

OMB No.: 1290-ONEW

Expiration: TBD

RESEA Interview Protocol – RESEA Line Staff

Introductory statement to respondents: We work for the research firm, Abt Global. The U.S. Department of Labor has hired us to conduct a multi-state impact evaluation of RESEA, which [INSERT NAME OF STATE] is participating in. We are examining the impact of two RESEA program components: 1) single vs. multiple RESEA one-on-one meetings and 2) meeting modality (in-person vs. remote). The study will examine the impact on Unemployment Insurance (“UI”) duration and increasing employment.

This site visit is part of the evaluation and is designed to understand how RESEA works in [INSERT NAME OF STATE], with a focus on how single and subsequent RESEAs and meeting modality are implemented.

Study Background

Over the next few months, we will be visiting [YY] [insert local name of AJCs—e.g. career source centers] where RESEA program services are delivered. These visits are designed to help us learn about how the RESEA program and the meeting modality and subsequent RESEA components operate. We will explore topics such as, RESEA program flow, approaches to service delivery, customers’ experiences in the program.

If the interviewees ask about the study, feel free to share any of the following information:

- We plan to visit [YY] [insert local name of AJCs—e.g. career source centers] where RESEA services are offered.
- At each site, we try to speak with (i) staff who deliver RESEA services, (ii) Career Center leadership, and RESEA participants. We also plan to observe the implementation of RESEA service delivery (i.e., RESEA one-on-one meetings, and reemployment workshops or other referral services).

Interview Logistics

Today we’d like to ask about your activities, experiences, and perspectives as staff who work on the RESEA program. The interview will take about 60 minutes to complete.

Before we begin, I want to assure you that all your responses will be used only for this research study. Your name will not appear in any written reports we produce, and your co-workers will not know your responses. We will try to describe any responses you give in a way that will make it impossible to identify you. The interview itself is voluntary and you may choose not to answer any specific question.

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Do you have any questions before we get started? If you have questions or concerns about today's interview, specifically your rights as participant in this research, you can call the Abt Global Institutional Review Board (toll-free 877-520-6835).

We would like to record our conversation so we can have a back up to our notes. The recording will remain private. We will de-identify your information if we cite quotes from this discussion in our reports by removing references to any personal identifying information. We will erase the recording before the end of the project. Is it okay for us to record? [If yes, thank the respondent *and* wait to record until you have confirmed everyone's name, department and job title in the background section.]

Key Topics for Discussion with Local Staff:

[Notes to Interviewer: 1) The interview is intended to be semi-structured and conversational. Though you do not need to follow the order of questions below—especially if the respondent jumps around with his/her responses—please try to collect information corresponding to each prompt. It is not necessary to ask every question in the allotted time, but please try to only exclude those questions that you determine are not relevant to your respondent. The solid black bullet points are the primary questions, and the sub-bullets identified as “Probe” are meant to encourage conversation when you determine necessary. You should not need to ask all the probing questions. 2) Please monitor the time and be sure to cover the topics in section 9 (innovations and challenges) so there is sufficient time for the respondent to respond to the topics.]

Background on Respondents

[Note to Interviewer: Collect the following information on each respondent involved in the interview; remind them that we will not use their name or any identifying information in any report or discussion with state staff.]

- Name
- Agency/division/unit
- Title and tenure in that position

[Interviewer note: Start recording after this information has been collected. Consider adding an introduction to the recording like: “This is an interview recorded on [date] by interviewer [name].”

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- Role in RESEA program and number of years person has conducted one-on-one RESEA sessions
- Other roles at the AJC (other than related to RESEA)

1. Program Context

The next several questions are about the local economy and labor market in this area. We want to understand the local context in which RESEA operates here.

- What are the local labor market conditions like in this area and how, if at all, does RESEA adapt to those conditions?
 - o Probe: Which are the primary industries and major employers?
 - o Probe: Have there been any major changes to the labor market, like new employers or mass layoffs?
 - o Probe: Are there any seasonal patterns to employment in the area?
 - o Probe: Does the program target job referrals based on industry changes?
 - o Probe: Do you have to change scheduling procedures to accommodate seasonal swings in unemployment?

2. Eligibility and Scheduling for RESEA

We have a question about your role in scheduling claimants for required program meetings and services.

- To the extent that you are involved in scheduling, how are claimants scheduled for each of RESEA's key components: [THIS LIST WILL HAVE TO BE CUSTOMIZED BY STATE, THIS IS CURRENTLY GENERIC]
 1. Career Center orientation
 2. Initial RESEA meeting
 3. Subsequent RESEA meeting (if applicable)

3. Career Center Orientation [Customization needed by state]

Now we would like to focus on the details of the RESEA program's key components. To start, we would like to discuss the CCS Orientation and your perspectives on that specific part of the program.

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- Who conducts the Orientation?
 - o *Probe: Are Department of Unemployment Assistance (“DUA”) staff involved?*
- What are the ways in which customers complete Orientation (in-person, virtual video conference, or recording)?
- How long does it usually take?

Content

- What are the elements of the RESEA Orientation?
 - o **[Note to Interviewer THIS will need to be customized: Use the list below like a checklist, confirming that each element of the has been reviewed.]**
 - Unemployment Insurance (“UI”) Eligibility Assessment Questionnaire
 - Job bank Registration
 - Introduction to Labor Market Information (“LMI”)
 - Overview of training opportunities
 - Job Search Inventory (“JSI”)
 - Initial Needs Assessment (“INA”)
 - Career Action Plan (“CAP”)
- When do claimants complete the following items (i.e., before the seminar, during the seminar, or after the seminar):
 - o UI Eligibility Assessment questionnaire
 - o Job Search Inventory
 - o Initial Needs Assessment
 - o Career Action Plan
 - o Resume information template
 - o LMI Worksheet

Perspectives **[Customize for each state]**

- How does virtual completion of the orientation compare to the in-person orientation?
 - o *Probe: Do you think virtual delivery is better suited for some services over others?*
- What do you think are the most important components of the orientation?
 - o *Probe: Which sections of the slide deck do you spend the most time on and/or find most important?*
- What, if anything, should be added to the orientation? What, if anything could be cut?

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4. Initial RESEA Meeting [Customize as needed for each state]

Now we would like to shift our attention to the Initial RESEA meeting, how it is conducted and what it entails.

Logistics

- Who conducts the Initial RESEA Meeting?
 - o Probe: Is it the same person that leads the orientation?
- What share are delivered in-person or remotely?
[This will likely need to be customized by state]
 - o If in-person, where (e.g., at AJC, other location)?
 - o If remotely, how (e.g., phone, videoconference)?
 - o For video conference, what portion approximately are conducted with the video on?
- How much time is set aside for each meeting, and is the full time typically used?
- For those elements of the meeting that are available in either hard copy or online (e.g., paper, online version of the career action plan), which do you use and who makes that decision (i.e., you or the customer)?

Content [Customize for each state, as needed]

[Note to Interviewer: Bring blank copies of fillable STATE RESEA forms. Refer to each form when asking about specifics.]

- How do you conduct the UI eligibility review?
 - o Probe: Are staff from UI involved in the review of UI eligibility?
 - o Probe: Do you walk through and/or complete the questionnaire with the participant?
 - o Probe: How long does a typical review take?
- How do you review the work search activity logs?
 - o Probe: Do you walk through and/or review the work search log with the participant?
 - o Probe: How much time do you typically dedicate to the work search logs?
- How do you identify customers' needs?
 - o Probe: Do you rely on your review of the Initial Needs Assessment ("INA")?
 - o Probe: Are there other needs assessment activities?
 - o Probe: How much time do you typically dedicate to the INA?
- How do you discuss the LMI research activity?
 - o Probe: Do you advise customers on where and how to complete their research?

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- o Probe: How much time do you dedicate to the LMI research?*
- How do you use the Career Action Plan?
- How do you approach the resume requirement during the Initial RESEA?
 - o Probe: Do you complete the template with each customer?*
 - o Probe: How much time do you typically dedicate to preparing a participant's resume?*
- How do you refer customers to interim services and workshops?
 - o Probe: How do you select the interim services and workshops?*
 - o Probe: What are the most common referrals? Who delivers the referred services and workshops?*
- What other topics do you typically cover during the initial RESEA?

Perspectives [Customize for each state, as needed]

- What do you think is the most important component of the Initial RESEA?
- What, if anything, should be added to the Initial RESEA requirements?
 - o Probe: Are there topics that often come up informally during RESEA meetings that you think should be formally incorporated into the meeting?*
 - o Probe: Are there things you'd like to be able to assess but don't have tools for? If so, what are they?*
- How do you perceive participant engagement in the Initial RESEA meeting?

5. Subsequent RESEA meeting [This term may need to be customized]

Now we would like to cover the details of the RESEA subsequent meeting.

Logistics

- Who conducts the Subsequent RESEA meeting?
 - o Probe: Is it the same person who conducted that customer's Initial RESEA?*
- Are these typically delivered in-person or remotely?
 - [This will likely need to be customized by state]**
 - o Probe: If in-person, where (e.g., at AJC, other location)?*
 - o Probe: If remotely, how (e.g., phone, videoconference)?*
- How much time is set aside for each meeting, and is the full time typically used?

Content

- What are the elements of a typical Subsequent RESEA meeting?

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- o **[This list will need to be customized by state]** *Note to Interviewer: treat the list below like a checklist, confirming that each element of the RESEA Review is completed]:*
 - UI Eligibility Assessment Questionnaire and work search log review
 - Verify completion of interim services
 - Review resume
 - Review LMI research activities
 - Further review of needs
 - Referral to future reemployment/career services
- How do you verify the customer's completion of required interim services?
- How is the Subsequent RESEA meeting different from the Initial RESEA meeting?
[This list will need to be customized by state]
 - o *Probe: Do you conduct the UI eligibility review differently (work search logs and Questionnaire)?*
 - o *Probe: Does the discussion of LMI differ if the customer has completed their LMI research?*
 - o *Probe: How do you select which services to refer customers?*
 - o *Probe: Do you typically identify new needs or barriers to reemployment?*
 - o *Probe: Are the referrals to additional career services also mandatory?*

Perspectives [Customize for each state, as needed]

- What is the most important part of the Subsequent RESEA meeting?
- What, if anything, should be added to the RESEA subsequent meeting requirements?
- What do you think should be the amount of time between the Initial RESEA and Subsequent RESEA meetings?
- How do you perceive participant engagement in the RESEA subsequent meeting?
- Do you think some claimants are more or less likely to benefit from RESEA than others? If so, which claimants are better suited for the program than others, and why?

6. Meeting Modality

- What do you think are the pros and cons of remote vs. in-person service delivery?
- Do you think remote delivery is better suited for some services over others?
- Which one (remote or in-person) do you prefer and why?
- Do you feel the same about remote service delivery for both the initial and subsequent RESEA sessions, or is one better suited for remote delivery than the other?

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7. RESEA specific training

- Does the AJC provide any required trainings for the staff that conduct the one-on-one sessions? If yes, please describe.
- Are the staff involved with RESEA dedicated only to RESEA, or are they cross-trained on other programs?

8. Claimant Non-compliance with UI and RESEA Requirements

We have several questions about non-compliance, and by that we mean instances in which RESEA participants do not meet UI program requirements (e.g., being able, available, and actively seeking work) or RESEA program requirements (e.g., not attending a scheduled meeting).

Non-Compliance with UI Rules

- During the eligibility review process, do you ever identify potential reasons why a claimant was ineligible for UI?
 - o Probe: Are these issues raised through the UI eligibility questionnaire?
- When eligibility issues are identified, how often are claimants reported to [customize name to what locals call the UI Department] for a potential issue?
 - o [If answer is other than "Never"] Probe: What is the process for referring those potential issues to UI?
 - o Probe: Is that process automated?

Non-Compliance with RESEA Requirements

- What happens if a participant misses their scheduled Initial RESEA or Subsequent RESEA meeting?
 - o Probe: What is the process for notifying UI?
 - o Probe: What is the specific penalty?
- Can a participant reschedule a missed meeting? If so, under what conditions and how?
- [If the respondent says benefits are suspended following failure to report to a scheduled meeting] After a missed meeting, what does a claimant need to do to resume benefits?

Perspectives on Non-Compliance

- What, if any, strategies are in place for reducing missed meetings or activities by RESEA participants Which do you feel are most effective?

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- o *Probe: Reminder calls or emails in advance of the Orientation, Initial RESEA, and Subsequent RESEA meetings?*
 - o *Probe: Changes to scheduling strategies and meeting times?*
- What are the main reasons people don't show up for their scheduled meeting for the Initial RESEA meeting and Subsequent RESEA meeting?
 - o What about for other RESEA activities?
- *Are there other things that you think can be done to increase attendance at meetings and RESEA activities?*

9. Innovations and Challenges

We would like the step back now and ask you to reflect on your perspectives on any challenges you encounter with respect to RESEA implementation and any innovations or unique elements of the program.

Innovations

- What do you think are the most important parts of the RESEA program that support the program's goals, and why?
- Are there any elements of your RESEA program that you feel are unique or otherwise notable/innovative?
- Are there any staffing, technology, or process innovations or practices you've adopted that have enabled significant improvement in RESEA processes or participant outcomes?
- Are there other changes that you would recommend to improve the program?

Challenges

- What, if any, do you see as the biggest challenges to operating the RESEA program currently?
 - o *Probe: Local economic conditions*
 - o *Probe: UI fraud (identity issues, no shows, etc.)*
- What, if any, challenges do claimants face to being able to participate?
 - o *Probe: Difficulty completing any pre-orientation requirements or required forms in advance?*
 - o *Probe: Are participants able to fully participate in remote meetings?*

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- o Probe: Are the program materials accessible to participants?*
- o Probe: Do you make special accommodations for customers who travel or have limited internet access?*
- o Probe: Difficulty following through with the services they're referred to?*
- Is there anything you would change about RESEA, such as how it is structured, the content provided, the duration, etc.?
 - o Probe: Are there any changes you would make to address the challenges we just discussed?*

9. Program Goals

Having covered all the detailed topics above, we would like to close with your thoughts on the RESEA program's goals.

- How would you describe the goals of the RESEA program?
 - o Probe: How do you define success for the RESEA program?*
 - o Probe: In what ways does your RESEA program seek to affect participants?*

10. Closing

- Is there anything about the RESEA program that we did not ask about that you think is important to discuss?
- Do you have any questions for us?

We appreciate your time and your input!

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