Unemployment Insurance (UI) Benefit Operations Self-Assessment Tool:

Intake Initial Claims-Combined Wage Claims (CWC)

This self-assessment review of the state's Intake Initial Claims-Combined Wage Claims (CWC) functional area will examine CWC processes and operations. The reviewer will consult with appropriate staff regarding each operational element, as necessary, to ensure accurate and complete information is reported. This will include Unemployment Insurance (UI) administrators, IT managers, fiscal officers, office/call center managers, Initial Claims supervisors, and other coordinators or staff with CWC knowledge.

Upon completion of this review, the results should be shared with UI administrators, appropriate program manager(s), and supervisors. The self-assessment findings can provide a very good analysis of the state's intake process for CWC claims and can be used to drive process and program-improvement initiatives.

A comments section is provided for each operational element, which the reviewer should use to document any observations regarding issues identified related to that specific operational element. This space may also be used to provide any additional information relating to a specific question in this section. In doing so, the reviewer should reference the specific question by number and insert the additional information related to that question.

In addition, a concluding comments section is provided at the end of the self-assessment instrument to capture any strengths identified by the reviewer in this functional area which could constitute a successful practice(s) to be shared with other states; any issues identified by the reviewer in the functional area that adversely impacts the state's performance and to identify any possible corrective actions to address the issue; and general comments about this functional area. The reviewer can provide information here that Federal reviewers and state UI administrators and managers can use to assess program operations and the state's effectiveness in providing quality services in this functional area.

Save your entries regularly as you complete the review and when you close the self-assessment to ensure your answers are saved.

SECTION 1: Procedures, Policies, and Confidentiality

The purpose of this section is to review the policies and procedures provided by the agency for staff to use in operating this functional area of the UI program. These are the written (in hard-copy, electronically or both formats) standards, instructions, and guidelines that staff regularly use in the operation of the program. The reviewer may utilize resources that include manuals, handbooks, desk aids, computer help screens, training guides, organized collections of procedures or policies, or other readily accessible instructions which can help staff do their work correctly—including ETA Handbook No. 399 and ETA Handbook No. 392—for guidance regarding intake of initial CWC claims. 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. The reviewer may need to examine all relevant instructions and consult with UI administrators, office/call center managers, claims supervisors, and the state's program coordinators.

The reviewer will document whether the state has policies and procedures sufficient to provide guidance and instruction to staff that process CWC claims. Existing policies and procedures should be examined to determine whether they are up-to-date and address all law changes, organizational changes and technology changes that occurred during the review period.

> **Helpful Info.**
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> *Question 5a:* The reviewer should examine and document the procedures in place to notify the transferring state of a determination issued as a result of untimely and/or inadequate information by an out-of-state employer.

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, the reviewer should consult with the state's training unit/staff and examine 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). The state should have procedures for identifying general and specific training needs, for developing a training curriculum and training materials, and for delivering training as needs are identified.

Helpful Info. 3

Question 3: The reviewer should consult with the trainers to determine all ICON applications for CWCs are included in the claims taker training.

SECTION 3: Performance Management

The reviewer will examine the state's practices for monitoring program performance and compliance with Federal and state law and regulations. If the state has a performance management unit, the reviewer should consult with performance management staff in addition to UI administrators, office/call center managers, and claims supervisors and program coordinators when completing this section.

Helpful Info.

Question 2: The reviewer will document the methods the state uses to monitor its CWC operations. If the state's processes for monitoring its CWC performance are considered to be particularly effective and/or efficient, explain fully in the Comments area at the end of this section.

SECTION 4: Information Technology (IT)

When completing this section of the self-assessment the reviewer should consult with UI and IT administrators and office/call center managers. The reviewer will assess the state's IT programming and technical support to the UI Benefits Section for CWC.

Helpful Info.

Question 1: Telecommunicating refers to sending or receiving information to or from other states through the UI Interstate Connection (ICON) network.

Question 3: The reviewer will indicate all filing methods used by the state for CWC initial claims.

SECTION 5: Claimant/Employer Access & Communication

The reviewer will examine the state's methods for taking and processing CWC Initial Claims. If the state takes CWC claims via the Internet, the reviewer will describe the means used to ensure information about filing options are available to the claimant. The reviewer will consult with UI administrators, office/call center managers, and claims supervisors when completing this section of the self-assessment.

Helpful Info.

Question 1a: If applicable, the reviewer will explain how CWC filing options are provided to the claimant on claims filed through the Internet process.

Question 1b: If applicable, the reviewer will explain why the CWC filing options are not provided when a CWC is filed through the Internet process.

SECTION 6: Operational Efficiency/Resource Allocation

Through interviews with UI administrators and appropriate office/call center managers, the reviewer will determine whether the state has allocated sufficient resources to training, facilities, staff, etc. to support program operations. The reviewer will identify efficiencies and automation the state has used to improve Initial CWC performance and provide better service to the public.

Helpful Info.

Question 5a: If the process for sending a second request for wages (IB-4) is not automated, the reviewer will document the methods the state uses to submit a second request.

Question 13a: This question is referring to the new billing application for CWC which was recently developed. Refer to UIPL No. 02-12 and UIPL No. 02-12, Change 1.

Question 13c: If the state is not using ICON model code for the IB-6 billing process, the reviewer will document the methods the state uses to process IB-6 billings.

Question 14c: If the state is not using ICON model code for processing and paying incoming IB-6 billings, the reviewer will document the methods the state uses to confirm the accuracy of the payment amount.

SECTION 7: Staffing

The reviewer will examine organizational changes that occurred during the review period, if any, and their effect on the state's ability to manage its CWC claims workload and to meet first payment promptness. The reviewer should consult with UI administrators, office/call center managers, and the state agency's human resource manager when completing this section of the self-assessment.

> **Helpful Info.**
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> *Question 1b:* The reviewer should explain what effect any reorganization had on the CWC workload.

SECTION 8: Concluding Summary Comments

The reviewer will use the Concluding Summary Comments section to highlight the state's strengths and weaknesses that impact the CWC Initial Claims functional area and to identify issues that have not been addressed in any other section of the self-assessment. These comments are intended to provide Federal reviewers and the state's UI administrators with additional insight into these program areas, focusing on methods that have proven to be successful and can be capitalized upon, or areas where corrective measures may be needed.

The first comment area provides the reviewer an opportunity to share any examples of good and/or exemplary operations in this functional area after reviewing each operational element. The reviewer can use this space to identify any policy, procedure or operation that would constitute a successful practice that can be shared with other states.

The second comment area provides the reviewer an opportunity to document issues detected during the review that are having an adverse impact on the functional area, affecting the state's performance, ability to meet performance standards or customer service. It is also a place to recommend corrective actions for the agency's leadership to consider implementing.

The final comment area in this section provides the reviewer space to share any additional comments, concerns or observations regarding the state's operations in this functional area.