

Tracking Changes in Program Implementation: Findings from Multiple Rounds of the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Implementation Survey

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The 2018 Bipartisan Budget Act (Public Law 115-123) amended the Social Security Act to require states to adopt evidence-based strategies in their Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) programs. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is funding a portfolio of work to support increased evaluation of RESEA, deepen states' evaluation capacities, and lay the groundwork for a culture of evidence-building. To that end, DOL is delivering ongoing and extensive technical assistance to support states to meet the evidence requirements, and it conducted an implementation study that described states' RESEA programs. The implementation study identified and described specific strategies states used to integrate and align with workforce partners, select claimants for RESEA, promote high attendance rates at RESEA meetings, provide customized reemployment services, strengthen program integrity, and build evidence on program impacts.¹

A 2022 implementation study report² drew on data from three waves of a web-based survey of all state RESEA directors. Since completion of that report, the study team conducted a fourth survey wave. Relying on these longitudinal data, this brief addresses the following research questions:

1. How have states' RESEA programs evolved as their operations return to a post-pandemic "new normal"?
2. What progress have states made in strengthening their evidence capacity and in building evidence of program effectiveness?

This brief summarizes the changes in RESEA program design and service delivery that occurred since the first survey wave in 2020. It also describes states' current evaluation activities and plans. Its research questions build on the implementation study report's longer and more detailed list of research questions.

Each survey wave asked respondents to report on recent and upcoming changes to their RESEA program design, document current program features and operations, identify implementation challenges and

Box 1. Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program Overview

The RESEA grant program is a federally funded, state-run effort to:

- improve employment outcomes for recipients of Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits;
- strengthen UI program integrity; and
- promote alignment between UI and the broader workforce development system.

Legislation enacted in 2018 requires that states' RESEA programs be supported by evidence of effectiveness and allowed states to use 10 percent of their RESEA grants to fund evaluations to help generate such evidence.

Source: Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-123), Section 306 of the Social Security Act. See

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-115publ123/pdf/PLAW-115publ123.pdf>.

¹ DOL contracted with Abt Associates, in partnership with the Urban Institute, Capital Research Corporation, and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, to carry out these activities.

² Trutko, J., Trutko, A., Clarkwest, A., Souvanna, P., Klerman, J. A., Spaulding, S., Briggs, A., Scott, M., Hecker, I., Islam, A., & Katz, B. (2022). *RESEA Program Strategies: State and Local Implementation*. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, Chief Evaluation Office. Rockville, MD: Abt Associates. https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/resea/RESEA_Implementation_Study_Report_State_and_Local_Program_Strategies_Final_508c.pdf

promising practices, and report on the status of ongoing evaluation activities. Fielded from February through March 2020, the initial survey, referred to as **Wave 1**, captured states’ perspectives and program implementation just prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In October and November 2020, the **Wave 2** survey provided an update on program implementation seven months into the pandemic. That wave also sought to understand how the pandemic affected states’ RESEA operations, what strategies states adopted in response, and what change the pandemic might spur in the longer term. Fielded between March and May 2021, the **Wave 3** survey documented ongoing program implementation and states’ continued efforts to re-establish program operations one year after the pandemic began. The 2022 implementation study report discussed findings and trends across these three survey waves.

Fielded from late-May to July 2023, the **Wave 4** survey continued to collect data on program features and operations, in addition to updates on states’ completed, ongoing, and future evaluation and evidence-building efforts. In Wave 4, 51 respondents (98 percent of states) completed the survey. These 51 states represent about 99 percent of the total number of UI claimants scheduled for an initial RESEA meeting in fiscal year 2022.³ Exhibit 1 shows fielding details for each survey wave. The companion Appendix to this brief includes tabulations of results for each survey question in Wave 4,⁴ and the implementation study report includes comparable tabulations for Waves 1-3.⁵

Exhibit 1. RESEA Implementation Survey Waves, Fielding Dates, Respondents, and Response Rates

Survey Wave	Fielding Dates	Respondents	Number of States Surveyed	Response Rate
Wave 1	February–March 2020	43	50	86%
Wave 2	October–November 2020	46	50	92%
Wave 3	March–May 2021	50	51	98%
Wave 4	May–July 2023	51	52	98%

Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 2, 3, and 4. Waves 1, 2, and 3 reported in *RESEA Program Strategies: State and Local Implementation* (Trutko et al., 2022)

Note: The states surveyed included non-state entities Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment.

1. Changes to Program Design and Service Delivery: 2020–2023

Each survey wave’s questions about program design and implementation covered approaches to selection of participants, scheduling RESEA meetings, meeting logistics, service delivery, and response to non-compliance with Unemployment Insurance (UI) and RESEA requirements. Because the survey had a very high response rate and these questions were asked consistently in each wave, we can compare responses across waves to explore changes in program implementation over time. This section highlights notable changes to the RESEA program since the first survey wave in 2020.

We include responses from Waves 1, 3, and 4 only, because detailed questions about program implementation were asked of all states in those three waves. We omit Wave 2 in this brief because 30 percent of responding states had temporarily suspended their RESEA programs due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and questions about program implementation were only asked of states whose programs were operating. Of the 51 states that responded to Wave 4, 40 also had responded to Waves 1 and 3. This brief

³ This is higher than the percentage of states responding because the non-responding state serves a below-average number of claimants.

⁴ Epstein, Z., Hawthorne, A., & Copson, E. (2024). *Tracking Changes in Program Implementation: Findings from Multiple Rounds of the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Implementation Survey. Appendix: Detailed Wave 4 Survey Results*. Report submitted to U.S. Department of Labor, Chief Evaluation Office. Rockville, MD: Abt Associates.

⁵ Trutko et al., 2022.

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⁵ Trutko et al., 2022.

compares responses across the three survey waves only for those respondents who answered the applicable question in each wave included in that comparison.

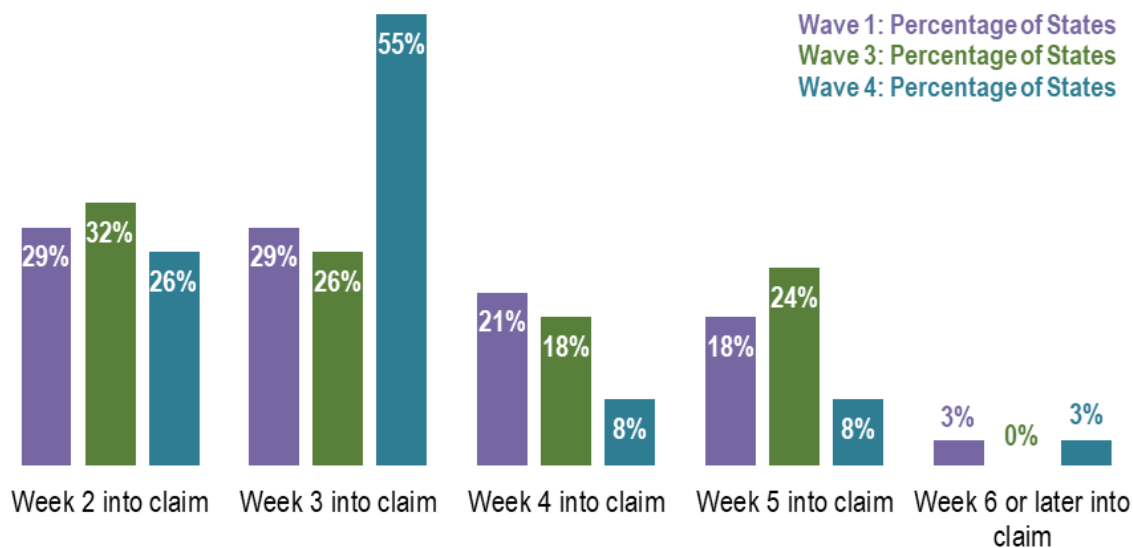
- **In selecting UI claimants for the RESEA program, states consistently reported that they targeted claimants identified as most likely to exhaust UI benefits.**

Across Waves 1, 3, and 4, between two-thirds and three-quarters of states (66 and 74 percent) reported they aimed to enroll in RESEA those UI claimants who were most likely to exhaust their UI benefits. About 20-25 percent of states targeted claimants who had both a high risk of benefit exhaustion and other unspecified characteristics that made them appropriate for RESEA participation per the state’s objectives. The remaining states selected claimants for reasons other than their likelihood of exhausting benefits.

- **In Wave 4, a larger percentage of states reported selecting claimants early into their claim period, with the majority of states having selected claimants by the third week into their UI claim.**

Exhibit 2 shows the number of weeks into their claim that states reported selecting claimants for RESEA. In Waves 1 and 3, 58 percent of states (22 states) reported selecting claimants for RESEA by the third week into their UI claim (sum of the purple and green bars in weeks 2 and 3). In Wave 4, this proportion increased to 82 percent of states (31 states) selecting claimants in that timeframe (the sum of the teal bars in weeks 2 and 3). Fewer than five percent of states reported selecting claimants for RESEA in week 6 or later.

Exhibit 2. Timing of Selection for RESEA, by Number of Weeks into the UI Claim



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 3, and 4, Q3a1. N=38 states.

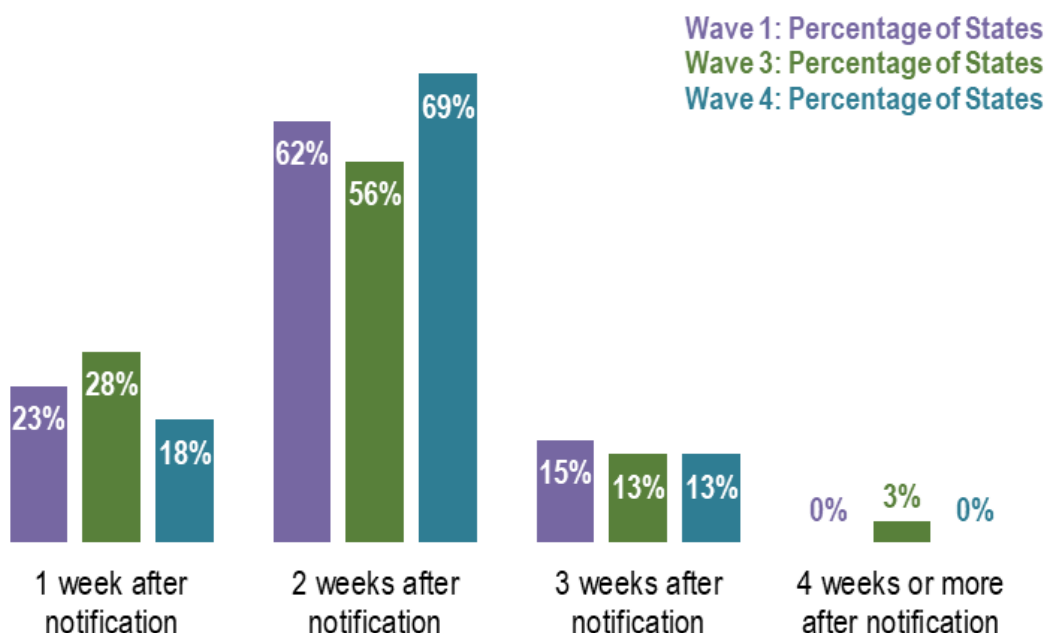
Note: Totals might not sum to 100 percent, because respondents could select more than one response. Wave 2 findings are omitted because this question was not asked of the 30 percent of responding states whose programs were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic at that time. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023.

RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment; UI=Unemployment Insurance.

■ **The timing of when the initial RESEA meeting takes place, relative to the notification of selection, remained relatively consistent between Waves 1 and 4.**

Although more states selected claimants for RESEA early in their UI claim (Exhibit 2) in Wave 4 than in earlier waves, states reported little change in the timing of the initial RESEA meeting relative to notification of RESEA selection. As shown in Exhibit 3 below, in each of the three waves, about 85 percent of states expected the initial RESEA meeting to occur within two weeks after selection for participation in RESEA. Selecting and notifying claimants earlier in their claim period, while holding the timing of the meeting constant, implies that states tended to hold their RESEA meetings earlier in the claim.

Exhibit 3. Timing of Initial RESEA Meeting, by Number of Weeks Following Notification of Selection into RESEA



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 3, and 4, Q3b1. N=39 states.

Note: States could select one response option. Totals might not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Wave 2 findings are omitted because this question was not asked of the approximately 30 percent of states whose programs were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic at that time. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023. RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment.

■ **Overall, states appeared to be providing more flexibility to claimants in scheduling RESEA meetings and in the location of those meetings than they did prior to the pandemic.**

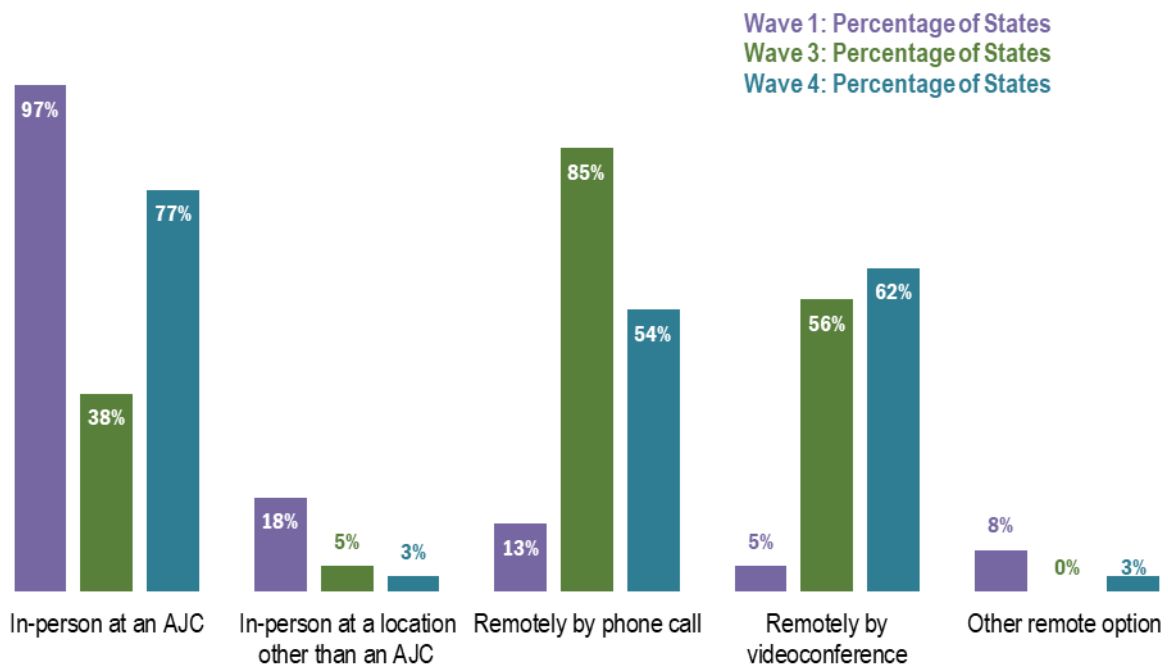
In Wave 1, three-quarters of states allowed claimants to reschedule their initial meeting only for extenuating circumstances, and the RESEA staff handled rescheduling.⁶ Since then, 24 percent more states have chosen to allow claimants to reschedule their own meetings—likely by using online scheduling systems⁷—and several reported allowing claimants to reschedule for convenience alone, rather than for extenuating circumstances (not shown).

⁶ Trutko et al., 2022.

⁷ Trutko et al., 2022.

States also offered more flexibility in the location and delivery mode for the initial RESEA meeting. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the typical RESEA meeting was held in person at a local American Job Center (AJC) (Exhibit 4 below; 97 percent in Wave 1). A small share of states routinely held at least some RESEA meetings remotely: in Wave 1, 13 percent of states reported holding meetings by phone and five percent by videoconference (Exhibit 4). Since the pandemic started, the majority of states shifted to delivering initial RESEA meetings remotely. In Wave 3, 85 percent of states offered meetings by phone and 56 percent by videoconference. As of Wave 4 (2023), the RESEA program appeared to have stabilized in a hybrid model, where in-person meetings at AJCs (77 percent), phone meetings (54 percent), and videoconference meetings (62 percent) are each identified as typical in most states (Exhibit 4). However, relative to Wave 3, fewer states conducted those remote meetings by phone.

Exhibit 4. Typical Location and Delivery Mode for Initial RESEA Meetings



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 3, and 4, Q3c1. N=39 states.

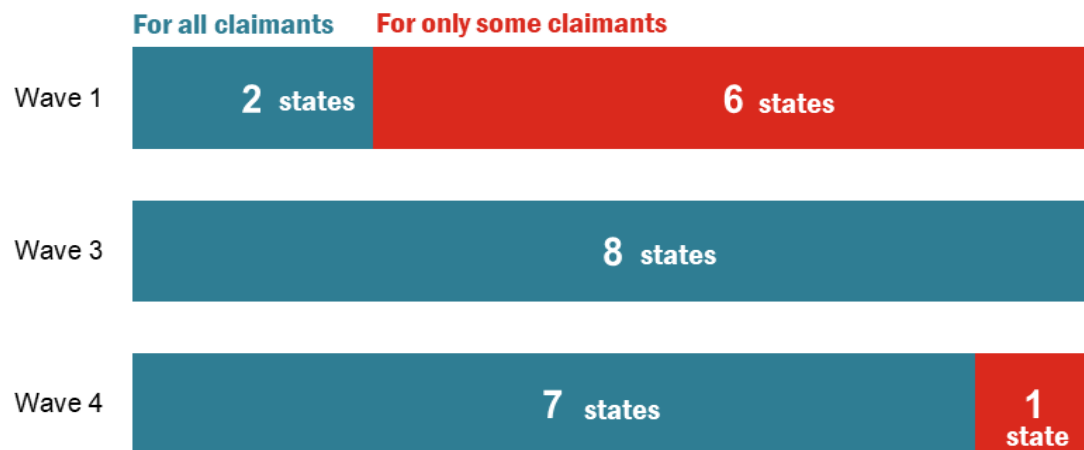
Note: Totals might not sum to 100 percent, because respondents could select more than one response. Wave 2 findings are omitted because this question was not asked of the approximately 30 percent of states whose programs were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic at that time. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023.

RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment.

- **Of the eight states that reported offering remote services in all waves, they widened their availability after Wave 1, tending to make remote services available to all claimants in later waves.**

Among the eight states that reported offering remote meetings in all survey waves, Exhibit 5 below shows the number of states that offered remote initial RESEA meetings to all claimants selected for the program (teal bars) and the number of states that offered remote meetings to only some claimants (red bars). Because only eight states responded to this question in all three of survey Waves 1, 3, and 4, these responses might not be representative of all states. But they nonetheless give some indication of changes over time, based on that subset of states. As shown, since Wave 1, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we observed a shift toward offering remote meetings more widely. Only two of the eight reporting states offered remote initial RESEA meetings to all claimants, whereas in Waves 3 and 4 (post-COVID), all or nearly all eight states offered remote meetings to all claimants.

Exhibit 5. Availability of Option to Hold Remote Initial RESEA Meetings



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 3, and 4, Q3c2. N=8 states.

Note: States could select one response option. Wave 2 findings are omitted because this question was not asked of the approximately 30 percent of states whose programs were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic at that time. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023.

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- **Although service delivery modes changed between Waves 1 and 4, states reported providing similar content and services in the initial RESEA meetings in all waves.**

DOL provides guidance to programs on the elements required in an initial RESEA meeting. Initial meetings must include an assessment of eligibility for UI benefits, a review of work search activities, customized labor market and career information, co-enrollment in the Employment Service program, development of an individual reemployment plan, and information and referrals to other reemployment and AJC services and resources.⁸ As these required elements did not change between the first and fourth survey waves (2020 to 2023), it is not surprising that similar shares of states continued to provide required content and services across waves. For each element, the share of states delivering that service never differed between Waves 1 and 4 more than eight percentage points (not shown). States also tended to emphasize similar types of individualized services (e.g., individualized reemployment plans, labor market information, job referrals, and career planning assistance) (not shown).

- **Across the three survey waves, most states reported conducting subsequent RESEA meetings after the initial RESEA meeting; in Wave 4, the number of subsequent meetings states reported conducting increased.**

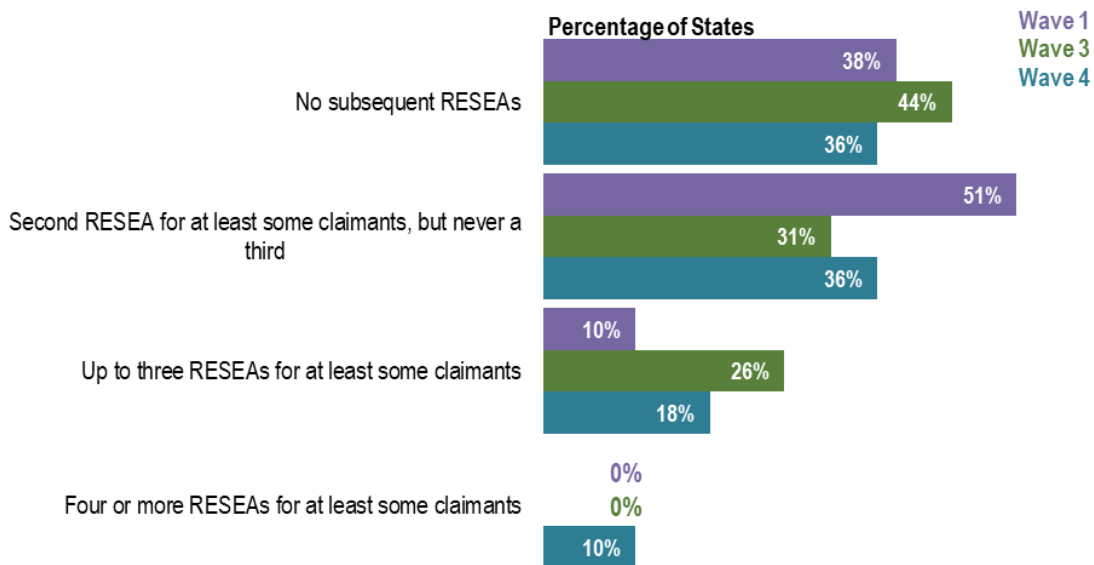
DOL allows states discretion in whether or not they plan to conduct any subsequent (i.e., in addition to the initial) meetings for RESEA participants and, if they do, how many. If states hold subsequent meetings, DOL requires that those meetings include a UI eligibility assessment and a review of the claimants' work search activities.⁹ In all three waves, more than half of states reported conducting a subsequent meeting (Exhibit 6 below). Though the share of states that conducted at least one subsequent meeting changed little from Wave 1 to 4 (remaining at about 63 percent), the share of states that conducted more than one subsequent meeting increased (10 percent in Wave 1 versus 28 percent in Wave 4). By Wave 4 (2023), states varied more in the number of meetings offered, as four states reported

⁸ See Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) 02-23, <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/advisories/UIPL/2023/UIPL%2002-23/UIPL%2002-23A.pdf>

⁹ UIPL 02-23.

conducting four or more RESEA meetings for some claimants (Exhibit 6), more meetings than any state had previously reported conducting.

Exhibit 6. Percentage of States that Conducted Subsequent RESEA Meetings



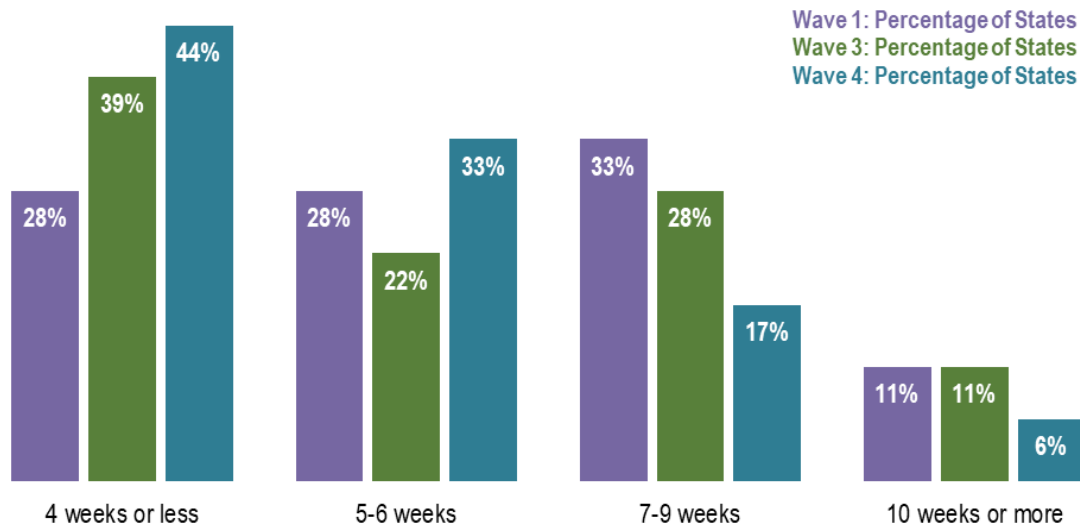
Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 3, and 4, Q3e1. N=39 states.

Note: States could select one response option. Totals might not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Wave 2 findings are omitted because this question was not asked of the approximately 30 percent of states whose programs were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic at that time. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023. RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment.

■ **Consistent with the finding that states started selecting claimants for RESEA earlier in their claim, states also conducted subsequent meetings earlier in the claim.**

Among the 18 states that reported conducting subsequent meetings in all three waves, the share of states that typically held the first subsequent meeting within six weeks of the initial claim increased from 56 percent in Wave 1 (10 states) to 78 percent in Wave 4 (14 states) (Exhibit 7 below). Notably, in Wave 4, 44 percent of states reported holding the second RESEA meeting within four weeks of the initial claim. The accelerated timing of subsequent meetings could be driven in part by states’ accelerated timing for claimant selection and conducting initial meetings.

Exhibit 7. Timing of Typical Second RESEA Meeting, by Number of Weeks into the UI Claim



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 3, and 4, Q3e2. N=18 states.

Note: States could select one response option. Totals might not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Wave 2 findings are omitted because this question was not asked of the approximately 30 percent of states whose programs were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic at that time. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023.

RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment. UI=Unemployment Insurance.

■ **States reported increased use of activities designed to promote RESEA program attendance and service delivery, such as reminder notifications to claimants.**

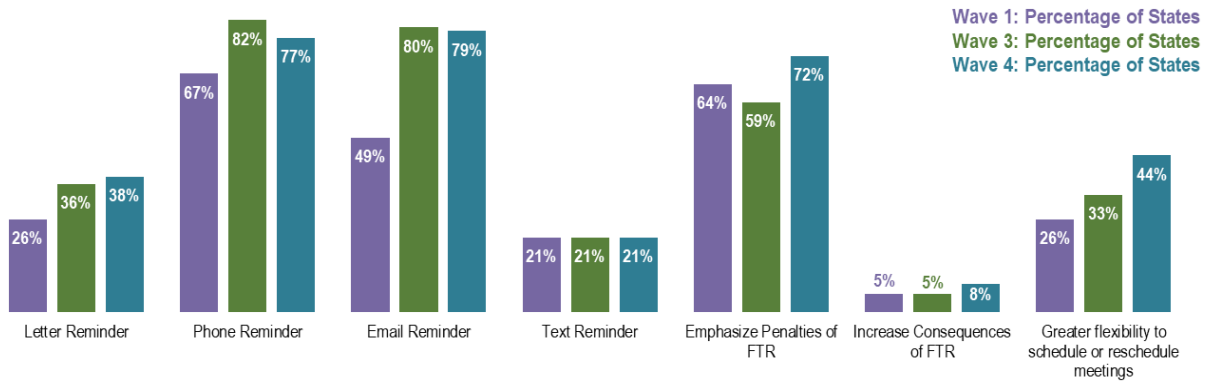
Attendance at RESEA meetings is mandatory, but not all UI claimants who are selected for RESEA attend the mandatory meetings. Non-attendance has consequences for the claimants, such as suspension of UI benefits, the specifics of which vary across states.¹⁰ States have implemented various strategies to encourage meeting attendance, such as more frequent reminders and assorted notification modes such as phone, email, or text message. Across all survey waves, nearly every state implemented at least one such strategy.

The results of Waves 3 and 4 of the survey show states increased efforts to promote meeting attendance since the first survey wave. As shown in Exhibit 8 below, in Wave 1, 67 percent of states used phone reminders, and 49 percent used email. By the Wave 4 survey, 77 and 79 percent of states used phone and email reminders, respectively. States also offered claimants greater flexibility to schedule and reschedule RESEA meetings, with an increase from 26 percent of states in Wave 1 to 44 percent of states in Wave 4. Email and phone reminders were most common, but states also sent reminders via letters (38 percent in Wave 4) and text message (21 percent in each of the waves).

Though most states in all waves reported that staff emphasized penalties for claimants’ failure to report to RESEA meetings (e.g., 72 percent in Wave 4), few states increased the consequences for non-attendance. Just five percent of states in the first two waves and eight percent of states in Wave 4 reported greater consequences for non-attendance.

¹⁰ Trutko et al., 2022.

Exhibit 8. Prevalence of Activities to Reduce Failure to Report to RESEA Meetings



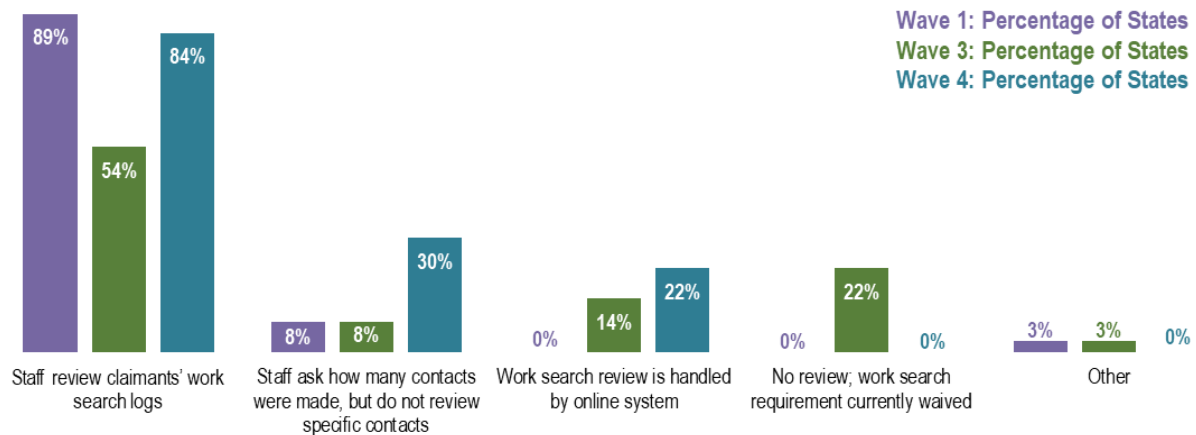
Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 3, and 4, Q4a2. N=39 states.

Note: Totals might not sum to 100 percent, because respondents could select more than one response. Wave 2 findings are omitted because this question was not asked of the approximately 30 percent of states whose programs were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic at that time. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023. FTR=Failure to Report. RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment.

- In response to the pandemic, states changed their approach to conducting RESEA’s work search review, either suspending the requirement or transitioning to an online system. However, by Wave 4, nearly all states had resumed pre-pandemic, staff-led review while sustaining more flexible and online review procedures.**

The minimum requirements of the initial RESEA meeting include a review of claimants’ work search, provided that work search had not been suspended. As of Wave 1, about 90 percent of states expected staff in the initial RESEA meeting to review claimants’ work search log of contacts with prospective employers. As shown in Exhibit 9, in Spring 2021 (Wave 3), about a year after the onset of the pandemic, only about half of states continued to require that most staff-intensive approach to review. About 20 percent of states had suspended the work search review. By Wave 4 (2023), all states had reinstated the work search review requirement, but more states allowed for an inquiry into work search activity less intensive than before the pandemic, without review of specific employer contacts.

Exhibit 9: Prevalence of Work Search Review Efforts as Part of the Eligibility Assessments



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 3, and 4, Q4b2. N=37 states.

Note: Totals might not sum to 100 percent, because respondents could select more than one response. Wave 2 findings are omitted because this question was not asked of the approximately 30 percent of states whose programs were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic at that time. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023.

■ **By Wave 4, more states reported taking steps to integrate their RESEA programs with key workforce system partner programs.**

The RESEA program is meant to supplement services offered through the workforce system (see Box 1, page 1). A specific statutory aim of RESEA is “to promote alignment with the broader vision of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of increased program integration and service delivery.”¹¹ In particular, DOL emphasizes RESEA’s coordination with the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service and the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.¹²

The survey asked states about efforts made to integrate RESEA with WIOA and Wagner-Peyser services. As shown in Exhibit 10 below, in all three waves, about 60 percent of states reported that they included staff from these two programs in RESEA meetings. In all three waves, at least two-thirds of states also reported that they trained WIOA or Wagner-Peyser staff on RESEA procedures and requirements, which could allow for additional flexibility in staffing and broaden knowledge of RESEA among partner program staff.¹³

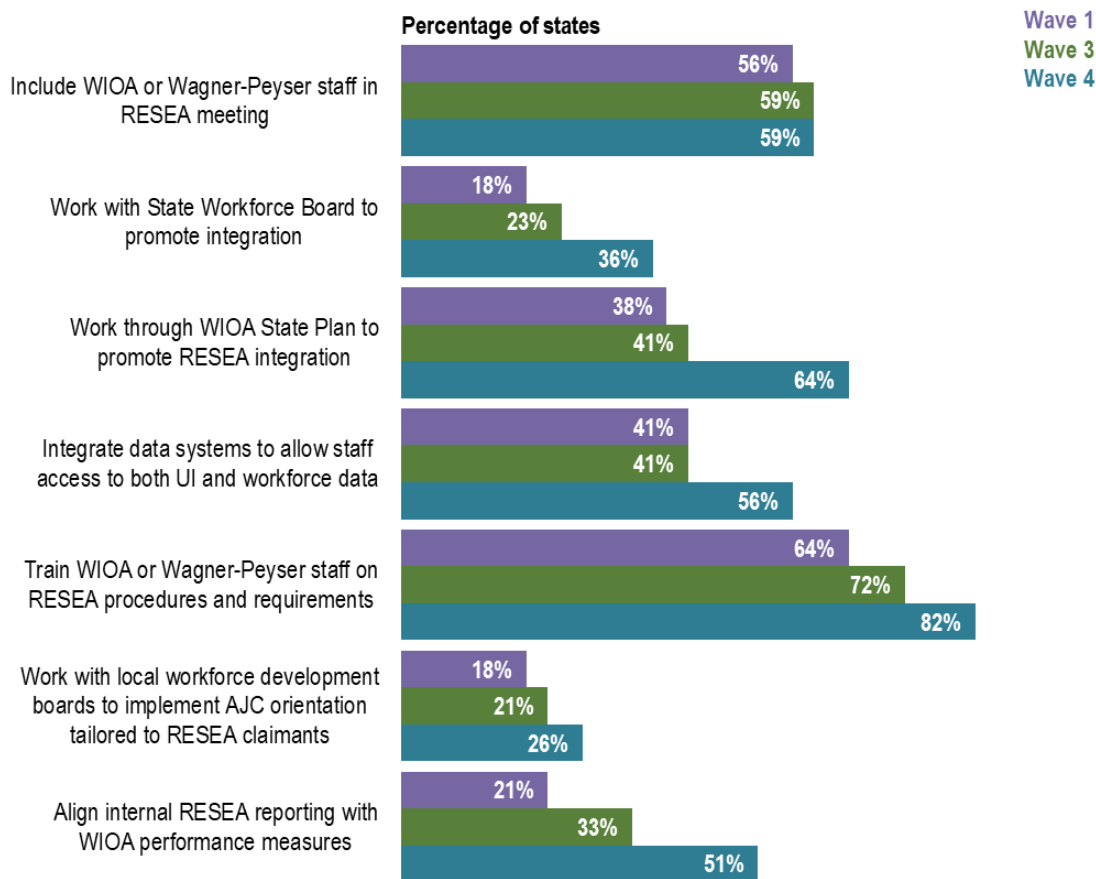
Between Wave 1 (2020) and Wave 4 (2023), survey results showed increases of about 15 to 30 percentage points for most other activities related to program integration, including working with state workforce boards and through WIOA state plans, integrating data systems to allow staff access to both UI and workforce data, and aligning RESEA reporting with WIOA performance measures.

¹¹ Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-123), Section 306 of the Social Security Act. See <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-115publ123/pdf/PLAW-115publ123.pdf>.

¹² For additional information about these programs, see <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa/programs>.

¹³ Trutko et al., 2022.

Exhibit 10. Steps to Integrate RESEA Programs with WIOA and Wagner-Peyser Services



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1, 3, and 4, Q4c3. N=39 states.

Note: Totals might not sum to 100 percent, because respondents could select more than one response. Wave 2 findings are omitted because this question was not asked of the approximately 30 percent of states whose programs were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic at that time. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023. AJC=American Job Center. RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment. UI=Unemployment Insurance. WIOA=Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

2. Building RESEA Evidence

The 2018 amendment to the Social Security Act that authorized the RESEA program to operate in all states also introduced “tiered” evidence requirements to support program development and implementation nationwide.¹⁴ The tiered evidence requirement calls for states to develop RESEA program designs and services using existing evidence that program components reduce UI benefit duration and improve employment outcomes. Also, states must generate new evidence that builds on past studies and informs future program implementation.¹⁵ States play a central role in building evidence about RESEA by conducting evaluations of their RESEA programs.

Each of the survey waves asked states questions about staff knowledge regarding the evidence-building requirements from the legislation, capacity for conducting evaluations, and evaluation progress. The

¹⁴ Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-123), Section 306 of the Social Security Act.

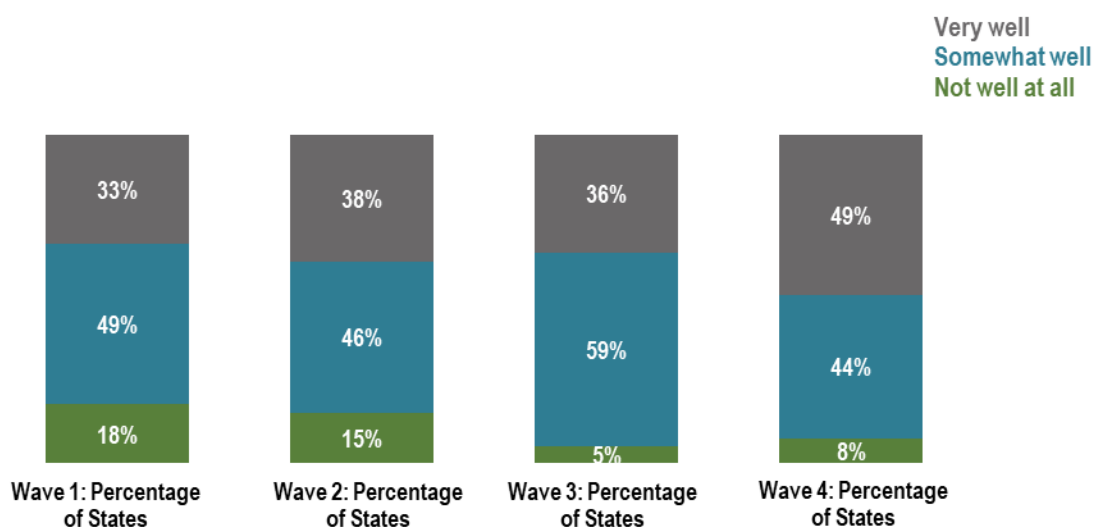
¹⁵ Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) No. 07-19. (2019). *Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Funding Allotments and Operating Guidance for Unemployment Insurance (UI) Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Grants.* https://oui.dola.gov/dmstree/uipl/uipl2k19/uipl_0719.pdf.

following section reports information on changes in staff knowledge of the legislation over time for all four survey waves. It also includes an update on the status of states' evaluations, using responses to Wave 4 of the survey. The fourth survey wave expanded on the evaluation questions of past waves to capture information on completed evaluations, evaluations underway, and states' plans for future evaluations.¹⁶

- **In Wave 1, a large majority of states reported that they understood the RESEA program's evidence requirements at least somewhat well. Still, states' collective understanding of the requirements improved over time.**

As of Wave 1, more than 80 percent of state respondents reported that they understood RESEA's program requirements "somewhat" or "very well" (Exhibit 11). That share of state program directors who understood the requirements slowly increased in each subsequent wave, reaching about 92 percent in Wave 4. The subset of states that reported understanding the program requirements "very well" also increased from Wave 1 to Wave 4. The Wave 4 results suggest that, in 2023, only a few states still needed support to understand the requirements they faced. States' improved understanding could be due, in part, to DOL's guidance and technical assistance, states' having had time to review and interpret the requirements since enactment in 2018, or other factors.

Exhibit 11. States' Self-Reported Understanding of RESEA Requirements for Evidence of Effectiveness and Performance



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1-4, Q6a1. N=39 states.

Note: Totals might not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 2, Oct-Nov 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023.

RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment.

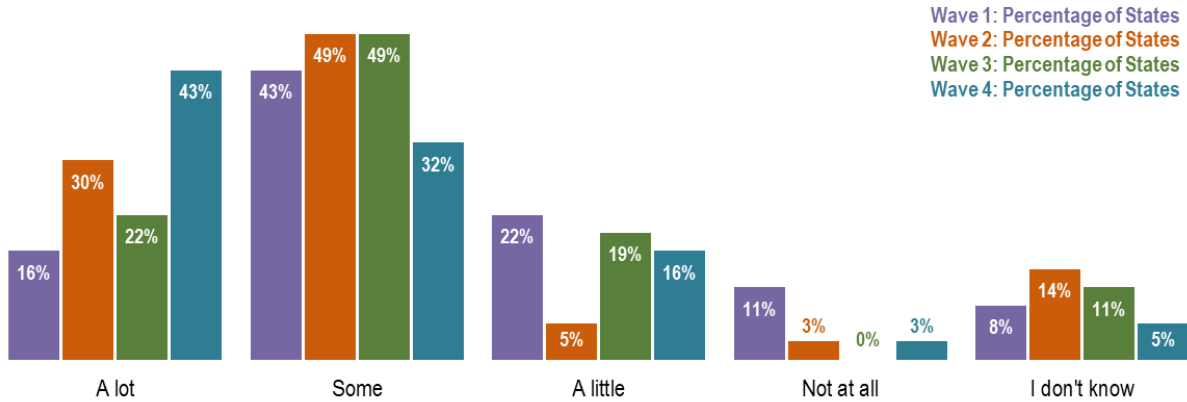
- **Relative to the first wave in 2020, states reported conducting more analyses of their data on RESEA participants to assess program effectiveness.**

The survey asked the degree to which state RESEA offices used and analyzed RESEA participant data they already collected to assess how their program was working. As shown in Exhibit 12, states' efforts to analyze their data increased in two ways since 2020. First, the number of states that analyzed participant-level data increased. In Wave 1, most states (81 percent) reported that they analyzed their data at least a

¹⁶ See the separate Appendix to this brief for a full list of Wave 4 questions, available at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasp/evaluation/completedstudies/RESEA-Evidence-Building-Implementation-Study>

little, and that share increased in each subsequent wave, reaching 91 percent in Wave 4. Second, the extent to which states analyze their data increased, conditional on their already doing so in previous waves. In other words, states’ analyses grew more intensive over time, too. Sixteen percent of states reported that they analyzed their data “a lot” in Wave 1, and that share increased substantially to 43 percent in Wave 4. States’ increased use of RESEA participant data suggests that states advanced in their capacity for evidence-building by using the data already available to them to learn about their programs, how they worked, and for whom.

Exhibit 12. Degree to Which States Reported that They Analyzed RESEA Participant-level Data to Assess the Program



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Waves 1-3, Q6e3, Wave 4, Q6f3. N=37 states.

Note: Totals might not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Field dates for each survey wave: Wave 1, Feb-Mar 2020; Wave 2, Oct-Nov 2020; Wave 3, March-May 2021; Wave 4, May-July 2023.

RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment.

■ **In Wave 4, 12 states reported having completed an evaluation of their RESEA program; eight of them were experimental impact evaluations using random assignment of claimants.**

Wave 4 of the survey asked states which types of evaluations they had completed. For this survey question, states could select multiple evaluation types, if applicable. Twelve states—about one-quarter of Wave 4 respondents—reported having completed an evaluation since 2019 (not shown).¹⁷ Of these states, eight (two-thirds) had conducted experimental impact evaluations that used random assignment to assign claimants either to a group offered the RESEA intervention being tested or to a group not offered that intervention. This *randomized controlled trial* design produces strong evidence of program effectiveness because it generates a credible comparison to claimants enrolled in the RESEA program.¹⁸ Six states reported completing outcomes studies, such as analyses of program performance data. Among this small sample of states with completed evaluations, none reported quasi-experimental impact evaluations or cost studies.

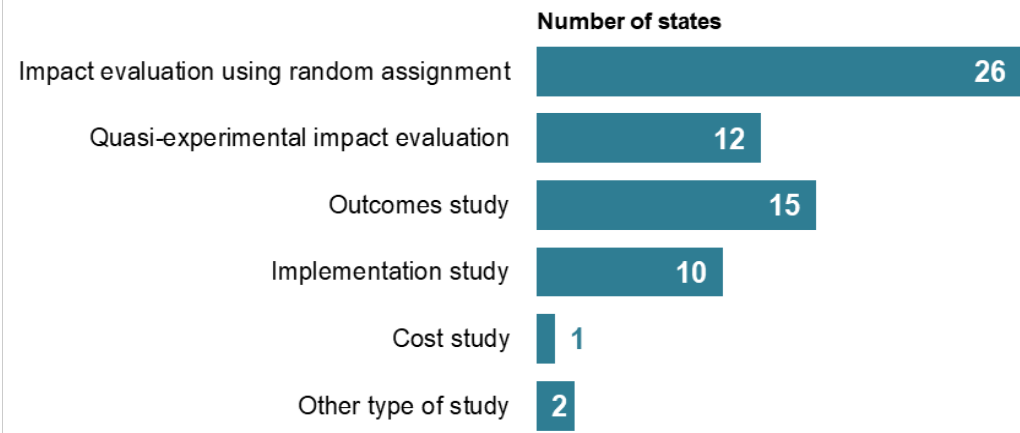
¹⁷ The Wave 4 survey asked states if they had participated in an evaluation since 2019, not since the first wave of the survey in 2020.

¹⁸ Mills De La Rosa, S., Souvanna, P., Clarkwest, A., Kappil, T., Epstein, Z., Rothschild, L., Kuehn, D., Wall, A., Klerman, J., & Nightingale, D. (2021). *Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Evaluation Toolkit: Key Elements for State RESEA Programs*. Report prepared by Abt Associates. Washington, DC: US Department of Labor. https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/RESEA_Toolkit_February2021.pdf

■ **Among states that reported having an evaluation currently underway, impact evaluations were the most common type.**

As of the Wave 4 survey, 44 states reported having at least one evaluation underway. States could select more than one study type, and their responses indicate that some states operated multiple types of studies simultaneously (Exhibit 13). Impact evaluations were the most common type of study, with 26 states conducting experimental impact evaluations using random assignment and 12 states conducting quasi-experimental impact evaluations. Fifteen states had outcomes studies and 10 states had implementation studies underway.

Exhibit 13. Types of Evaluations Underway, as of Wave 4

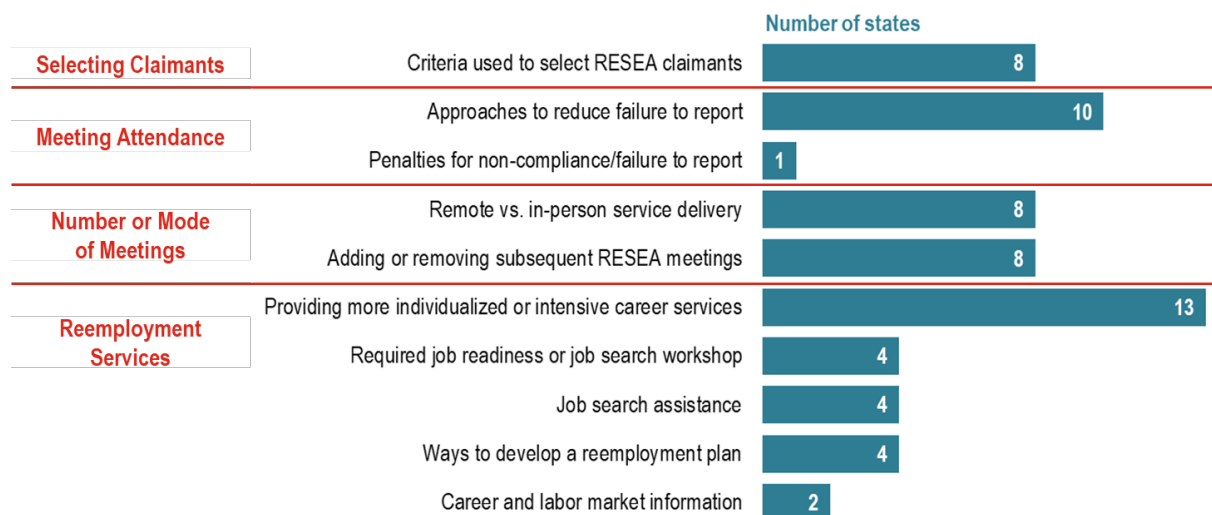


Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Wave 4, Q6c3. N=44 states.
Note: Totals reflect the number of respondents. The number of selected responses might not sum to total, because respondents could select more than one response. Field dates for Wave 4: May-July 2023.

■ **In Wave 4, 37 states reported planning for future RESEA evaluations of program components.**

The Wave 4 survey asked states about their plans for future RESEA evaluations (Exhibit 14 below). Twenty-four states planned to evaluate their RESEA program as a whole (not shown). Particularly important to growing the evidence base around intervention effectiveness, many states (37 states) reported future plans to evaluate specific program components, approaches, and strategies. Some intended to evaluate reemployment services including job search and job readiness workshops (four states) and more intensive or individualized career services (13 states). Some intended to study the impact of the number of RESEA meetings (eight states) or the mode of RESEA meeting delivery (i.e., remote versus in-person) (eight states).

Exhibit 14. Program Components Targeted by States for RESEA Evaluations



Source: RESEA Implementation Survey, Wave 4, Q6d5. N=37 states.

Note: The survey asked states to identify which aspects of their RESEA program they planned to evaluate. Totals reflect the number of respondents. The number of selected responses might not sum to total, because respondents could select more than one response. Field dates for Wave 4: May-July 2023..

RESEA=Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment.

Closing: Value and Limitations

This brief reports findings from the fourth wave of the RESEA Implementation Survey, conducted in 2023, and discusses changes over time from the first wave of the survey in early 2020 to the present.

Fielding that survey four times over the last three years has yielded valuable insights into how the RESEA program continued to change over time. Ongoing survey data collection of this kind allows DOL to monitor program implementation for changes, which could inform DOL’s understanding of how states respond to future updates to program guidance, economic cycles, new evidence from ongoing evaluations, and other developments. We continued to monitor states’ progress with responding to the 2018 evidence requirements, beginning with initial evaluation planning activities reported in Wave 1, through the launch of evaluations captured in Wave 4.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the coincidental timing of the first survey wave, the second and third waves allowed for important insights into how states adapted their programs to the pandemic environment. By Wave 4, we might consider states’ programs to have settled into a “new normal” for implementation, sustaining some pandemic-related program changes (e.g., remote service delivery options) and scaling back others (e.g., suspensions of work search review).

Each individual wave offers a snapshot of the program’s implementation; taken together, the combined results offer insights that a single wave cannot deliver. However, these findings must be interpreted with the appropriate caveats, given some limitations of the data and our analyses. Due to survey non-response, most but not all states are included in the longitudinal analyses, so the patterns described in this brief might not hold for the full sample. The analyses are descriptive and cannot definitively attribute any observed changes in program implementation to any one factor. Moreover, each survey was completed by a state’s RESEA program director or other appropriate staff; due to staff turnover, we cannot ensure that the same person completed each survey wave. Particularly for those survey questions that gathered data on perceived implementation challenges, innovations, or other relatively subjective topics, within-state changes across waves could be due to differences between respondents.

Acknowledgements

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The team also appreciates the efforts of states to complete four waves of a state survey that sought to understand and document their programmatic and evaluation-related experiences and statuses.

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Additional Resources and Information

DOL's RESEA Helpline: RESEA@abtassoc.com

Additional RESEA evaluation technical assistance resources are available here:

https://rc.workforcegps.org/resources/2019/07/30/17/32/RESEA_Evaluation_Evidence_Resources

Study reports, publications, and other materials are available here:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasp/evaluation/completedstudies/RESEA-Evidence-Building-Implementation-Study>

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