

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 06-23
	DATE September 1, 2023

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES

FROM: BRENT PARTON 
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Announcing “Fundamentals of Equitable Access in Unemployment Insurance (UI)” Online Training

1. **Purpose.** To announce the availability of a recently developed online training lesson about the fundamentals of equitable access in UI programs.
2. **Action Requested.** The U.S. Department of Labor’s (Department) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) requests that State Workforce Agency (SWA) Administrators provide the information contained in this Training and Employment Notification (TEN) to all staff. ETA encourages all SWA staff to access and complete this training.
3. **Summary and Background.**
 - a. Summary – This TEN announces the availability of an online training lesson on the fundamentals of equitable access in UI programs for SWA staff. This training was developed in partnership with the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA).
 - b. Background – Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) No. 02-16, issued October 1, 2015, articulates the requirements under federal law to ensure access to the UI program and provides guidance to assist states with meeting these requirements. UIPL No. 02-16, Change 1, issued May 11, 2020, highlights additional state responsibilities regarding access to UI benefits. Further, the inclusion of equitable access as one of the three goals of Section 9032 of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and as a national priority in each state’s State Quality Service Plan (*see* UIPL No. 09-23) emphasizes equitable access as a fundamental requirement of the UI program. In addition, ETA has developed the UI Equitable Access Toolkit, which can be accessed directly at: https://www.workforcegps.org/resources/2023/04/UI_Content/Public_Equitable_Access_Toolkit. This UI Equitable Access Toolkit is also publicly available through the Department’s Unemployment Insurance Modernization website at <http://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/ui-modernization>.
4. **Fundamentals of Equitable Access in UI.** The new “Fundamentals of Equitable Access in UI” training lesson is self-paced and can be accessed via NASWA’s learning management website (<https://www.naswa.org/learning>). ETA has created this online training, in

collaboration with NASWA, to address challenges and possible solutions to help ensure equitable access to UI programs. The contents of this training do not supersede states' obligations under federal law, including Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and its implementing regulations at 29 C.F.R. Part 38, and states must ensure compliance with these requirements, as described in the above-mentioned UIPLs.

As states continue to optimize UI operations, especially in the areas of timeliness and integrity, and modernize their UI systems, the Department is committed to providing SWAs assistance in recognizing common equity and accessibility issues and providing SWA employees actionable solutions to continue to promote equity and accessibility both internally and externally. This online training has been developed in part based on the Department's learnings from its UI Tiger Team engagements with state workforce agencies and community-based organizations across the country (*see* UIPL No. 02-22 and its Changes, as well as UIPL No. 11-23).

The online training is intended to promote awareness of equitable access issues amongst SWA leadership and non-leadership staff, identify barriers and possible solutions, and create a dialogue to further identify and address equitable access barriers within the state's UI programs. SWA staff will receive a high-level overview on why it is critical to embed equitable access principles in the UI system, where barriers to equitable access may exist along the UI journey, and potential solutions to those barriers. ETA encourages SWAs to provide this training for all staff to complete.

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

6. **References.**

- Section 9032 of the American Rescue Plan Act, Pub L. 117-2, enacted March 11, 2021;
- Executive Order 14091, "Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government," issued February 16, 2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/02/16/executive-order-on-further-advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government/>;
- Executive Order 14020, "Establishment of the White House Gender Policy Council," issued March 8, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/03/08/executive-order-on-establishment-of-the-white-house-gender-policy-council/>;
- Executive Order 13985, "Executive Order On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government," issued January 20, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government/>;

- UIPL 09-23, *Additional Planning Guidance for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Unemployment Insurance (UI) State Quality Service Plan (SQSP)*, issued June 30, 2023, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/UIPL0923>;
- UIPL 11-23, *Announcement of Grant Opportunities and National Identity (ID) Verification Offering under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)*, issued July 13, 2023, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/uipl-11-23>;
- UIPL No. 02-22, *Grant Opportunity to Support States Following a Consultative Assessment for Fraud Detection and Prevention, Promoting Equitable Access, and Ensuring the Timely Payment of Benefits, including Backlog Reduction, for all Unemployment Compensation (UC) Programs*, issued November 2, 2021, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/unemployment-insurance-program-letter-no-02-22>;
- UIPL No. 02-22, Change 1, *Extension of Time for States to Express Interest in the Grant Opportunity Announced in Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) No. 2-22 to Support States Following a Consultative Assessment for Fraud Detection and Prevention, Promoting Equitable Access, and Ensuring the Timely Payment of Benefits, including Backlog Reduction, for all Unemployment Compensation (UC) Programs*, issued February 16, 2022, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/unemployment-insurance-program-letter-no-02-22-change-1>;
- UIPL No. 02-22, Change 2, *Extension of Time for States to Express Interest in the Grant Opportunity Announced in Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) No. 02-22, to Support States Following a Consultative Assessment for Fraud Detection and Prevention, Promoting Equitable Access, and Ensuring the Timely Payment of Benefits, including Backlog Reduction, for all Unemployment Compensation (UC) Programs*, issued September 19, 2022, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/uipl-02-22-change-2>;
- UIPL No. 23-21, *Grant Opportunity for Promoting Equitable Access to Unemployment Compensation (UC) Programs*, issued August 17, 2021, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/unemployment-insurance-program-letter-no-23-21>;
- UIPL No. 02-16, *State Responsibilities for Ensuring Access to Unemployment Insurance Benefits*, issued October 1, 2015, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/unemployment-insurance-program-letter-no-02-16> ;
- UIPL No. 02-16, Change 1, *State Responsibilities for Ensuring Access to Unemployment Insurance Benefits, Services, and Information*, issued May 11, 2020, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/unemployment-insurance-program-letter-no-02-16-change-1>;
- UIPL No. 11-14, *Collection and Analysis of Claimant Demographic Data*, issued May 15, 2014, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/unemployment-insurance-program-letter-no11-14>;
- TEN No. 26-22, *Availability of the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Equitable Access Toolkit*, issued May 12, 2023, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/ten-26-22>;

- TEN No. 24-22, *New Unemployment Insurance (UI) Tiger Team Promising Recommendations Resource Pages Available on WorkforceGPS*, issued April 17, 2023, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/ten-24-22>; and
- UI Modernization webpage, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/ui-modernization>.

7. **Attachment(s)**. None.