



## Unemployment Insurance (UI) Benefit Operations Self-Assessment Tool: *Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)*

REVIEW PERIOD: **Begins**

**Ends**

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

1. When was the last major disaster, if any, declared in the state that provided for DUA?
  - 1a. What was the disaster number?

### 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 [ET Handbook No. 356](#), Disaster Unemployment Assistance Handbook for guidance on the DUA Program. Instructions will normally include general information such as compilations of relevant laws and regulations, including the DUA regulations at [20 CFR 625](#), 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 the current DUA administrative guidance (e.g., 20 CFR 625, ET Handbook No. 356, and other pertinent DUA program letters/guidance) readily accessible to DUA staff?
  
2. Does the state have written procedures for each of the following DUA activities? *(check all that apply)*
  - Requesting initial and supplemental administrative and benefit funds from FEMA
  - Identify agency staff responsible for preparation of initial funding requests
  - Preparing appropriate announcement(s) regarding the availability of DUA
  - Estimating DUA workloads
  - Preparing DUA required reports (e.g., ETA 902)

*Questions 2 check boxes continue on next page*

- Implementing claims-taking operations including applications or forms
- Implementing procedures for Monetary Determinations
- Implementing procedures for Non-Monetary Determinations
- Implementing procedures for DUA appeals
- Implementing procedures for establishing/recovering DUA overpayments
- Preparing appropriate close-out report(s) (e.g., final narrative/final ETA 9130)

**3.** Were there any law changes during the review period that affected the DUA claims policies and procedures (e.g., change in the UI weekly benefit amount)?

**3a.** If yes, what law changes did the state implement, when were these changes implemented, and what was the effect on the DUA claims policies and procedures?

**3b.** If yes, have the state's policies, procedures, and training material been updated to reflect these changes?

**3c.** If no (to question 3b) , explain.

**4.** Were there any new business processes implemented during the review period that affected DUA claims policies and procedures?

**4a.** If yes, what business process changes did the state implement, when were these changes implemented, and what was the effect on DUA claims policies and procedures?

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

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

**5.** Do the state's procedures ensure that a DUA applicant's eligibility for regular UI be determined before establishing DUA entitlement?

**6.** Do the state's written policies and procedures ensure the state is adhering to the definition of eligible DUA claimants as unemployed workers and unemployed self-employed individuals that are unemployed as a direct result of a declared disaster as provided in [20 CFR 625.2](#)?

**7.** Do the state's written policies and procedures ensure compliance with the 30-day filing deadline for DUA initial claims in accordance with [20 CFR 625.8\(a\)](#)?

**7a.** Do the state's procedures address requests for extensions of the 30-day filing period?

- 8.** Does the state conduct identity verification of claimants when they file DUA initial claims?
- 8a.** If yes, through what entities and by what means is identity verification conducted?  
(check all that apply)
- SSA
- DMV
- Other:
- Other:
- 9.** Do the state's policies and procedures ensure the use of the appropriate base period for the declared disaster?
- 10.** Do the state's written policies and procedures detail acceptable proof of earnings for Monetary Determinations for unemployed workers and self-employed individuals as provided in [20 CFR 625.6\(e\)](#)?
- 11.** Does the state have written policies and procedures in place to ensure that DUA is paid only during the Disaster Assistance Period as provided in [20 CFR 625.2\(f\)](#)?
- 12.** Do the state's written policies and procedures include a communication plan to ensure the timely issuance of a Declaration Announcement and Amended Declaration Announcement, when necessary, as required by [20 CFR Part 625.17](#)?
- 13.** Does the state have systematic procedures in place to calculate the correct monetary entitlement?
- 13a.** If yes, do the procedures address the quarterly minimum weekly benefit amount in accordance with [20 CFR 625.6\(b\)](#)?

- 14.** Does the state have procedures for early evaluation of staffing needs when a disaster declaration is issued, and timely request for approval to use overtime, if needed, to ensure efficient delivery of services?
- 15.** Do the state's written policies and procedures provide for the retention of DUA records for a minimum of three years after final action on the claim, including appeals, court actions, and overpayment recovery?
- 16.** Does the state have written policies and procedures to ensure that fiscal reporting, per [OMB Circular A-102](#), for DUA claims activity are in place and current?
- 17.** Does the state have written policies and procedures to ensure that statistical reporting procedures per [20 CFR 625.16](#), for DUA claims activity, are in place and current?
- 17a.** What office is responsible for preparation and submission of required DUA fiscal reports?
- 17b.** What office is responsible for preparation and submission of DUA statistical reports?
- 18.** Does the state have written policies and procedures to ensure the ETA-902 reports are verified and submitted timely on a monthly basis?

- 19.** Do the state’s written policies and procedures for taking DUA initial claims comply with Federal Equal Employment Opportunity laws and regulations in accordance with [29 CFR Part 31](#) and [29 CFR Part 32](#)?
- 20.** Do the state’s written policies and procedures provide for the confidentiality of DUA claim records in accordance with [20 CFR 603.5](#)?
- 21.** Does the state have procedures to ensure it requests FEMA approval to have staff located at Disaster Recovery Centers to take DUA claims, if appropriate and for the use of any administrative funds for this purpose?
- 22.** 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 government programs, in accordance with [20 CFR 603.11](#)?

  - 22a.** If yes, how and when is this information provided to the claimant?
- 23.** Does the state have a systematic process in place to ensure submission of a final narrative report(s) and final ETA 9130 within 60 days following the end of all DUA payment activity, or the end of the disaster assistance period?

  - 23a.** If no, how does the state ensure that a disaster is properly closed out?

**24.** Does the state have policies and procedures to facilitate the taking of DUA claims in support of another state that has a declared disaster?

**24a.** If yes, during the review period, did the state take any DUA claims for another state that experienced a declared disaster?

**24b.** If yes, for which state were the claims taken and when was this done?

## **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 which 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 training curriculum for DUA claims taking that could be implemented quickly?
2. Does the state have a written plan or process for quickly designating and training staff in the event of a major disaster declaration that includes DUA?
3. Is training provided to staff for any technology they will use for taking DUA claims (e.g., cell and/or satellite phones, tablets, laptops, etc.)?
4. Is appropriate DUA training provided to staff in relevant program areas, (e.g., Appeals) to ensure a functional understanding of the DUA requirements and consistency of application?
5. If the state took DUA claims during the review period, were any training needs identified as a result of the experience?
  - 5a. If yes, what training needs were identified?

**5b.** Has the necessary training been delivered?

**5c.** If no, explain.

## **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: 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.

- 1.** What unit or office is responsible for monitoring the performance and readiness of the state's DUA operations?
  - 1a.** What methods are used to monitor the DUA operations to ensure the program is operated in accordance with Federal and state law and regulations?
  
- 2.** Does the state conduct any DUA readiness or program reviews to ensure readiness, compliance, and operational integrity?

**2a.** If yes, how often are the reviews conducted?

Quarterly      Semi-annually      Annually

Other (*explain*)

N/A

**3.** Does the state maintain a pre-disaster checklist to verify all mandatory DUA processes are implemented when a disaster declaration is made?

## **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 DUA claims completed during the review period and planned for the future are addressed. The reviewer will assess the state IT department's delivery of programming and technical support to the UI Benefits Section.

- 1.** Does the state have an automated DUA claims taking system?
  - 1a.** If yes, during the review period, were there any IT projects that impacted the DUA initial claims system?
  - 1b.** If yes, what were the projects, are they completed or on-going? If on-going, what is the expected completion date for each?
  - 1c.** Have staff members been fully trained on any new technology that was implemented during the review period that affects DUA claims processes?
  - 1d.** If the state does not have an automated DUA claims taking system, is any part of the DUA claims processing automated, such as the Monetary determination?
- 2.** Does the state have the capacity to accept DUA telephone continued claims via an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system?
  - 2a.** If yes, does the IVR continued claims system have DUA-specific questions?
  - 2b.** If it does not have DUA-specific questions, does the state have the ability to modify its continued claim questions for DUA in the event of a disaster?

**2c.** If yes, has the state ensured that the DUA requirements for continued claims questions have been met?

**3.** What IT systems does the state use for taking DUA initial claims? (*check all that apply*)

Internet claims

Interactive Voice Response (IVR)

Kiosks

Mainframe terminals

Online assistance for claims takers

Other (*explain*)

**4.** Is the state's computer system updated each quarter with the DUA minimum weekly benefit amount when it is published?

**4a.** If not, what procedure does the state follow to ensure the correct amount is used for DUA Monetary Determinations in the event of a disaster resulting in DUA claims being filed?

**5.** Does the state have the ability to "lock" or suppress the DUA Internet initial claims system when not in an active Disaster Assistance Period to prevent improper filing of DUA claims?

**5a.** If yes, what method does the state use? (*explain*)

**5b.** If yes, does the state use this functionality to close the DUA Internet initial claims system after the 30-day application period expires?

## **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 methods for taking DUA claims 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 take paper claims, handle incoming initial/weekly claims by mail and/or fax, retrieve and store paper claims, dedicated staff to open/sort/distribute claims for processing and incoming proof of wages and employment documents, dedicated faxes for incoming mail, and must ensure that forms contain proper mailing instructions. Claims taking operations must operate a sufficient number of hours per week to afford all DUA claimants who wish to file a claim to do so.

1. What filing methods are available to workers and self-employed individuals for DUA initial claims?  
(check all that apply)

Workers/Employees:

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

Self-Employed Individuals:

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

**2.** What methods does the state use to take DUA continued claim certifications?

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

**3.** Describe how each of the state’s filing methods is publicized so that claimants are made aware of them.  
(*check all that apply for each filing method*)

Internet:

Website  
Posters in Job Centers  
Media  
Rapid Response Meetings  
Other (*explain*)

N/A

Telephone:

Website  
Posters in Job Centers  
Media  
Rapid Response Meetings

**Question 3 continues on next page**

Other (*explain*)

N/A

In-person:

Website

Posters in Job Centers

Media

Rapid Response Meetings

Other (*explain*)

N/A

Mail:

Website

Posters in Job Centers

Media

Rapid Response Meetings

Other (*explain*)

N/A

Other:

- Website
- Posters in Job Centers
- Media
- Rapid Response Meetings
- Other (*explain*)

N/A

Other:

- Website
- Posters in Job Centers
- Media
- Rapid Response Meetings
- Other (*explain*)

N/A

**4.** What avenues does the state offer to a claimant to file a DUA initial claim? (*check all that apply*)

Remote Disaster Centers:

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Internet | In-person | Telephone |
|----------|-----------|-----------|

Mobile Units:

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Internet | In-person | Telephone |
|----------|-----------|-----------|

Workforce/One-Stop Centers:

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Internet | In-person | Telephone |
|----------|-----------|-----------|

**Question 4 check boxes continue on next page**



Kiosks in locations accessible by the general public:

Internet      In-person      Telephone

Call/Contact Centers:

Internet      In-person      Telephone

Other (*explain*):

Internet      In-person      Telephone

- 5.** Indicate the DUA function supported by the following communication methods.  
(*check all that apply for each method*)

Internet:

Claim status requests  
Address changes  
Forms download  
Benefit Rights Information  
Provide bank information for direct deposit of benefits  
Other (*explain*)

N/A

Telephone:

Claim status requests  
Address changes  
Forms download  
Benefit Rights Information

**Question 5 check boxes continue on next page**

Provide bank information for direct deposit of benefits  
Other (*explain*)

N/A

In-person:

Claim status requests  
Address changes  
Forms download  
Benefit Rights Information  
Provide bank information for direct deposit of benefits  
Other (*explain*)

N/A

- 6.** How is the Benefits Rights Information provided to claimants for the following claim filing methods?  
(*check all that apply for each method*)

Internet:

Electronic certification (web)  
Telephone/IVR certification  
Verbal by claimstaker  
Mailed

**Question 6 check boxes continue on next page**

Other (*explain*)

N/A

Telephone:

Telephone/IVR certification

Verbal by claimstaker

Mailed

Other (*explain*)

N/A

In-person:

Verbal by claimstaker

Printed handout

Signed BRI

Mailed

Other (*explain*)

N/A

**Question 6 check boxes continue on next page**

Mail:

Verbal by claimstaker

Mailed

Other (*explain*)

N/A

If the state experienced one or more declared disaster during the review period, complete Questions 7–9a for the first incident and 10–12a for the second incident.

**7.** If the state had a declared disaster during the review period, provide the declaration number.

1st disaster declaration number:

**8.** If the state had a declared disaster during the review period, what percentage of DUA initial claims were filed via each filing method?

Internet: %

Telephone: %

In-person: %

Mail: %

Other (*explain*):

%

N/A

**9.** If the state experienced a declared disaster during the review period, did the state experience significant delays or backlogs in DUA initial claims taking?

**9a.** If yes, what was the cause of the delays or backlogs?

DUA initial claims volume

Lack of claims takers trained for DUA claims

Disaster recovery center facility limitations

Other (*explain*)

N/A

**10.** If the state had a second declared disaster during the review period, provide the declaration number.

2nd disaster declaration number:

**11.** If the state had a second declared disaster during the review period, what percentage of DUA initial claims were filed via each filing method?

Internet: %

Telephone: %

In-person: %

Mail: %

Other (*explain*):

%

N/A

**12.** If the state experienced a second declared disaster during the review period, did the state experience delays or backlogs in DUA initial claims taking?

**12a.** If yes, what was the cause of the delays or backlogs during this second declared disaster?

DUA initial claims volume

Lack of claims takers trained for DUA claims

Disaster recovery center facility limitations

Other (*explain*)

N/A

## **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.

## SECTION 7: Operational Efficiency / Resource Allocation

Steps taken by the state to improve its preparedness to respond to a disaster and take DUA claims are examined. What automation, if any, does the state use to handle DUA claims documents?

- 1.** Does the state maintain an ongoing relationship with the state's emergency management organization and/or FEMA to help ensure early notification of pending disasters?
  - 1a.** Does the agency have staff that regularly attend the state's emergency management preparedness meetings?
  
- 2.** Does the state utilize a document management system to support DUA claims processing?
  - 2a.** If yes, is the system accessible remotely, such as from a disaster recovery center?



## **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

The reviewer will examine the state's organization on how the responsibilities of the DUA coordinator are handled. Also, the impact of any declared disaster on staff work hour and the preparedness to staff DUA operations in the event of a declared disaster are reviewed.

- 1.** Does the state have a designated DUA coordinator?
  - 1a.** If yes, how long has the DUA coordinator held this position?
  - 1b.** Where in the organization does the DUA coordinator position reside?
  - 1c.** If there is no DUA coordinator, what plans does the state have for designating this responsibility?

**2.** If the state experienced a declared disaster during the review period, was overtime required to meet DUA initial claims workload requirements?

**2a.** If yes, provide the dates of the filing periods for each event and amount of overtime used for each to file and process DUA initial claims.

1. Disaster Number:

Begin Date	End Date	Overtime Used
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2. Disaster Number:

Begin Date	End Date	Overtime Used
------------	----------	---------------

**2b.** What were the most common reasons for overtime? (*check all that apply*)

- DUA initial claims volume
- Lack of claims takers trained for DUA claims
- Staffing disaster recovery centers
- Inefficient processes
- Other (*explain*)

**3.** Does the state have a contingency plan to handle DUA initial claims in the event of a disaster or other event that causes a disruption of services, (e.g., has the agency identified staff with DUA claims experience and established protocols for continuity of DUA program operations)?

**4.** Does the state have specialized staff that can readily form a DUA unit in the event of a disaster for filing DUA initial and continued claims?

## **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: Fiscal Management

The state's practices for managing its grants and its compliance with Federal and state law and regulations are examined.

1. How does the state monitor the amount of DUA benefits expended from the DUA grant?
  - 1a. To what unit or office is this information made available?
2. Does the state have a systematic method to use this information to determine if/when a supplemental funding request is needed?
3. How does the state monitor DUA administrative funding?

**3a.** Provide the unit or office name where this information is made available?

**3b.** What positions are authorized to charge to the DUA administrative grant?

**4.** How does the state generally ensure that DUA administrative funds remain within 15% of the total funding obligation from FEMA, unless there is justification to exceed 15%?

## **SECTION 9: 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 10: Concluding Summary Comments for Disaster Unemployment Assistance Claims

For the following sets of questions, consider the overall operations related to Disaster Unemployment Assistance. 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 [43](#) and [44](#).

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



2. Document any issues detected in the state's DUA initial claims taking that adversely affects the state's performance 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:**

**Phone No.:**