

<b>EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION          ADVISORY SYSTEM          U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR          Washington, D.C. 20210</b>	<b>CLASSIFICATION</b> UI
	<b>CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL</b> OUI/DPM
	<b>DATE</b>

**ADVISORY: UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM LETTER NO.**

**TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES**

**FROM: JOSÉ JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ**  
 Assistant Secretary

**SUBJECT: Updated and Expanded Reporting of Demographic Information on the ETA 203 Report “Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed.”**

1. **Purpose.** To provide and advise State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) of the new and expanded definitions of existing demographic categories on the ETA 203 report, implementing the latest guidance of other federal departments and agencies.
2. **Action Requested.** The Department of Labor’s (Department) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) requests that Administrators of SWAs provide the information in this Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) to the appropriate state UI program and information technology (IT) staff to follow instructions related to the collection and reporting of demographic characteristics of the insured unemployed on the ETA 203 report, attached to this UIPL through the UI Database Management System (UIDBMS).
3. **Summary and Background.**
  - a. Summary – Section 303(a)(6) of the Social Security Act specifies that for State UI programs to be certified to receive administrative funding from the Federal government, the State’s law must include provisions for “making of such reports...as the Secretary of Labor may from time to time require, and compliance with such provisions as the Secretary may from time to time find necessary to assure the correctness and verification of such reports.” ETA considers the changes and updates to the ETA 203 report described in this UIPL to be one of those “provisions...necessary to assure the correctness and verification” of the reports submitted by states to achieve continuity and consistency for demographic data collected across federal government agencies.
  - b. Background – ETA’s changes to the ETA 203 report will update and expand terms and definitions in the race and ethnicity categories to adhere to updated guidance/changes set out in the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Revisions to its Statistical Policy

<b>RESCISSIONS</b>	<b>EXPIRATION DATE</b>
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Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity<sup>1</sup>, which became effective on March 29, 2024. Also, for “Sex and/or Gender,” adding “Another Gender Identity/Non-binary/X” as a response option will make the data collection consistent with the U.S. State Department’s passport guidelines. These changes will capture characteristics that better reflect society and the UI population across demographic groups. For example, race and ethnicity will be combined into one question and reporting category to decrease confusion by respondents; a separate race and/or ethnicity category will be added (“Middle Eastern or North African”); and “other” will be removed from “Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.”

In addition to collecting age, industry, and occupation information, the revised ETA 203 report would also collect information on a claimant’s primary language, self-identified disability status, level of educational attainment, and base period wages, which will be verified by wage records/employer information and not self-selected by the claimant. By adding these categories, ETA will increase its understanding of interactions between socio-economic characteristics and unemployment insurance receipt and inform state UI programs managers about possible needs in areas such as translation services. These categories and terms were identified after examining data studied, collected, or used by OMB, the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Census Bureau, and Bureau of Labor Statistics. This data will not be shared beyond aggregate reporting to ETA. ETA recommends as a best practice that any demographic information associated with a specific claimant or employer be masked or hidden from non-essential state agency staff. Furthermore, disclosure of demographic information is voluntary and a non-response to questions will continue to be reported as “Information Not Available” or INA.

#### 4. **Guidance.**

***Disclosure.*** Disclosing personal demographic information is entirely voluntary by the claimant and cannot be used for the purposes of establishing eligibility for benefits. Demographic data elements are self-selected by the claimant on the initial claim application and will be treated as confidential. Any other UI required reports that also collect demographic information will use the same definitions established by the ETA 203 report as stipulated in this guidance.

The Information Not Available (INA) option will remain as is to capture incidences where claimants leave a question(s) blank. A category may include a “Prefer not to Disclose” option that allows claimants to indicate they do not wish to share sensitive information about their identity, background, or experience for certain data elements.

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<sup>1</sup> [The 2024 Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 \(spd15revision.gov\)](https://www.spd15revision.gov)

Any other UI required reports that also collect demographic information will use the same definitions established by the ETA 203 report as stipulated in this guidance.

***Weeks Claimed.*** Each category will continue to count the number of weeks claimed for claimants during the survey week. The survey week is to coincide with the survey week for the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Survey (CPS) week. This usually represents weeks claimed which are filed during the week containing the 19th of the month. The week containing the 19th of the month is assumed to reflect unemployment experienced during the prior week containing the 12th of the month, the CPS survey week. When the CPS survey week is altered due to holidays, etc., the week used for the ETA 203 should be altered accordingly.

***Updated UI Handbook.*** The ET Handbook No. 401, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Unemployment Insurance Reports has been updated and Attachment A will replace the existing pages in Section IV-1-150-154. Please refer to Attachment A for Item-by-Item Reporting Instructions. Please note that no changes were made to the existing Age, Industry and Occupation report categories.

***Updated Categories and Expanded Definitions.*** The following existing demographic categories have been expanded and updated in the ETA 203 report: Sex and/or Gender and Race or Ethnicity. Individuals must be allowed to select demographic options during the initial claim process through all filing methods. Please refer to Attachment B for definitions/classifications, reasoning, and justification.

***New Categories and Definitions.*** The following new categories have been added to the ETA 203 report: Primary Language, Disability Status, Level of Educational Attainment, and Base Period Wages. Individuals must be allowed to select demographic options during the initial claim process through all filing methods. Please refer to Attachment B for definitions/classifications, reasoning, and justification.

***OMB Approval.*** This information collection request received final approval from OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 Control No. 1205-0009 on XXX (date placeholder).

***Important Dates.*** SWAs will have two years from the date of the publication of this guidance to implement the necessary changes to their initial claim questionnaire and the ETA 203 reports using the new form included in Attachment A.

5. **Inquiries.** Please direct inquiries to the appropriate Regional Office.

6. **References.**

- Section 303(a)(6) of the Social Security Act (SSA).
- ET Handbook No. 401, *Unemployment Insurance Reports Handbook*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Issued August 16, 2017; and
- Office of Management and Budget: “Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity,” Issued March 29, 2024, [The 2024 Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 \(spd15revision.gov\)](https://www.spd15revision.gov)

**7. Attachment(s).**

- Attachment A – ET Handbook No. 401, “Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed” Reporting Instructions for Section IV-1, pages 150-161.
- Attachment B – Demographic Data Collection: Definitions and Reasoning for Expanding Current Categories.
- Attachment C – ETA 203 Report Cell Map