/A

Mail:

Mailed

Other (*explain*)

Other (*explain*)

N/A

4. What types of assistance is available to assist claimants and/or employers with fact-finding and the adjudications processes for each method used? (*check all that apply for each method used*)

Internet:

Online tutorials

Help screens

Hyperlinks to FAQs

Online chat with staff

Other (*explain*)

N/A

Telephone:

Staff assisted

FAQ Menu

Other (*explain*)

N/A

In-person:

Staff assisted

Brochures/Pamphlets

Other (*explain*)

N/A

5. Does the state issue automated determinations, where the fact-finding and issuance of the decision are completed without staff intervention?

5a. If yes, what types of issues are subject to an automated determination process?

(check all that apply)

Availability for work issues

Search for work issues

Failure to report

Voluntary Quit

Discharge for Misconduct

Gross Misconduct

Leave of Absence

Other *(explain)*

5b. If automated determinations are issued by the state, does the fact-finding process fulfill the following requirements? *(check all that apply)*

The system advises the claimant that an issue has been detected that will affect the claimant eligibility for unemployment benefits

Fact-finding obtains all relevant and critical facts related to the issue

The system confirms the claimant's response

The system gives the claimant the opportunity to change the response

6. Are claimants and employers provided a means to provide feedback about the adjudications process?

6a. If yes, how is feedback concerning adjudications process obtained?

- 7.** Did any fact-finding system (Internet or call center) experience downtime during the review period which caused delays or backlogs in adjudications?
 - 7a.** If yes, when did the downtime occur, how many days/hours was the system down, and what was the cause of the downtime?

SECTION 6: Comments

Document any issues that were identified when completing this section. This comment section may also be used to provide additional information relating to any specific question(s) in this section.

5. If the state uses an automated process for making a second attempt at gathering separation information, describe the process being used.

6. Does the state have dedicated staff that conducts the quarterly BTQ reviews?

6a. If not, what staff performs the BTQ reviews?

SECTION 7: Comments

Document any issues that were identified when completing this section. This comment section may also be used to provide additional information relating to any specific question(s) in this section.

SECTION 8: Staffing

Staffing levels and organizational changes all can affect the state's ability to manage its adjudications workloads and meet timeliness and quality standards for Nonmonetary Determinations, as well as meeting the needs of qualified staff to conduct BTQ reviews.

1. What is the percentage of state staff that is allotted (FTE allocation) for fact-finding and adjudications?
%
2. How many FTEs were budgeted for adjudications during the review period?
3. How many FTEs were dedicated to adjudications during the review period?
4. Did personnel actions occur that impacted staffing levels of adjudications staff during the review period? *(check all that apply)*
 - Hiring freeze(s)
 - Temporary or permanent staff reductions
 - Retirement/buyouts
 - Other *(explain)*

N/A

- 4a. If the state implemented a hiring freeze, when did it occur and how long did it last?

- 4b.** If the state underwent temporary or permanent staff reductions, how many claims center staff were affected, when did the action occur and how long did it last?
- 4c.** If the state experienced retirements in its adjudications staff or had a retirement buyout during the review period, provide the number of adjudications staff that left due to retirement.
- 4d.** What percentage of the overall adjudications staff was impacted as a result of a temporary or permanent staff reductions and/or retirement? %
- 4e.** If the state experienced turnover of adjudicators during the review period, what percentage of the adjudications positions remain vacant? %
- 4f.** What negative impact, if any, did these personnel actions have on adjudication operations?

SECTION 8: Comments

Document any issues that were identified when completing this section. This comment section may also be used to provide additional information relating to any specific question(s) in this section.

SECTION 9: Concluding Summary Comments for Adjudications and Benefits Timeliness and Quality Reviews

For the following sets of questions, consider the overall operations related to adjudications and BTQ. This is an opportunity to identify successful practices and/or any needed corrective action measures along with any other general comments or observations concerning this functional area of UI Benefits. Additional space for comments and reviewer notes is available on pages [50](#) and [51](#).

- 1.** Provide any observations of good and/or exemplary performance in the state's adjudications and BTQ policies, procedures, or operations that would constitute successful practices to share with other states.

2. Document any issues detected in adjudications and BTQ that adversely affects the state's performance, its ability to meet performance standards/measures, or customer service. Identify any corrective action measures that should be taken to improve the state's performance in regards to any weaknesses identified.

3. Add any additional comments, concerns, or observations regarding the state's performance or operations in this area that have not been addressed elsewhere and should be noted.

Additional Comments and Reviewer Notes:

Reviewer Information:

REVIEWER

Name:

Title:

Email:

Phone No.:

ADDITIONAL REVIEW TEAM MEMBER

Name:

Title:

Email:

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