RESEA Cost Study Project: State-Level Employment Services Staff Interview Guide

This guide will be used to interview state employment services staff who work on various components of the RESEA program.

AIR Team: • **Facilitator:** • **Note taker:**	Participant Job Position(s):
Date and Time:	**Location:**

Note to Interviewer:

- Approach the interview with empathy and understanding
- Keep the tone conversational and comfortable
- For each question, be sure to note the time frame that you're discussing (e.g., during an appointment, in an average week, in the past year).

Introductions

Introductory statement to respondents: We work for the research firm, [Insert Name]. The U.S. Department of Labor has hired us to help them understand the state, local, and participant costs associated with administering the RESEA program. We invited you to speak with us because of your work in the RESEA program as a/an [job title] for [state name].

Today, we will be asking you about the job duties related to the RESEA program performed by you and people you work with as they relate to the RESEA program to better understand the types of state and local resources that are used to run the RESEA program. For example, we would like to learn about your role in supporting RESEA program activities, such as orientation and initial meetings, as well as RESEA staff at this AJC.

Study Background

We will use this information to understand the costs of running the RESEA program and its components. We will also use this information to understand how the costs of running the program compare to any changes in unemployment insurance benefits paid because of claimants' participation in the RESEA program.

[Interviewer note: Customize this paragraph to focus on the components of interest for the interview.]There are 5 program components that we are interested in learning more about today. The first is RESEA Program Administration, the second is selecting and scheduling RESEA participants, the third is AJC Orientation, the fourth is the Initial RESEA meeting, and the fifth and final component is subsequent RESEA meetings (if applicable).

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

- *The study aims to use the information gathered from interviews, questionnaires, and other sources to understand the RESEA program's impact on UI benefits as well as the average per-participant costs, component costs, and claimant costs of the RESEA program.*

- *We are conducting up to 30 interviews with State Unemployment Insurance (UI) and American Jobs Center (AJC) staff who administer, evaluate, or otherwise work on aspects of the RESEA program in your state.*

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 90 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. 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.

We may also send you a brief follow-up survey to collect additional information or to clarify the information that you provide today.

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.]

Component 1: RESEA Program Administration

Note to interviewer & note-taker: It is very important to take careful note of the time unit (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly) used to assess role responsibilities in each question.

Great, we can go ahead and get started now. Throughout the ==interview== we're going to talk about each of the five components I mentioned earlier. The first component we'd like to learn more about is **RESEA Program Administration,** or your work in managing and overseeing the implementation of RESEA. So, we're going to be talking about your role in things like creating the RESEA State Plan, working with AJCs to provide UI eligibility training and technical assistance, and working with the [name of UI office] to maintain program alignment with policy requirements, and evaluating your RESEA program.

Standard Administration

1. *[If conducting the interview with more than one person, ask each individual the following question(s).]* Tell us a little more about yourself. What is your name and title?
   [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]."

   And role in administering the RESEA program?
   a. Can you tell us about your educational background and what kind of experience you had prior to coming into this role.

      i. *Probe*: Do you need any specific training to perform your job?

   b. Approximately what percent of your full-time equivalent (FTE) time do you spent working on the RESEA program?
2. Who administers the RESEA program in your state?
   a. Probe: Do you work as a part of an administrative team? Are staff from outside of [Employment Services Agency] involved?
   b. *[If yes]* Can you describe your team? How many people work on your team? What are their titles? Do they work for the state or someone else?
   c. *[If yes]* Which members of your team are responsible for which aspects of RESEA program administration?
   d. *[If yes]* Approximately what percent of their time does each staff member involved spend on activities related to administering the RESEA program?
3. *[If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities]* In a typical ==week== about how many hours do [you or your team] spend working with/overseeing state staff and contractors who directly work on RESEA?
   a. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical week, what percentage of your time [do you or you team] spend working with or overseeing staff and contractors who directly work on RESEA? An estimate is fine.
   b. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

      i. [*for each individual mentioned*] About how many hours do they spend on this?

   c.
   d. *Probe*: This can include staff who work on RESEA reporting activities, staff who do data collection, management, or analysis, staff who create or maintain your RESEA selection model.
      Note: We will ask about working with evaluation contractors in more detail later in the interview.
   e. In a typical month, how many hours do [==you or your team==] spend liaising with Employment Services staff about the RESEA program? This may include efforts to

support reporting, alignment with policy requirements, selection and scheduling, or other program requirements.

4. *[If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities]* In a typical quarter, about how many hours do [you or your team] spend communicating with, meeting with, or preparing reports for your Federal Project Officer? This may also include attending regional calls with your Federal Project Officer, regional office staff, and other states.

    a. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical quarter, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend communicating with, meeting with, or preparing reports for your Federal Project Officer? An estimate is fine.

    b. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

        i. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

5. *[If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities]* In a typical year, about how many hours do you spend assembling or working on your RESEA state plan?

    a. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical year, what percentage of your time do [you or your team] spend assembling or working on your RESEA state plan? An estimate is fine.

        i. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

            1. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

    b. Who else contributes to assembling the state plan?

        i. What are their titles? Approximately how many hours do they spend contributing to the state plan?

    c. During this time, approximately how many hours do [you or your team] spend trying to identify evidence-based interventions to include in the state plan? An estimate is fine.

        i. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

            1. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

        ii. What does it involve?

6. *[If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities]* In a typical month, about how many hours do you or your team spend working on or reviewing RESEA program reporting?

    a. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical month, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend working on or reviewing RESEA program reporting?

    b. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

        i. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

Alignment with Policy Requirements and Reporting Activities

7. *[If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities]* How do you ensure that your RESEA program is compliant with state and federal laws? Ensuring state alignment with policy requirements may include developing reports for internal or external audiences (including US DOL), working with staff in *[insert name of unemployment insurance agency]* to support claimants' applications, adjudications, or appeals, audits or data reviews, or other activities designed to ensure that the RESEA program is operating as intended and that claimants are in compliance with program requirements.

    a. About how many hours do [you or your team] spend each month reviewing the RESEA program's alignment with policy requirements?

    b. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical month, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend working on reviewing the RESEA program's alignment with policy requirements?

    c. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

        i. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

8. What software, cloud storage, or other materials do you use to support alignment with policy requirements and reporting activities?

    a. What is the dollar value of each of these materials?

AJC Supervision, TA, and Training

9. *[If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities]* Do [you or your team] directly supervise any staff based at AJCs, such as RESEA Area Managers?

    a. *[If yes]* In a typical month, about how many hours do [you or your team] spend supervising AJC-based staff?

        i. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical month, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend supervising AJC-based staff?

    b. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

        i. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

10. *[If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities]* Do [you or your team] provide RESEA-related technical assistance to [insert state name of American Job Centers (AJCs)]?

    a. *[If yes]* In a typical month, about how many hours do [you or your team] spend providing RESEA-related technical assistance to [state AJCs names]?

        i. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical month, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend providing RESEA-related technical assistance to [state AJCs names]?

        ii. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

            1. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

    b. *[If yes]* In a typical month, about how many hours do you or your team spend preparing to provide RESEA-related technical assistance to [state AJCs names]?

        i. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical month, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend preparing to provide RESEA-related technical assistance to [state AJCs name]?

        ii. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

            1. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

    c. Is all technical assistance delivered by your team?

        i. *[If no]* Who else provides technical assistance? Who do they work for and what is their title?

        ii. *[If no]* Approximately how many hours per month do they spend providing technical assistance to [state AJCs name]?

        iii. Please describe the technical assistance they provide.

11. Is technical assistance mandatory for local staff working on RESEA activities?

    a. *[If yes]* What does this technical assistance look like? This could include regular calls, resource sharing, lunch and learn calls, etc.

b. [*If yes*] Who participates in these activities? (e.g., AJC directors, county UI directors, etc.)

12. [*If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities*] Do [you or your team] provide training for state employment services staff or AJC staff on UI eligibility requirements?

   a. [*If yes*] In a typical year, about how many hours do [you or your team] spend preparing for these trainings? This can include things like reading up on changes in the law, preparing training materials, etc.

      i. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical year, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend preparing for these trainings?

      ii. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

         1. [*for each individual mentioned*] About how many hours do they spend on this?

   b. [*If yes*] In a typical year about how many hours do [you or your team] spend providing trainings for state employment services staff or AJC staff on UI eligibility requirements?

      i. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

         1. [*for each individual mentioned*] About how many hours do they spend on this?

13. Do other agencies or staff provide trainings for state employment services or AJC staff on UI eligibility requirements?

   a. *[If no]* Who else provides that training? Who do they work for and what is their title?

   b. *[If no]* Approximately how many hours per year do they spend providing training to staff employment services of [insert AJC name] staff?

   c. Please describe the trainings they provide.

14. What software, cloud storage, or other materials do you use to support AJC Supervision, TA, and Training?

   a. What is the dollar value of each of these materials?

Program Evaluation and Evidence Building Activities

15. [*If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities*] Do [you or your team] oversee your state's RESEA evaluation and/or evidence building?

   a. *[If yes]* Who oversees the evaluation or evidence building activities? In a typical month, how many hours do they spend overseeing the evaluation?

      i. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical month, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend overseeing the evaluation or evidence building activities?

      ii. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

         1. [*for each individual mentioned*] About how many hours do they spend on this?

   b. *[If yes]* Please tell us about your evaluation and your work in overseeing the evaluation.

16. Do you use an in-house program evaluation team or do you contract with an external evaluator to conduct your program evaluations?

   a. *[If contract with external evaluator]* Tell us more about your evaluation contract with your evaluator. What is the value of your contract with your evaluator? What is the period of performance for your evaluation contract?

  b. *[If contract with external evaluator]* In a typical <mark>month</mark>, about how many hours do [you or your team] spend meeting with or working with your evaluation team? This can include doing things like making evaluation decisions, getting evaluation updates, liaising between RESEA program staff and evaluation staff, reviewing evaluation reports, etc).

    i. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical <mark>month</mark>, what percentage of time do [<mark>you or your team</mark>] spend meeting with or working with your evaluation team?

    ii. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

      1. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

  c. *[If using an in-house evaluation team]* Are you currently working on an evaluation or have you done an evaluation in the past <mark>year</mark>?

      1. *[If yes]* Who <mark>is/was</mark> on the evaluation team? What are their titles?

        a. What percentage of their full-time equivalent roles is each person on the evaluation team spending on the evaluation of your state's RESEA program?

        b. Can you tell me about their job duties and where they sit in the organization?

        c. Can you tell us about the educational background of the people on this team? Do they need any specific training to perform their job duties?

        d. Over what period of time was the evaluation conducted? The months and year(s) would be helpful, if you know.

17. *[If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities]* In a typical <mark>*year*</mark>, about [how many hours <mark>do [you and your team]</mark> and your evaluator spend participating in evaluation technical assistance calls, events, or activities sponsored by DOL?

  a. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical <mark>year</mark>, hat percentage of time do [<mark>you or your team</mark>] and your evaluator spend participating in <mark>evaluation</mark> technical assistance calls, events, or activities sponsored by DOL?

  b. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?

    i. *[for each individual mentioned]* About how many hours do they spend on this?

18. What software, cloud storage, or other materials do you use to support program evaluation and evidence building activities?

  a. What is the dollar value of each of these materials?

Component 2: Selecting and Scheduling RESEA Program Participants

Note to interviewer & note-taker: It is very important to take careful note of the time unit (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly) used to assess role responsibilities in each question.

Thank you for answering those questions! The second RESEA program component we'd like to learn more about is the process of **Selecting and Scheduling RESEA Program Participants**. So, we're going to be talking about your role in things like creating and maintaining the RESEA Selection Model and scheduling participants for their RESEA meetings.

19. [*If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities*] Tell us about how [state name] selects and schedules claimants to participate in RESEA. Are you or your team involved in this?

    a. [*If yes*] What type of RESEA selection model does [state name] use? Do you use your WPRS profiling model to select claimants for RESEA or do you have a separate RESEA selection model?

        i. [*If use selection model that is separate from WPRS*] About how much time did [you or your team] spend creating and testing the RESEA selection model?

            1. Who was involved in creating and testing your RESEA selection model? What are their titles?

                a. Approximately how many hours did each individual spend creating and testing the RESEA selection model? An estimate is fine.

            2. When was your model last updated? How often is your model typically updated?

                a. [*if unable to answer*] Could you provide the rough dates of the last two updates to your model?

        ii. In a typical month, how many hours do you spend maintaining your selection model and/or reviewing its output (for example, making sure it is communicating well with the scheduling system and running smoothly)?

            1. [*If staff are unable to give an hours estimate*] In a typical month, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend maintaining your selection model and/or reviewing its output??

            2. [*If part of a team*] Who does this?

                a. [*for each individual mentioned*] About how many hours do they spend creating, updating, or distributing RESEA communication materials?

        iii. What software, cloud storage, or other materials do you use to support your RESEA selection model?

            1. What is the dollar value of each of these materials?

    b. [*If no*] Who works on developing and maintaining the RESEA selection model in your state?

        i. What is their title? What agency do they sit in?

        ii. Approximately, what percentage of their full-time equivalent role do they spend on developing, updating, and maintaining the RESEA selection model?

        iii. What software is used to develop and maintain your selection model?

            1. Does [state] pay licensing fees for the software it needs? If so, what is the dollar value of these fees?

20. [*If relevant to respondent's role and responsibilities*] Once a claimant is selected for RESEA, how are they scheduled for their RESEA meeting? Who is responsible for scheduling claimants' RESEA meetings?

a. [*If scheduling system is automated and maintained by state*] In a typical *month*, how many hours do [you or your team] spend ensuring that selection model results are appropriately transmitted to your RESEA scheduling system?
    i. *If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical month, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend ensuring that selection model results are appropriately transmitted to [state AJCs name]?
    ii. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?
        1. [*for each individual mentioned*] About how many hours do they spend on this?
b. [*If AJC's are responsible for scheduling claimants*] In a typical *week*, how many hours do you spend ensuring that selection model results are appropriately transmitted to [state AJCs name]?
    i. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical week, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend ensuring that selection model results are appropriately transmitted to [state AJCs name]?
    ii. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?
        1. [*for each individual mentioned*] About how many hours do they spend on this?
c. In a typical *week*, how many hours do [you or your team] spend helping AJCs troubleshoot scheduling issues? This may include issues pulling eligible claimants from the scheduling pool, helping them figure out technology issues, etc.?
    i. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical week, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend helping AJCs troubleshoot scheduling issues?
    ii. *[If part of a team]* Who on your team does this?
        1. [*for each individual mentioned*] About how many hours do they spend on this?
d. In a typical week, how many hours do [you or your team] spend providing other guidance, training, and/or scheduling support to AJCs?
    i. *[If staff are unable to give an hours estimate]* In a typical week, what percentage of time do [you or your team] spend providing general scheduling support to AJCs?
    ii. *[If part of a team]* Who does this?
        1. [*for each individual mentioned*] About how many hours do they spend on this?
e. What software is used to support scheduling in your state?
    i. Does [state] pay licensing fees for the software it needs? If so, what is the dollar value of these fees?
f. What other materials are used to support scheduling in [state]?
    i. What are the costs associated with these materials?

Component 3: AJC Orientation

Note to interviewer & note-taker: It is very important to take careful note of the time unit (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly) used to assess role responsibilities in each question.

Okay, now we're going to move onto the third RESEA program component that we'd like to learn more about, which is **AJC Orientation**. So, we're going to be talking about what orientation looks like for both RESEA participants and AJC staff.

21. What does AJC Orientation look like for RESEA participants in [state name]?
    a. How are AJC Orientations delivered in [state name] (i.e., in-person only, virtually only, hybrid, combination)?
        i. *[If multiple modes are used]* What percentage of claimants conduct their AJC orientation in-person? Virtually? Hybrid?
    b. Are any orientation materials developed by state RESEA staff?
    c. *[If yes]* Which materials were developed by the state?
    d. *[If yes]* Who developed these materials? What is their title?
    e. *[If yes]* Approximately how many hours did they spend developing these materials?
    f. *[If yes] About how much did it cost to produce these materials? This might include the cost of purchasing supplies or software, or of printing materials.*
22. Can you tell us about what staff are involved in providing AJC Orientation to RESEA participants?
    a. What kind of educational and employment experience do staff in these roles typically have?
    b. Do these staff typically work full time on RESEA or do they also work on other programs?
        ii. If they work on other programs, what percentage of their time do they typically spend on RESEA? Does it vary by AJC?

Component 4: Initial RESEA Meeting

Note to interviewer & note-taker: It is very important to take careful note of the time unit (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly) used to assess role responsibilities in each question.

Okay, now we're going to move onto the fourth RESEA program component that we'd like to learn more about, which is the **Initial RESEA Meeting**. So, we're going to be talking about who is involved in those meetings and what they typically look like for an RESEA participant.

23. What does an initial RESEA Meeting look like for RESEA participants in [state name]? What topics are covered? How long do the meetings typically last? Are those meetings conducted in-person or virtually?
    a. Are initial RESEA Meetings delivered in the same way that they were during [insert year of impact study build]? If not, how is the initial RESEA meeting different now?
24. Can you tell us about how many Initial RESEA Meetings were completed in [2024/2025]?
    a. How do the number of meetings fluctuate over the course of the year? Are some months busier than others?
25. Can you tell us about what staff are involved in the initial RESEA meeting? Are these the same staff that work on AJC Orientations for RESEA?
    a. [If the staff are not the same], What kind of educational and employment experience do staff in these roles typically have?
        iii. Do these staff typically work full time on RESEA or do they also work on other programs?

      iv. If they work on other programs, what percentage of their time do they typically spend on RESEA? How much does this vary by AJC?

26. What software, cloud storage, or other materials do you use to support initial RESEA meetings?

      g. What is the dollar value of each of these materials?

Component 5: Subsequent RESEA Meetings (if applicable to state)

Note to interviewer & note-taker: It is very important to take careful note of the time unit (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly) used to assess role responsibilities in each question.

Great, thank you for answering all our questions so far, now we're going to move onto the fifth and final RESEA program component that we'd like to learn more about, which are the **Subsequent RESEA Meetings**. So, we're going to be talking about who is involved in those meetings and what they typically look like for an RESEA participant.

27. Does your state offer subsequent RESEA meetings?

28. What do the subsequent RESEA meeting look like for RESEA participants in [state name]? What topics are covered? How long do the meetings typically last? Are those meetings conducted in-person or virtually?

29. Can you tell us about how many subsequent I RESEA Meetings were completed in [2024/2025]?

      a. How do the number of meetings fluctuate over the course of the year? Are some months busier than others?

30. Can you tell us about what staff are involved in the subsequent RESEA meeting? Are these the same staff that work on AJC Orientations for RESEA?

      b. [If the staff are not the same], What kind of educational and employment experience do staff in these roles typically have?

            i. Do these staff typically work full time on RESEA or do they also work on other programs?

            ii. If they work on other programs, what percentage of their time do they typically spend on RESEA? How much does this vary by AJC?

31. What software, cloud storage, or other materials do you use to support subsequent RESEA meetings?

      a. What is the dollar value of each of these materials?

Wrap up

1. Is there anything else you would like to share with us that we have not already covered?

Thank you very much for your time! We found your input very helpful. If you have any questions or concerns, or if you would like to share anything with us that we did not discuss, please feel free to contact us.