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THE NEW JERSEY UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REEMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION  
PROJECT:  
THE IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF DISLOCATED UI CLAIMANTS TO REEMPLOYMENT  
SERVICES

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDE

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In fall 1985 the U.S. Department of Labor, through a cooperative agreement with the N.J. Department of Labor, initiated a demonstration, The New Jersey Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Demonstration Project (NJUIRDP), to examine whether the Unemployment Insurance system could be used to identify displaced worker early in their unemployment spells and to provide them with early intervention services to accelerate their return to work. A key component of the demonstration was that eligible claimants were identified and services were provided through the coordinated efforts of the Unemployment Insurance (UI), Employment Services (ES), and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) systems.

The demonstration was, in general, successful in achieving its objectives. For this reason, this Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) has been prepared to provide SESAs with a description and discussion of the mechanisms used in the NJUIRDP to: (1) identify displaced UI recipients early in their unemployment spells, (2) refer them to services, (3) monitor their receipt of services, and (4) promote interagency coordination. It is expected that this information may be useful to SESAs in their implementation of the Economic Dislocation and Workers Adjustment Assistance (EDWAA) Program which emphasizes early intervention and coordination among programs. The TAG may also be useful, more generally, in planning for the provision of reemployment services to UI recipients.

The focus of the TAG is on the identification of displaced workers and the mechanism by which coordination between UI and the reemployment service delivery network (ES and JTPA) was achieved in the New Jersey demonstration. It does not explicitly examine the way in which the reemployment services themselves were provided since the design of the New Jersey demonstration emphasized utilization of existing reemployment service agencies and providers.

The TAG proceeds, in general, (1) to provide a description of the procedures used in New Jersey, (2) to highlight the key elements of the approach, and (3) to raise issues and alternatives that SESAs might want to consider if they chose to adapt elements of the New Jersey approach to their own environments. (1) Since the NJUIRDP operated as a demonstration, some elements of the program would differ in an ongoing program and these elements are noted. In addition, the TAG makes an organizational distinction between the UI program which provides benefits and the ES/JTPA program and these elements are noted. In addition, the TAG makes an organizational distinction between the UI program which provides benefits and the ES/JTPA programs which provide services. Although the roles assigned to the ES and JTPA programs in New Jersey are described, the TAG does not make a functional distinction between ES and JTPA since states differ considerably in the way in which these programs are used to provide reemployment services for displaced workers.

The remainder of this Technical Assistance Guide provides (1) an overview of the New Jersey UI Reemployment Demonstration Project design, (2) a discussion of the identification of permanently separated workers, (3) a discussion of the process of referring such workers to reemployment services and of monitoring service delivery, and (4) a discussion of the mechanisms used in the NJUIRDP to strengthen interagency coordination.

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(1) Additional information on the demonstration can be found in the Final Evaluation Report (Corson, et al, 1989); the demonstration procedures manual (NJDOL, 1986), which includes copies of the forms used in the demonstration; and the job search workshop manual (Mathematica Policy Research, 1986). Copies of these materials can be obtained from the Unemployment Insurance Service, Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, d.C. 20210. address mail to "Attention TEURA."

## II. OVERVIEW OF THE NEW JERSEY UI REMEMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION

The NJUIRDP was undertaken to address three objectives: (1) to examine the extent to which UI claimants who can benefit from the provision of employment services can be identified early in their unemployment spells, (2) to assess the policies and adjustment strategies that are effective in helping such workers become reemployed, and (3) to examine how such a UI reemployment program should be implemented. To achieve these objectives, the design of the demonstration encompassed procedures for identifying demonstration-eligible UI claimants in the week following their first UI payment, and for assigning eligible individuals randomly either to one of three treatment groups who were offered alternative packages of reemployment services or to a control group who received existing services. The demonstration services were delivered to eligible claimants through the coordinated efforts of staff from UI, the Employment Service (ES), and the local service delivery program operators of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) system. The demonstration was implemented in 10 sites in New Jersey, corresponding to state UI offices. The demonstration began operations in July 1986, and, by the end of sample selection in June 1987, 8,675 UI claimants were offered one of the three service packages in the ten local offices included in the demonstration. Services to eligible claimants were continued in to fall 1987 to ensure that all eligibles were able to receive, if desired, the full set of demonstration services.

The evaluation of the demonstration (see the Final Evaluation Report, Corson et al 1989) found that the treatments could be implemented as designed. That is, eligible claimants could be identified, offered services, and provided services early in their Unemployment spell. Moreover, each of the treatments did lead to reductions in the lengths of unemployment spells and to concomitant increases in earnings and reductions in UI benefits received. All three treatments offered net benefits to society as a whole and to claimants, when compared to existing services. However, the savings in UI benefits were not in themselves sufficient to offset program costs.

In the remainder of this chapter we describe the demonstration design in some detail. We begin by discussing the eligibility definition used in the demonstration. Then we describe the three treatments, or service packages, offered under the demonstration. Next we provide a brief discussion of how the services were provided and how the participation of claimants was monitored. Finally we provide a summary of the key elements of the demonstration that are pertinent to the TAG.

### A. THE DEFINITION OF ELIGIBILITY

The purpose of the demonstration was to provide reemployment services to experienced workers, who, having become unemployed through no fault of their own, were likely to face prolonged spells of unemployment. They were expected to experience job-finding difficulties due to the unavailability of jobs, a mismatch between their skills and job requirements, or their lack of job-finding skills. However, because previous research efforts had failed to establish good predictors of prolonged unemployment spells, complex screens for demonstration eligibility could not be used to channel demonstration services. Thus, one objective of the demonstration research was further to investigate the possible predictors of long-term unemployment that could be used in targeting future programs.

Faced with this situation, the demonstration plan incorporated a small number of sample screens because they were thought to be good indicators of experienced workers who were likely to exhibit permanent displacement from their jobs. Additional screens were to be evaluated by examining the effects of the demonstration on alternatively defined samples.

1. First Payment. The demonstration excluded claimants who did not receive a first UI payment. To promote early intervention, the demonstration also excluded claimants who did not receive a first payment within five weeks after filing their initial claim. Individuals who were working and, consequently, who received a partial first payment were also excluded, since their job attachment meant that they had not been displaced. Finally, claims of a “special” nature (e.g., Unemployment Compensation for ex-servicemembers, Unemployment Compensation for federal civilian employees, interstate claims, combined wage claims, etc.) were also excluded.
2. Age. An age screen was applied to eliminate the broad category of young workers who have traditionally shown limited attachment to the labor market and whose employment problems may be quite different from older, experienced workers. This screen excluded workers younger than 25 years of age from the demonstration.
3. Tenure. A decision was made that demonstration-eligible claimants should have exhibited a substantial attachment to a job, whereby the loss of a job was associated with one or more of the reemployment difficulties described above. This decision was implemented by requiring that each claimant have worked for his or her last employer for three years prior to applying for UI benefits and not have worked full-time for any other employer during the three-year period. The three-year requirement is used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to define dislocated workers (see Flaim and Sehgal, 1985 and Horvath, 1987).
4. Temporary Layoffs. The demonstration treatments were not intended for workers who were facing only temporary layoffs. However, previous research and experience show that many individuals expect to be recalled even when their chances of actual recall are slim. In order not to exclude such individuals from demonstration services, only individuals who both expected to be recalled and had a specific recall date were excluded.
5. Union Hiring-Hall Arrangement. Individuals who are typically hired through union hiring halls exhibit a unique attachment to the labor market (as opposed to a specific job), and were thus excluded from the demonstration.

## B. THE TREATMENTS

The demonstration tested three treatment packages for enhancing reemployment. Eligible claimants were assigned randomly to the three treatment groups—job-search assistance only (JSA), JSA plus training or relocation, and JSA plus a reemployment bonus—and to a control group who received existing services. Each of the treatments began with a common set of initial components (notification, orientation, testing, a job-search workshop, and an assessment/counseling interview), which were delivered sequentially early in the claimants’ unemployment spells (see Figure II.1). These initial treatment components were mandatory; failure to report could lead to the denial of UI benefits.

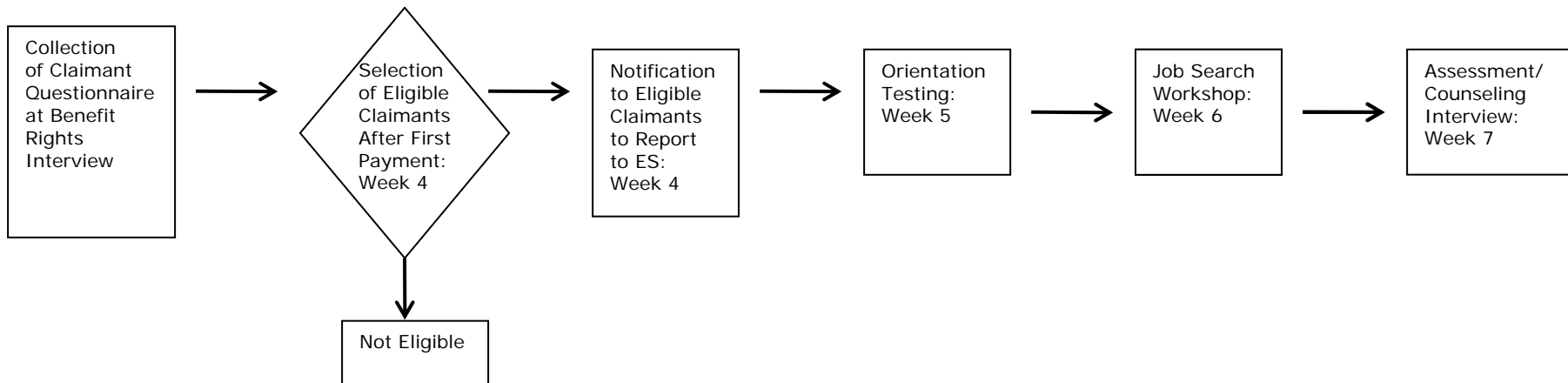
After the assessment/counseling interview, the nature of the three treatments differed (see Figure II.2). In the first treatment group (JSA only), claimants were told that as long as they continued to collect UI they were expected to maintain periodic contact with the demonstration office to receive continuing support for their job-search activities; they were also informed that a reemployment resource center was available to them to help them in their efforts at finding employment. Claimants in the second treatment group (JSA plus training or relocation) were also informed about the resource center and of their obligation to maintain contact during their job-search period. In addition, they were informed about the availability of classroom and on-the-job training, and they were encouraged to pursue training if interested. These claimants were also offered relocation assistance. Claimants in the third treatment group (JSA plus a reemployment bonus) were offered the same set of JSA services as was the first and second treatment groups, but were also offered a reemployment bonus (cash payment) if they became reemployed within a specified period of time.

With the exception of the reemployment bonus and the relocation assistance, the services that were offered in the demonstration were similar to those that were available under the existing ES and JTPA systems in New Jersey. However, the likelihood that a claimant was offered and received these services in the demonstration was considerably greater than under the existing system. Moreover, the timing of service receipt also differed; demonstration services were generally provided earlier in the unemployment spell than were existing services.

In the remainder of this section, we describe each of the treatments in more detail: (1) the initial set of services provided to all treatment groups, (2) periodic job-search assistance, (3) training and relocation assistance and (4) the reemployment bonus.

FIGURE II.1

CLAIMANT FLOW: INITIAL TREATMENT COMPONENTS



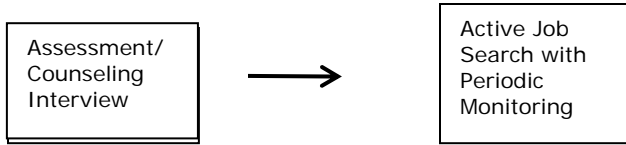
NOTE: Weeks are weeks from Initial claim filing.

FIGURE II.2

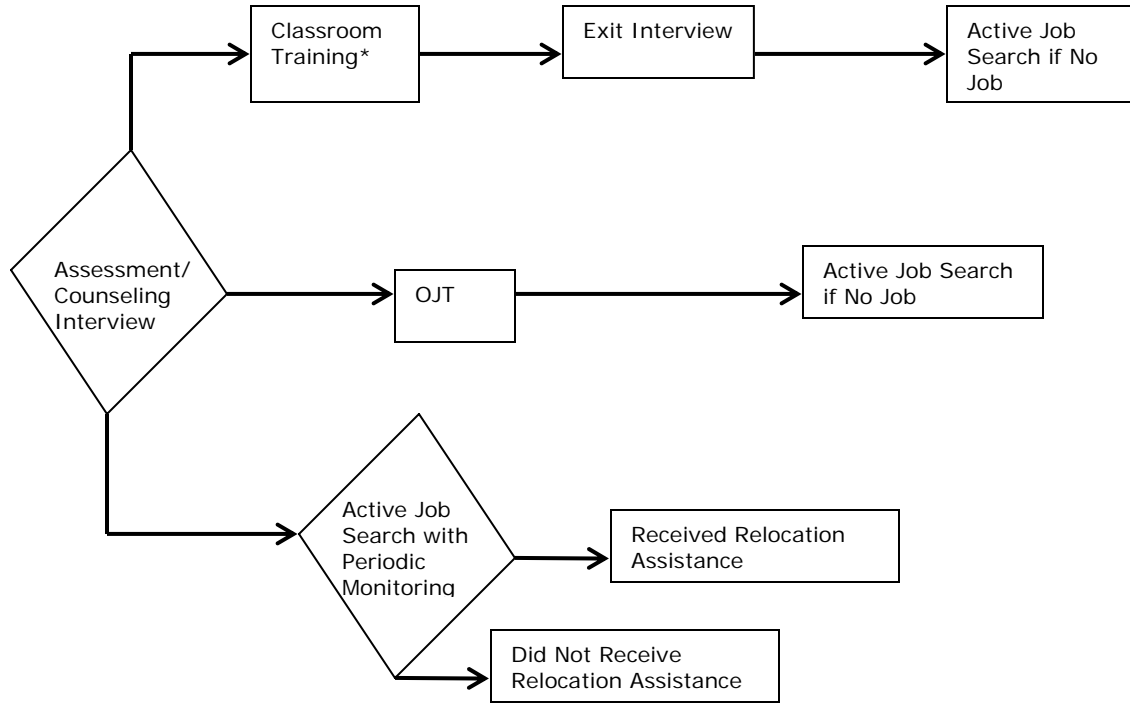


CLAIMANT FLOW BY TREATMENT

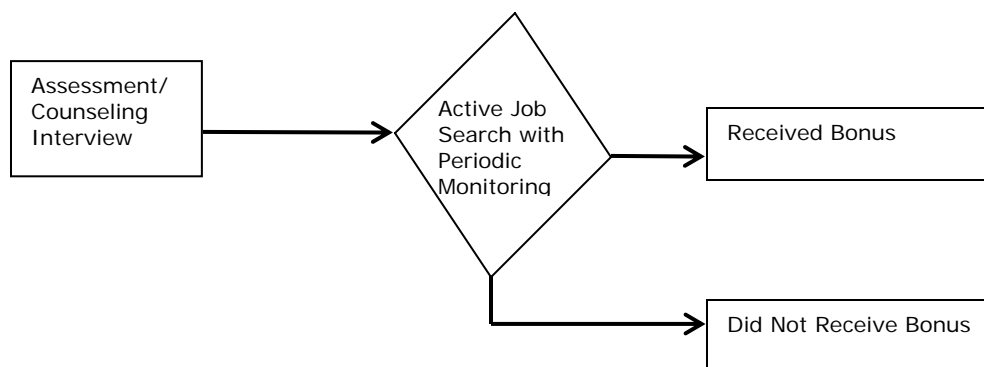
Treatment 1: Job Search Only



Treatment 2: Training or Relocation



Treatment 3: Reemployment Bonus



\*Active job search with periodic monitoring was expected to occur prior to OJT and prior to three weeks before the classroom training start date.

## 1. The Initial Services

All claimants who were selected as demonstration treatment group members were offered a common set of reemployment services early in their UI claim period. Provided primarily by ES staff, this core set of services was offered during a three-week period beginning at approximately the fifth week of the UI claim spell, and it included, in sequential order, orientation, testing, a job-search workshop, and an assessment/counseling interview. Reporting for these services was mandatory unless the claimant was explicitly excused. Failure to report was recorded in the demonstration's tracking system and was reported to UI. UI was expected to follow up with a fact-finding interview with the claimant, and, if an adjudicable issue was identified, a nonmonetary determination. We now discuss each of these services.

### a. Orientation

Claimants who were selected for the treatment sample were sent a letter by UI notifying them to report on a specific date and at a specific time to a demonstration office (in most cases, the local ES office) for an orientation session. The reporting date was specified for the week after the week in which claimants were selected, so as to give them sufficient time to receive the notice. At that time, an orientation session was conducted in a group session, during which the claimants were informed about the initial sequence of demonstration services and were told that additional employment services might be offered to them. They were also informed about what they could expect from the demonstration and what was expected of them. Some claimants were excused from further services at the time of the orientation session, primarily because they were job-attached. (1)

### b. Testing

After orientation but during that same week, the Generalized Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) was administered in a group session to the claimants who attended orientation. The purpose of this test, which has been used extensively by the ES, is to evaluate the match between the aptitudes of individuals and the requirements of many areas of work, so as to facilitate developing vocational plans for the individuals. Individuals with active ES files who had been tested in the last two years were excused from testing, as were many individuals who were unable to take the test because of language problems or a reading level which was below the minimum level necessary to take the GTAB. Claimants also completed an interest inventory, which, together with the GATB results, was used to create a Vocational Information Profile (VIP), equating an individual's aptitude with his or her interests. This profile was used by staff to counsel the claimants.

### c. The Job-Search Workshop

Beginning on the following Monday (i.e., the sixth week of the UI claim spell), individuals in the demonstration were expected to attend a one-week job-search workshop, which lasted approximately 3 hours each morning. A standard curriculum was followed to ensure that approximately the same workshop was provided in each locality. The goal of the workshop was to ensure that each claimant could define his or her job-search objectives and develop a plan for work search. The standard curriculum included sessions on such topics as dealing with the loss of one's job, making an effective self-assessment, developing realistic job goals, organizing an effective job-search strategy, and developing resumes and effective job application and interview techniques. The curriculum included both individual activities and group discussions.

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(1) As noted earlier, claimants who expected to be recalled but did not have a definite recall date were eligible for the demonstration. However, under demonstration procedures, some of these individuals were excused from the demonstration at orientation if they obtained a letter from their employer stating that they would be recalled.



Individuals who had attended an ES job-search workshop within the previous six months were not required to complete the workshop, nor were individuals who completed a comparable workshop offered by a private vendor (which were generally workshops paid for by the employer at the time of layoff). Other claimants were excused because of language difficulties or literacy deficiencies.

d. Assessment/Counseling

At the end of the workshop, each participant was scheduled for an individual assessment/counseling session, which, except when scheduling difficulties arose, was held during the following week (i.e., approximately the seventh week of the UI claim spell). For each treatment, this session was to begin with a discussion of the individual's job-search objectives and job-search plan. Counselors were encouraged to review these plans in conjunction with the test results (the GATB and the VIP scores), and the counselor was to work with the claimant to develop a realistic employability plan.

The counselor also informed claimants about the specific additional services that were available to them. Claimants in all three treatments were informed about the resource centers that had been established in the local offices, and were told that they were expected to maintain periodic contact with demonstration staff. Claimants in the second treatment were told about the training and relocation options, and claimants in the third treatment group were told about the reemployment bonus.

2. Periodic Job-Search Assistance

An important objective of all three treatment packages was to encourage claimants to engage in on-going, intensive job search, with the exception of those in treatment 2 who entered training. To promote continued job search, the design of the NJUIRDP required that claimants maintain periodic contact with the demonstration staff following the assessment/counseling interview. A resource center was also established in each office to provide a supportive environment for job search.

More specifically, claimants were informed that they were to maintain in-person contact with the demonstration staff as long as they continued to collect UI benefits. Staff were expected to provide assistance and encouragement to claimants during their on-going job-search efforts and to monitor the periodic contacts by claimants. To help monitor these contacts, the demonstration tracking system generated weekly lists of individuals who had completed their assessment/counseling interview in the previous 2, 4, 8, 12, and 16 weeks and who were still claiming UI. Demonstration staff were to review these lists and follow up on claimants who had not maintained contact with the staff. They were also expected to notify UI when a claimant did not report for services.

The resource centers that were established in the offices were expected to provide (1) a place for claimants to initiate job-search activities, (2) materials useful in job-search efforts, (\*2), (3) staff support if necessary, and (4) support from the claimants' peers. During the assessment/counseling interview, claimants were encouraged to use the center. In reality, most of the resource centers fell short of these goals, and the resource centers were not utilized extensively except in a few offices that promoted their use. Periodic contact was, however, maintained with many claimants through the monitoring efforts of staff.

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(\*2) These materials included job listings, local newspapers, occupational information, industrial directories, and telephone directories. Each resource center also had one or two telephones available for local calls.

### 3. Training and Relocation

Classroom and on-the-job (OJT) training opportunities were offered to claimants in treatment 2 during the assessment/counseling interview to test the efficiency of a treatment that attempted to alter or upgrade the skills of individuals whose current set of job skills were not longer in demand. Individuals in this treatment could also choose to relocate to another area in which their skills were in demand, and they were offered financial assistance for out-of-area job search and moving expenses. Claimants could not receive both training and relocation assistance.

The training offer was made to claimants by a staff member from the local JTPA service delivery operator who functioned as a member of the demonstration staff (\*3). If the claimant was interested in classroom training, the JTPA staff member attempted to arrange appropriate training, relying in most instances on the list of local training options and vendors used by JTPA. Staff were instructed to try to place the individuals in training as quickly as possible and to work with the trainees once training had been completed to help them find a job. Three restrictions were placed on acceptable classroom training: (1) that the expected duration of courses be no longer than 6 months(84); (2) that claimants be offered remedial education only if necessary to progress to job-oriented training courses; and (3) that, with the exception of remedial education, purely academic courses not be funded (the courses were to be job-oriented). To enroll in classroom training, claimants need not have been eligible for JTPA; the demonstration provided some funding to supplement existing JTPA dollars.

The procedures to be followed by individuals who wished to enroll in OJT were similar to those to be followed for enrollment in classroom training. JTPA staff worked with these individuals to find suitable OJT slots from either existing slots or newly developed ones. The demonstration also tried to encourage claimants to find their own OJT opportunities by distributing pamphlets, or vouchers, to potential employers to inform them that claimants were eligible for an OJT subsidy. However, only a few sites used these vouchers.

Finally, the relocation assistance offered to claimants in treatment 2 consisted of financial assistance for out-of-area job search, and a fixed subsidy if the claimant moved to accept a job. Multiple job-search trips could be made, with actual expenses reimbursed up to a total of \$400. the moving subsidy ranged from \$300 to \$1,000, depending on the relocation distance. Locations that were further than 50 miles from the claimant's home were considered out-of-area.

### 4. The Reemployment Bonus

During the assessment/counseling interview, claimants in treatment 3 were offered a reemployment bonus as a direct financial incentive to seek work actively and become reemployed. The particular bonus offered to claimants was one that provided a large bonus for rapid reemployment and a smaller one for those who took longer to become reemployed. Specifically, claimants were offered one-half of their remaining UI entitlement if they started work by the end of the second full week following the assessment/counseling interview. The amount of this full bonus averaged \$1,644. the bonus then declined by 10 percent of the original amount each week, so that it fell to zero by the end of the eleventh full week of the bonus offer (or it expired at the end of the UI entitlement period, whichever came first). Claimants were provided with information on the specific bonus to be offered to them, and they were given a fact sheet that described the bonus scheme.

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(\*3) The original design of the demonstration called for JTPA staff to handle the assessment/counseling interviews for all members of treatment 2; however, in most offices, claimants had interviews with an ES counselor first and then with the local JTPA staff member (in some cases, only those interested in training saw the JTPA staff member). This change in design occurred because JTPA staff did not generally have the appropriate qualifications to interpret the GATB test results. In most local offices, ES staff also performed the JTPA certification process under existing arrangements.

(\*4) Each site was permitted to enroll a small proportion of claimants in programs lasting more than 6 months.

When an individual found a job, he or she claimed the bonus by submitting a signed statement reporting the new job to his or her ES counselor. The Employment Service was then responsible for verifying employment by calling the employer. To qualify for a reemployment bonus, the claimant's new job must not have been temporary, seasonal, part-time (less than 32 hours per week), provided by a relative, or provided by the immediately preceding employer. A job-tenure requirement was also attached to the bonus payment; an individual was to be employed 4 weeks to receive 60 percent of the bonus, and 12 weeks to receive the remaining 40 percent.

### C. THE PROVISION OF SERVICES

An important objective of the demonstration was to examine how a reemployment program targeted toward UI claimants would be implemented. During the demonstration design phase, two aspects of that objective were given considerable emphasis: (1) using existing agencies and vendors to provide the services, and (2) using a computer-based participant tracking system to facilitate the delivery of services. In this section, we briefly discuss these two issues by describing the organization and staffing of the demonstration and its tracking system.

#### 1. Organization and Staffing

The services offered to claimants in the NJUIRDP were provided through the coordinated efforts of local office staff from the UI agency, the ES, and the JTPA's local program operators and central office staff responsible for these programs(\*5). Strengthening linkages among these programs and agencies was an important component of the demonstration.

At the local level, UI staff were responsible for collecting the data that were used to select eligible claimants, and for monitoring compliance by claimants with the demonstration's reporting requirements. Continued UI eligibility was to be reviewed when claimants did not report for the initial mandatory services, and, if appropriate, benefits were to be denied.

The initial reemployment services, together with the additional services offered at the assessment/counseling interview, were provided in each local demonstration office by a four-person team. This team consisted of three ES staff members – a counselor and two interviewers (one half-time)—and a three-quarter-time JTPA staff member for the local SDA program operator. The ES counselor was the team leader and had overall responsibility for the provision of services. ES staff provided all of the services for the JSA-only (treatment 1) and JSA plus reemployment bonus (treatment 3) treatment group members. The JTPA staff members were involved only with the JSA plus training/relocation (treatment 2) treatment group members. They were expected to become involved with the claimants during the assessment/counseling interview and to work with individuals who were interested in classroom or on-the-job training to identify appropriate opportunities and to place the claimants in them. The goal was to use the training opportunities available in each local JTPA SDA. Thus, this component of the demonstration strengthened the linkages between the ES and the local JTPA program operators in the ten demonstration sites.

At the central office level, representatives from these three programs oversaw and monitored operations in the local offices. Because these individuals did not have direct supervisory authority over the local office staff, any problems that were identified were brought to the attention of local office managers for resolution. The central office project staff also worked closely together to resolve any cross-program coordination issues that arose. Other central office staff performed the payments function for the reemployment bonus, relocation assistance, and transportation allowances and operated the mini-computer (a Microvax) that was used for the weekly sample selection process and for the tracking system.

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(\*5) Central office staff from other parts of the agency, such as the Division of Planning and Research, also played a role in this project.

Finally, a policy committee chaired by the Assistant Commissioner for Income Security and consisting of a USDOL representative and the heads of all the major NJDOL divisions involved in the project approved the design of the demonstration and periodically monitored its progress. The high level of interest in the project shown by this group contributed to the successful cross-program coordination that was achieved in the demonstration.

## 2. The Participant Tracking System

An important aspect of the NJUIRDP was that a computer-based tracking system was used extensively to operate the program. This system was used, in part, to identify the eligible population and to select the sample and assign them to the treatment and control groups. More important in terms of the operation of the demonstration, the system was used by local office staff to monitor the progress of claimants through the demonstration services. Service delivery data were entered into the system, and local office staff were provided with weekly lists of claimants who were expected to receive services. A list of claimants who did not report for services was also generated for use by UI, and monitoring reports were provided to central office staff. The system helped ensure that the services were delivered as specified, and that claimants were not "lost" from the program.

### D. KEY COMPONENTS OF THE DEMONSTRATION

There are five key components of the NJUIRDP that are important for the Technical Assistance Guide. These are:

1. Early identification of UI claimants who are displaced from their pre-UI jobs.
2. Referral of such claimants to the ES/JTPA reemployment service delivery network.
3. Coordination of UI, ES and JTPA service delivery.
4. Systematic follow-up of the referrals.
5. Use of a computer tracking system for identification of eligible UI claimants, referral to reemployment services, and monitoring of the referral process.

### III. IDENTIFYING PERMANENTLY SEPARATED WORKERS

The first step in the delivery of reemployment services is to identify eligible claimants and notify them about their eligibility. This process occurred in the New Jersey demonstration during the first several weeks of the UI claims process. It entailed collecting screening data on all claimants, processing these data to determine which ones met the demonstration eligibility criteria, assigning eligible claimants to the treatment and control groups, and sending letters to the claimants to ask them to reort for services.

SESAs that are considering using the UI system to perform this function for the EDWAA program or for other purposes need to decide what eligibility or screening criteria to apply and how to apply them. In this chapter we discuss each of these issues using the NJUIRDP experience as a guide. In the first section, Section A, we show the impact of the eligibility screens used in the NJUIRDP and show how alternatively defined screens would have performed in New Jersey in directing services to the long-term unemployed. Such information should be useful to planners since the data items used in new Jersey to determine eligibility may not be available in other program settings and since additional eligibility screens might usefully be used to direct services to the long-term unemployed.

Then, in Section B, we describe the process used to apply the eligibility criteria in New Jersey and how this process might be modified in an ongoing program. For example, not all the screening data used in the demonstration were routinely collected and data-entered by the UI system, which necessitated an additional data collection step for the demonstration. In an ongoing program, these data items would presumably be added to the state's UI data processing system. Similarly, most of the data processing was performed on a stand-alone microcomputer, rather than the state's mainframe—a situation which is likely to differ in an ongoing program. Finally the timing of the eligibility determination could be changed.

A final section provides a list of the major steps needed to develop a process to identify claimants who are displaced from their jobs.

#### A. THE CHOICE OF ELIGIBILITY SCREENS

The New Jersey demonstration applied seven specific eligibility screens to claimants who received a first UI payment under the regular state UI program (these screens are described in more detail in Chapter II). These screens excluded claimants who (1) were younger than age 25; (2) had a gap between the date of their claim filing and their first payment of more than 5 weeks; (3) were receiving partial payments because of earnings; (4) had not worked with their pre-UI employer three years before applying for UI; (5) had worked full-time for more than one employer during this three-year period; (6) were on temporary layoff and had a definite recall date; or (7) used an approved union hiring hall to secure employment.

In the remainder of this section we present data on the importance of the screens, describe the degree to which they directed services to long-term claimants, and show the impact of alternatively defined screens.

##### 1. Importance of the Eligibility Screens

Data on the impact of the eligibility screens are reported in Table III.1. the data show the percentage of first payments under the regular state program that were excluded by the various eligibility screens. The combined effect of all the screens is also reported. This combined effect is no the sum of the individual effects, since a claimant may have been excluded for more than one reason.

TABLE III.1

## IMPACT OF THE ELIGIBILITY SCREENS ON FIRST PAYMENTS UNDER THE REGULAR STATE UI PROGRAM

		TOTAL
Mainframe Screens		
	Percent excluded by age screen	14.8
	Percent excluded by the payment timing screen	14.1
	Percent excluded by earnings screens	4.0
	Percent excluded by mainframe screens	27.9
Microvax Screens		
	Percent excluded by the tenure screen	47.5
	Percent excluded by the Single employer screen	4.4
	Percent excluded by the Temporary layoff screen	13.3
	Percent excluded by the Union screen	10.2
	Percent excluded by Microvax screens	63.1
Percent Excluded by All Screens		73.4
NOTE:	<p>The first set of screens (age, payment timing, and earnings) were applied on the state's mainframe computer. The estimated effects of the screens are based on tabulations performed by NJDOL following the end of sample selection. A file was created of all first payments in the regular UI program in the 10 demonstration offices over the year of sample selection. This file contained 75,120 records. The sample selection criteria applied on the mainframe were then applied to this file to provide an estimate of the percentage of noneligibles, which was 27.9 percent. A sample of noneligibles was drawn from this file and used to estimate the effect of the individual mainframe screens. The Microvax screens were applied to the records downloaded from the mainframe (i.e., to the 72.1 percent of cases that passed the mainframe screens) that were matched with tracking system New Claimant Questionnaire data. There were 38,602 such records. Thus, the reported effect of these screens is their effect on the subset of first payments that passed the mainframe screens.</p>	

The first panel in the table shows the impact of the three screens that were applied on the mainframe. (\*1). As can be seen, the three mainframe screens together excluded 28 percent of the claimants who received a first payment. The age screen (15 percent) and the payment-timing screen (14 percent) were the most important. This latter eligibility screen was used to exclude claimants whose gap between their initial claim and their first payment was more than 5 weeks, and was applied because one of the primary objectives of the demonstration was to offer services early in the claim spell. However, because claimants who experience a delay in receiving a first payment tend to be those for whom an eligibility issue is raised about the reason for their job separation, it had the effect of excluding such claimants.

The remainder of the table shows the impact of the eligibility screens that were applied on the Microvax to the records that were downloaded from the mainframe (\*2). Of the four screens that were applied at this point, the tenure screen was by far the most important. This screen excluded individuals who reported that they had not worked for their pre-UI employer three years previously, and it excluded almost half of the claimants who passed the mainframe screens.

Another important screen was the one that excluded claimants with a definite recall date. As shown in the table, about 13 percent of the downloaded population were excluded by this screen. In devising this screen, a decision was made that some evidence that the layoff was temporary was to be established, rather than relying merely on the claimant's expectation that it was indeed temporary. Having a definite recall date was used for this purpose (\*3). However, the claimant questionnaire that was used to collect these data also asked the more general question about recall expectations. As expected, a substantially larger percentage of claimants said that their layoff was temporary (44 percent) than said that they had a definite recall date (13 percent). About half of those expecting recall who did not have a definite date did return to their pre-UI job, while 6 percent of those with no recall expectations returned to their pre-UI job.

The union hiring hall screen has also proved to be important. The impact of this screen varied considerably over the year, having been most important in the January to March 1987 period when construction layoffs occur (the maximum percentage excluded by this screen was 23 percent in February). Overall, 10 percent of the downloaded cases were excluded by this screen.

In sum, the eligibility screens applied in the NJUIRDP demonstration excluded about three-quarters of the individuals who received a first payment under the regular state UI program.

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(\*1) These three screens were applied on the mainframe because data to apply the screens were collected and data entered as part of the regular UI application process. The remaining screens used data that were not collected regularly, and these screens were applied through a separate process.

(\*2) Although these screens were applied only to the downloaded cases, it is likely that, if all the screens were applied to the full population of first payments, the relative importance of each screen would be similar to that observed for the downloaded cases, although the percentage excluded by each screen would differ somewhat. In particular, the tenure screen would probably exclude a smaller percentage of the full population than was occurred for the downloaded cases.

(\*3) During the demonstration it became clear that some individuals who did not have a definite recall date, were, in fact, on temporary layoff and knew approximately when they would be recalled. For this reason the definition of the definite recall date category was broadened to count individuals who knew within a four week period when they would be recalled as having a definite recall date.

## 2. Impact of the Screens on Directing Services to the Long-Term Unemployed

The purpose of applying the eligibility screens used in the NJUIRDP was to focus the offer of demonstration services on claimants who, in the absence of services, were expected to experience difficulty in becoming reemployed. Therefore, these claimants were also those who were expected to be long-term recipients of UI benefits.

Comparison of the characteristics of the NJUIRDP eligible population to the characteristics of a sample of individuals who were not eligible for the demonstration (see Final Evaluation Report) indicates that much of the demonstration-eligible population exhibited the attributes usually associated with the dislocated population and with reemployment difficulties. A substantial proportion of the eligible population were older, a substantial proportion were in manufacturing, and a substantial proportion (about 40 percent) indicated that their plant had closed or moved or their shift had been eliminated. The eligible population also comprised a large percentage of black and Hispanic workers, groups that often experience labor-market difficulties. Nevertheless, these groups did not account for the entire eligible population. Individuals in the prime of their working lives and individuals from industries which are strong and growing in New Jersey (e.g., the service industry) were also eligible.

In addition, the eligibility screens applied in the demonstration appear, in general, to have directed services successfully to the long-term unemployed (Table III.2). For example, the data clearly show that the eligible population had longer UI durations than did the ineligible population (17.9 weeks versus 15.1 weeks). Other measures of UI receipt (dollars collected and the exhaustion rate), which are not shown in the table, also show significant differences between the two groups as do data on unemployment duration.

Thus, these comparisons indicate that the eligibility screens used in the New Jersey demonstration did target services toward a group who experienced reemployment difficulties relative to individuals who were not eligible for the demonstration. However, no set of screens applied early in the unemployment spell can predict with certainty which individuals will have long unemployment spells and which will not (\*4). That is, some individuals who meet an operational definition of displacement early in their unemployment spell will be recalled to a former job or have no difficulty becoming employed while other individuals who do not appear displaced will experience reemployment difficulties. State planners and program operators should anticipate this situation and not expect all individuals who are referred for reemployment services to be interested in receiving such services.

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(\*4) for example, 35 percent of the ineligible population exhausted UI while 20 percent of the eligible population were recalled to their former employer.



TABLE III.2

## UI RECEIPT AMONG ALTERNATIVELY DEFINED SAMPLES

	Mean Weeks of UI in Benefit Year
NJUIRD P Eligibles	
All Eligibles	17.9
Eligibles Not Expecting Recall	18.8
Eligibles Not Using a Union Hiring	18.1
Eligibles in Manufacturing	17.8
NJUIRD P Noneligibles	
All Noneligibles	15.1
Noneligibles With Definite Recall Date	12.8
Noneligibles With Less Than Three Years on the Pre-UI Job	15.8
Noneligibles Under Age 25	14.9

NOTE: The sample size is 2,385 for eligibles (the control group) and 2,536 for noneligibles.

### 3. Impact of Alternatively Defined Screens

Additional data presented in Table III.2 provide an indication of both the implications of further screens and the importance of the eligibility screens used in New Jersey I directing services to the long term unemployed. The top panel of the table shows that the NJUIRDP eligible population collected, on average, 17.9 weeks of UI and that average duration for the eligible population could have been increased through two further potential screens. These would have been (1) to exclude all individuals expecting recall regardless of whether or not they had a definite recall date (only in the definite date individuals were excluded in New Jersey) and (2) to exclude everyone who said that they used a union hiring hall (only individuals with an approved hiring hall were excluded) (\*5). Interestingly another potential screen based on industry (to exclude all individuals except those from manufacturing) would not have been effective in directing services to the long-term unemployed. For the NJUIRDP eligible population, average duration on UI for individuals from manufacturing industries was roughly the same as for individuals from non-manufacturing industries.

The findings suggest that the recall and union hiring hall screens described above could be used to direct services to long-term claimants more effectively than the less stringent screens implemented in New Jersey. However, whether any further screens should be applied depends on the services that are being offered. For example, in the New Jersey demonstration, the mandatory job-search assistance provided by the demonstration did affect UI receipt among individuals expecting recall and exclusion of such individuals would have diluted the demonstration impacts. However, a program like EDWAA that emphasizes services, such as training, which are intended solely for hard-core displaced workers might want to consider such a screen.

Finally the bottom half of the table indicates that the three main screens that were applied in New Jersey (the definite recall date, tenure and age screens) all contributed to directing services to the long-term unemployed. That is, UI duration among eligibles would have been lower if these screens were not applied. Among these screens however, the definite recall date and age screens, were the most important in this regard. The three-year requirement was less important since average weeks on UI for this group was closer to the average for eligibles than was the overall average for noneligibles. This finding indicates that elimination of the tenure requirement could be considered, particularly since data on three years of job tenure are not routinely collected by UI systems. Although data on recall expectations are not collected by all UI systems, this data item is probably the most important in directing services to the long-term unemployed, and it needs to be collected if the UI system is to be used to identify displaced workers early in their claims spells.

#### B. IDENTIFYING THE ELIGIBLE POPULATION

The seven eligibility screens discussed above were applied in New Jersey through a weekly, six-step process. In the first step, a computer file was constructed to identify all UI claimants who received a first payment during the week. This file was constructed on the mainframe computer system used by the New Jersey UI program. Then, in the second step, several screening criteria were applied to produce a file that contained a subset of the claimants who received first payments. The criteria that were applied at this point were based on data that are routinely collected by the UI system (such as age). In the third step, the file with this subset of claimants was downloaded to a Microvax computer, which contained the demonstration's Participant Tracking System (PTS). In the fourth step, the downloaded files were matched with files that contained additional information on claimants that was used to identify eligible claimants. This additional information was collected for all claimants on a "New Claimant Questionnaire" (NCQ) (See Exhibit III.1) and was data-entered into the tracking system. The NCQ was a form designed to collect data for demonstration screening that was not otherwise collected by local UI offices.

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(\*5) Of these two further screens the recall screen would have been the more important in terms of the magnitude of its impact.

Claimants filled it out at the time of the Benefits Rights Interview (BRI). In this fifth step, the additional information was used to identify eligible claimants. Finally, eligible claimants were sent a letter telling them to report for services.

In an ongoing program this set of procedures could be changed in several ways. First, data to apply any screening criteria would ideally be collected as part of the initial UI application process and the data would be included in the computerized UI program database. Second, processing of the eligibility screening could then be accomplished without use of a stand-alone computer system such as the one used in the New Jersey demonstration. That is, eligibility processing could be made a regular function performed by the UI system.

Third, states could change the timing of the eligibility determination process. In the New Jersey demonstration eligibility was determined in approximately the fourth week of unemployment which was the week after a first payment was made. This timing was chosen to provide sufficient time to collect additional data for the determination and so that services would not be offered to claimants who filed an initial claim and did not continue on UI (about 30 percent of initial applicants do not receive a first payment). If all necessary data are collected on the initial UI application, eligibility determination could be performed sooner than it was in New Jersey although this would result in the offer of services to some claimants who would not continue on UI. Alternatively the offer of services could be delayed as a way of targeting on the long-term unemployed although any delay would diminish the ability to achieve early intervention and it would reduce potential trust fund savings.

Fourth, states might want, on occasion, to change screening criteria to be more or less rigorous depending on the state of the economy and the capacity of service providers. For example, relatively restrictive screening might be needed during periods of high unemployment to avoid overwhelming service providers with claimants.

With these procedures identification of the displaced worker population can be accomplished quite easily and at relatively low cost if all necessary screening data are collected and data entered as part of the initial UI application process. There may be sizable set-up costs if the necessary data items are not already collected, but the marginal costs of on-going data collection will be low. Additional on-going costs associated with the identification of displaced workers will include only the data processing costs associated with periodic processing to identify such individuals and either the production of lists of displaced claimants or the production of letters to be sent to displaced claimants.

### C. SUMMARY

In summary, use of the UI system to identify claimants who are displaced from their pre-UI jobs requires that states decide (1) what eligibility criteria are to be applied and (2) when they are to be applied. As illustrated in this chapter, eligibility screens that relate to recall status, pre-UI job tenure, and other factors can be effective in directing services to claimants who, on average, experience reemployment difficulties. However, no set of screens applied early in the unemployment spell can predict with certainty which individuals will have long unemployment spells and which will not. That is, some individuals who meet an operational definition of displacement early in their unemployment spell will be recalled to a former job or have no difficulty becoming employed while other individuals who do not appear displaced will experience reemployment difficulties. State planners and program operators should anticipate this situation and not expect all individuals who are referred for reemployment services to be interested in receiving such services.

In addition to defining eligibility screens, use of the UI system to identify displaced workers requires procedures to:

1. Collect the necessary screening data. Ideally this should be part of the regular UI initial claims process (assuming that early intervention is desired).
2. Modify existing UI automated databases to accommodate the screening data, if necessary.
3. Develop computer programs and procedures to apply the screening criteria on a periodic basis. In the New Jersey demonstration this process was performed weekly for all individuals who received a first UI payment. Less frequent processing might be done. In addition the eligibility screens could be applied at the time of the initial UI application or at a later date (see discussion above).
4. Notify eligible claimants of the selection and of the services that are being offered (see discussion in the next section).

EXHIBIT III – 1  
NEW CLAIMANT QUESTIONNAIRE  
(please print)

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

B.R.I. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month) (Day) (Year)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (Middle)

**Please answer each question by placing an "X" in the numbered box.**

1. Do you customarily secure work through a union?

No 1                       Yes 2                      Which One? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you worked for the same employer for the past three years---mostly full time?

No 1                       Yes 2

2a. During the past three years, did you also work full time for someone other than the employer who just laid you off?  
(Full time is 32 hours or more per week for one month or longer.)

No 1                       Yes 2

3. Do you expect to be recalled by the employer who just laid you off?

No 1                       Yes 2

3a. Do you have a definite recall date from the employer who just laid you off?

No 1                       Yes 2

If so, when \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month) (Day)

<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:</b> Is the union specified on Item 1 on the list of unions certified as an approved hiring hall?	
No	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1
LOCAL OFFICE CODE _____	Date Entered _____



#### IV. REFERRALS TO SERVICES AND MONITORING SERVICE DELIVERY

Once displaced claimants are identified through the UI system they need to be referred to the reemployment service provider network (ES/JTPA). This initial referral was performed in the NJUIRDP by using the eligibility process to generate a letter to claimants directing them to report for reemployment services. In addition, whether or not claimants reported from services was monitored and individuals who did not report were identified and re-referred to services. In part this monitoring procedure was adopted because reporting for services was mandatory in the NJUIRDP (in the sense that failure to report could lead to a denial of UI benefits), but similar follow-up procedures could be adopted in voluntary programs as well.

In this chapter, we discuss referral and monitoring procedures. We begin by describing the initial referral for services process. Then we describe the monitoring of both this initial referral and any subsequent ones. We discuss how this monitoring was accomplished in the New Jersey project in an environment in which claimants were expected to report for services. We also provide an assessment of this process and indicate how it could have been improved. Then we discuss how elements of this process could be used in a voluntary program. The final two sections provide (1) a discussion of the administrative costs of referral and monitoring and (2) a brief summary.

##### A. THE INITIAL REFERRAL

In the NJUIRDP eligible claimants were referred to reemployment services through the use of a computer generated letter (\*1). Each week, when eligible claimants were identified, a letter was produced and mailed to each claimant assigned to a treatment group. This letter (see Exhibit IV.1) was signed by the state UI director, and informed the claimant to report for the demonstration orientation session. The letter included the claimant's name and addresses, and the date, time and location of the appropriate local office orientation session (\*2). The letter also informed the claimant that failure to report could affect his or her eligibility for unemployment benefits.

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(\*1) The letter itself was a pre-printed with space left for the claimant's name and address, the address and time of the appointment and the name of a contact person if the claimant could not make the appointment.

(\*2) These sessions were held at the same time each week in each location.

The entire process of eligibility determination and notification was carried out on a weekly cycle. First, on the Monday following the first payment week, a file with potentially eligible claimants was downloaded to the Microvax, after the initial mainframe screening process was undertaken (described above). The sample was then selected on Tuesday, and the notification letters were mailed on Tuesday or Wednesday, depending on how long sample selection took. Claimants were told to report for the orientation sessions to be held the following week. Since most claimants received their first payment in the third week of their claim, eligibility determination generally took place during the fourth week and the orientation session during the fifth week of the claims process.

Although the computer used for eligibility screening and notification would probably, for an ongoing program, be changed from a stand-alone microcomputer (as used in the demonstration) to the state's mainframe, the use of a computer for this processing could be continued (\*3). This differs from the process used by most state UI systems for referrals to ES (claimants are generally screened in the local offices by claims takers and if appropriate they are referred to the ESJ. Use of a computer for this process has the advantage that all claimants are screened systematically using the same criteria. Moreover, as done in the demonstration, lists of all referrals can easily be generated for UI and JTPA/ES. Such lists

can be used by the service providers to anticipate their workflow and to monitor compliance with the referral (see more below).

## B. MONITORING COMPLIANCE

An important objective of the NJUIRDP was to provide reemployment services to claimants early in their unemployment spells. This goal was to be achieved both by identifying eligible claimants and offering them services early in their unemployment spells and by compelling them, to some extent, to participate in the services. New Jersey's UI law permitted the Director of UI to require that claimants report to ES for services, but not that they participate in services, and for this reason a reporting requirement was instituted for the demonstration, as shown in the attached UI policy statement (Exhibit IV.2). Although claimants could technically satisfy this requirement by reporting for services and then leaving, in practice most claimants who reported participated in the services (they may not have understood that they could leave after reporting).

These reporting requirements were instituted somewhat differently for the different services. For the initial orientation, the notification letter requested that claimants report for orientation, and it informed them that "failure to report may affect your eligibility for unemployment benefits." At orientation, claimants were given appointment slips to report for testing and the job-search workshop, unless they were explicitly excused. Later, during the workshop, they were given an appointment to report for assessment/counseling. Following the assessment/counseling interview, claimants who did not report for the periodic follow-ups were also to be given appointments. These appointments for testing, the workshop, and the other services were provided in writing, using the form shown in Exhibit IV.3. This form contained the date, time, and place of the appointment and the UI Director's signature to make it clear that UI had directed the claimant to report for services at an explicit time and place.

Compliance with these reporting requirements was also monitored. Attendance was recorded by ES staff in the automated tracking system, and a weekly "Delinquency Report" was produced which listed all claimants who failed to attend or to complete one of the initial scheduled events. This report was organized by event (i.e., orientation, testing, the job search workshop, and assessment/counseling). The report was sent to the local UI office. The periodic follow-up visits that occurred subsequent to assessment were not monitored in the Delinquency Report. Instead, staff were instructed to report any potential eligibility issues to UI on an individual basis, using the standard ES-572 report form that is used in New Jersey for this purpose (see Exhibit IV.4).

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(\*3) It might be necessary to modify this process for small local offices since the flow of claimants might not be sufficient to do referrals on a fixed time schedule. In this case states might want to generate referral letters, but intervene manually to determine when to send them and when to schedule orientation.



EXHIBIT IV-1

State of New Jersey  
Department of Labor

Charles Serraino  
Commissioner

James A. Ware  
Director

DIVISION OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND DISABILITY INSURANCE  
LABOR AND INDUSTRY BUILDING  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0058

Notice of Selection for Reemployment Services

You have been selected to participate in the Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Demonstration Project which was briefly explained to you during your Benefit Rights Interview.

You are hereby directed to report to:

The project services will be explained to you when you report. Please be prepared to spend up to four hours receiving an orientation and other employment and training services. Failure to report may affect your eligibility for unemployment benefits. This appointment will take the place of any other appointment you currently have to register for work with the Employment Service.

If this appointment conflicts with either your regular reporting date for you benefit check or any other scheduled appointment with the unemployment claims office, please contact the UI coordinator at the phone number listed above.

Please bring this letter with you when you report for orientation.

Sincerely,

James A. Ware  
Director

*New Jersey Is An Equal Opportunity Employer*

EXHIBIT IV – 2

POLICY STATEMENT OF ADJUDICATION  
OF THE  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REEMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

This statement is intended to clarify the Division's policy as regards the UIRDP instituting the mandatory reporting provision called for in the Design documents for the set of common activities including the referral to the Resource Center. These common activities are intended to intervene early on in the claimants spell of unemployment and thereby improve employment outcomes.

NJAC 12:17-2.1 (b) provides:

"A claimant will be required to report in person to the local employment service office as directed by the Division.

1. A claimant's failure to report to the local employment service office without good cause on the date and time designated will result in the loss of unemployment benefit rights from the date of the failure to report occurred, to such time as the claimant reports to either the local employment service office or the unemployment insurance claims office and is rescheduled for employment services

The regulation clearly states that claimants are required to report "as directed by the Division" to the local employment service office for employment services. In the project design, the initial set of common services, i.e. – Orientation; Testing; Job Search Assistance Workshop; Counseling/Assessment – will be mandatory in that claimants who fail to report to the ES as directed will have established a Nonmonetary issue if the claimant continues to claim UI benefits.

It is also important that appointment for each set of common service be identified by a referral/appointment slip that shows date, time, place and the Director's name for the services that occur within the ES in order to support the mandatory requirement provision of the Design.

EXHIBIT IV – 3

CLAIMANT'S APPOINTMENT OR REFERRAL FOR SERVICES	
NAME _____	SS # _____
TO THE CLAIMANT: You are to report to: _____	
_____	
on _____ at:	
_____	
REASON FOR THE APPOINTMENT/REFERRAL: _____	
IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND	
Contact: _____	at: _____
Referred by: _____	Date: _____
Date Delivered: _____	
Date Mailed: _____	
Insurance	James A. Ware, Director N.J. Division of Unemployment & Disability
BC-27	

APPLICANT DATA		
NAME		SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER
DOT CODE	JOB TITLE	UI CLAIM OFFICE
LAST SALARY (FOR W.C. & D. Or		DATE
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>A. CALL IN</b> Call in notice sent _____ (Date) _____  _____ Failed to respond _____ Returned attached card		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>B. NOT REFERRED</b> Will be returning to work _____ (Date) _____ at _____ _____ _____ Hours of work _____ Attending school _____ Will attend school _____ Leaving the area _____ Non-Citizen without work perm _____ Restricting wage/salary to \$ _____ _____ Restricted to _____ _____ (Type of Work) _____ Distance _____ _____ (time limit/miles) Other _____		

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>C. REFUSED REFERRAL</b> Refused referral on _____ (Date) _____ Distance _____ _____ Transportation _____ _____ Salary _____ _____ Type of Work _____ _____ Hours _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Other _____ _____	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>D. JOB REFERRAL</b></p> Referred to job and _____ interview _____ offer _____ _____ Failed to report to _____ Refused employer's _____ Failed to report for work _____ _____ Hired _____	
JOB DATA (C & D)	
NAME OF EMPLOYER _____	
ADDRESS _____	TELEPHONE NUMBER _____
TYPE OF JOB _____	SALARY _____
START _____ AM _____ PM	HOURS PER DAY _____
END _____ AM _____ PM	HOURS PER WEEK _____
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
DATE _____	SIGNATURE _____

The Delinquency reports were delivered by hand to the UI claims examiner in each UI office, and that individual was instructed to pend the automated UI files for all individuals who were listed in the Delinquency Report. Any special issues or circumstances were also entered in the file. If these individuals reported to the local UI office to claim benefits, the pend indicator would not permit a payment to be made, and a fact-finding interview was triggered. The fact-finding interview and, if appropriate, a determination of eligibility were performed following New Jersey UI laws and regulations. The outcome of the eligibility determination depended, of course, on the reasons given during the fact-finding interview for failing to report for the reemployment services, as well as on whether any other eligibility issues (e.g., availability) came to light in the interview. As indicated earlier, the claims examiners were informed that failure to report to the demonstration office without good cause could lead to a UI benefit denial until the claimant reported and was rescheduled for services. They were also informed that whether the claimant received the notice to report was to be established. Consequently, individuals who did not report for orientation were not denied benefits if they said that they did not receive the letter which informed them to report for services. Instead, they were rescheduled for services and were handed a copy of the letter (\*4). If they did not report at that point, it had been clearly established that they were notified, and a denial could then be issued. The written notice that had been given to claimants by ES staff to report for the other mandatory services (i.e., testing, the workshop, and assessment) established that notice had been given in these cases.

### C. ASSESSMENT OF THE COMPLIANCE PROCESS

Evaluation of his monitoring and compliance process (see the Final Evaluation Report) suggested that the process worked fairly well for the initial set of services. That is, most individuals who did not report for services were identified and either referred to services or explicitly excused from them. Nonmonetary determinations and denials were also found to increase. The process followed by claims examiners emphasized, however, referrals to services when a scheduled service was missed, rather than the automatic denial of UI benefits.

The compliance process instituted for the periodic job-search follow-ups resulted, in contrast, in very few reports to UI concerning failure of claimants to report for services. The main difference between the compliance process used for the initial services and that used for the periodic follow-ups was that the first process utilized the tracking system in the delivery and monitoring of service receipt.

Although the compliance process for the initial services worked reasonably well, the process itself, particularly the use of the Delinquency Report, was complicated and messy. Success required a high degree of coordination and communication between the UI claims examiners and the ES staff, which, given the complicated nature of the process, generally took some time to iron out. The process itself and the rules that were established also evolved somewhat during the demonstration as problems with the process were identified. The following were the major issues and problems that arose during the demonstration:

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(\*4) Claimants who had a lag of more than five weeks from the missed event to the time at which they were seen by the claims examiner were not rescheduled. The purpose of this rule was to preclude dealing with individuals who had dropped out of the UI system and had not claimed benefits for a substantial period of time. It was also designed to ensure that services were only provided early in an individual's unemployment spell.

- To be useful, the Delinquency Reports had to contain accurate data and list only those claimants who had not reported for services. This was a problem initially in some sites because ES staff did not always enter information on service receipt into the tracking system in a timely way. In these cases, claimants who actually attended services were listed in the Delinquency Report, and, consequently, some claims examiners felt that the reports were useless, and the process of pending files was not always followed.
- Even when data on the service receipt were entered accurately and in a timely manner, the Delinquency Reports were not automatically “accurate”. Special situations (e.g., when a claimant had called ES with a scheduling conflict and had been told to come to the next week for orientation) were not handled automatically in the Delinquency Report, and required ES staff to annotate the reports before sending them to UI. In addition, UI staff often received calls from claimants directly, since the name and telephone number of the UI claims examiner for the relevant local office were included in the initial notification letter sent to the claimants. In these cases, the claims examiners made a decision about whether the claimant should report as scheduled or report for a later orientation. These special situations made it imperative that UI and ES staff develop a good working relationship to make the process work smoothly.
- The Delinquency Reports listed all individuals who had ever missed a service, not just those who missed the most recently scheduled service. Thus, as time progressed, the reports became unwieldy, since many cases had had their files pending and had never claimed additional benefits. This situation was handled in an ad hoc way by periodically deleting old cases from the Delinquency Report, but in an ongoing program the list would need to be purged automatically. The report was also changed early in the demonstration to group claimants by the date of the missed event, so that claims examiners could easily identify claimants new to the list.
- Another change in the report was also made during the demonstration to pend the files in a timely manner when orientation was missed. Initially, the Delinquency Report for all the initial services was generated each Monday morning after the previous week’s activities had been completed, together with the entry of the data on the services received. Since the orientation sessions occurred on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, this schedule meant that claimants’ files were not pending until about a week after they missed their orientation session. Thus, given the bi-weekly UI reporting process, some claimants who had missed orientation might not have been sent to a later orientation for several weeks. For this reason, the Delinquency Report was divided into two parts, and the orientation session part was generated as soon as possible after each week’s orientation was completed. The other section continued to be generated after the week’s activities were completed.

Further improvements in this report were suggested but not adopted during the demonstration. These potential improvements included focusing only on claimants who had just missed a service in the last week (perhaps with less frequent follow-ups for those who had missed services in the past) and adding more information including “a remarks section” to the tracking system on the reasons for missed sessions. These steps would make the report shorter and more informative. However, even with these improvements, successful monitoring would still require close cooperation and communication between the UI and ES staff assigned to the monitoring function.

In addition to monitoring compliance through the Delinquency Report, a further report, the Case Exceptions Report, was generated centrally from the tracking system, listing all claimants who had not received an initial service and who were claimant UI five or more weeks later (\*5).

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(\*5) Data on both service and benefit receipt were needed to produce this report. Such data were available in the demonstration's tracking system (data on UI receipt were updated weekly). An ongoing program would need a link between the UI data system and the service provider (ES or JTPA) data system to produce a similar report.

These reports were generated weekly and were given to UI staff, who then sent them to the local offices to have the claims examiners check on why these claimants were continuing to collect benefits. Each UI office was to submit a monthly report on NJUIRDP nonmonetary activities to the central office. This report was to list all cases which were included in the Delinquency Reports or the Case Exceptions Reports and their disposition—the date pended, the service for which they did not report, any UI eligibility issues identified, and the date and outcome of the eligibility determination. Central office staff used this report to monitor compliance activities in the local offices.

This review of the monitoring and compliance process suggests two general points. First, the process itself was complex, requiring substantial coordination between UI and ES to keep track of the individuals who did not comply with the reporting requirements. Second, the process changed over time, becoming more focused in general and subject to more enhanced monitoring by the central office. Similar evaluation at the compliance process would be likely in an ongoing program. That is, SESAs adopting similar procedures can expect them to require numerous changes until a smoothly working situation can be developed.

#### D. APPLICATION OF THE MONITORING PROCESS IN A VOLUNTARY PROGRAM

An important difference between the NJUIRDP and many other programs designed for displaced workers (e.g., EDWAA) is that claimants in the NJUIRDP were required to report for services. Failure to report would have led to the denial of UI benefits. Other programs are likely to refer eligible claimants for services but their participation will be purely voluntary. Nevertheless a monitoring process could still be utilized in such a program to monitor program take-up rates and to make follow-up referrals.

Letters could be sent to eligible claimants referring them to ES/JTPA, and, as was done in the NJUIRDP, lists could be produced for the service providers indicating who had been referred for services. Such lists would be useful to the service providers since they would provide an indication of the likely workload. Similarly service providers could record receipt of services. In the demonstration, service receipt was recorded on the demonstration tracking system, but since recording of service delivery is performed currently by both ES and JTPA for their own purposes, existing data systems could be used.

The information on these data systems on service receipt could be compared to the referrals that were made to determine which individuals followed through on the referrals and which did not. In the demonstration the list of individuals who did not follow through on the referral was used for the compliance process. In a voluntary program such a list could be used to make a second referral either immediately or with a lag. For example, an initial referral could be made early in the claims spell and a further referral could be made later in the claim period for individuals who did not respond to the first referral and who continued to collect UI benefits. Such a strategy might be useful since some displaced workers believe that they will be recalled or will obtain a job easily. These individuals might not respond to an offer of services early in the claim period, but after testing the job market they might be interested. A second referral would provide a reminder that services are available.

## E. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

In the previous chapter we indicated that the cost of identifying displaced claimants will be low if all data items need to establish displacement are collected as part of the initial UI application process. In that case the identification process can be accomplished through a computer process, whenever it is decided to perform referrals. Similarly the actual referral process can be accomplished inexpensively if it is done, as in the New Jersey demonstration, through computer generated referral letters.

If participation in reemployment services by claimants is voluntary, additional resources need only be expended if states decide it is important to monitor participation. Such monitoring could be accomplished by using the service delivery agency's (ES or JTPA) data base to determine if individuals who had been referred to services had, in fact, received services. This process should be relatively inexpensive also since it could be a routinized data processing function.

If participation in services has any mandatory components, as in the New Jersey demonstration, additional resources will need to monitor compliance and perform any follow-up. As indicated above, this process was accomplished in New Jersey by sending a computer generated list to UI for compliance monitoring. This monitoring was handled in each local New Jersey office by a claims examiner who spent about 40 percent of his or her time on the project. These individuals handled an average of 17.4 new claimants per week during the demonstration. Some time was also spent by ES staff on the monitoring process. However, since these staff members also provided services under the demonstration, it is not possible to measure the time they spent solely on the monitoring process.

## F. SUMMARY

In this chapter we described the processes used in the New Jersey demonstration to (1) refer displaced claimants for services, (2) monitor their participation in services, and (3) monitor their compliance with the demonstration's reporting requirements. The key points made regarding these processes and their potential adaption to other environments are:

1. Referrals were made in the New Jersey demonstration through the use of a computer generated letter that was sent to all individuals who were identified by the computer as displaced (i.e., eligible for the demonstration). This process was systematic, straightforward, and inexpensive relative to procedures that involve manual intervention either for scheduling or to determine who should be referred. It worked best in large offices with a relatively constant flow of claimants. Some adaption would be necessary to handle small offices or ones with large fluctuations in the flow of claimants.
2. Claimants who were referred to services in the New Jersey demonstration were required by the UI system to report for services. Their compliance with this reporting requirement was monitored through a computer tracking system that checked if individuals who were referred reported for services. A listing of all individuals who did not report was transmitted to a UI claims examiner in each local office. Additional verbal communication between service provider and UI agency staff was also needed to make this process work smoothly.
3. The monitoring of service use among referrals could also be of use in programs where participation in service is voluntary (e.g., EDWAA). Service providers could monitor participation by using existing information systems to determine if individuals who were referred for services actually received services. Transmittal of this information to UI would not be necessary in this case.

## V. STRENGTHENING INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

The previous chapters have indicated that the NJUIRDP relied on the coordinated efforts of the UI, ES and JTPA systems to identify displaced workers, refer them to services, and deliver services. Moreover, strengthening linkages among these programs and agencies was an important component of the demonstration. For the most part this process worked well in the New Jersey demonstration, and for that reason, we describe, in this chapter, the mechanisms used to promote coordination.



We begin by describing the roles played by UI, ES, and JTPA staff in the provision of services in the NJUIRDP. We then describe the mechanisms used to foster cooperation and coordination among these agencies. Next we provide a brief assessment of interagency coordination and the importance of the mechanisms used to foster this coordination. A final section provides a brief summary.

#### A. AGENCY ROLES

At the local office level, UI staff were responsible for collecting the data that were used to select eligible claimants, and for monitoring compliance by claimants with the demonstration's reporting requirements. Continued UI eligibility was to be reviewed when claimants did not report for the initial mandatory services, and, if appropriate, benefits were to be denied.

The initial reemployment services, together with the additional services offered at the assessment/counseling interview, were provided in each local demonstration office by a four-person team. This team consisted of three ES staff members—a counselor and two interviewers (one half-time)—and a three-quarter-time JTPA staff member from the local SDA program operator. The ES counselor was the team leader and had overall responsibility for the provision of services. ES staff provided all of the services for the JSA-only (treatment 1) and JSA plus reemployment bonus (treatment 3) treatment group members. The JTPA staff members were involved only with the JSA plus training/relocation (treatment 2) treatment group members. They were expected to become involved with the claimants during the assessment/counseling interview and to work with individuals who were interested in classroom or on-the-job training to identify appropriate opportunities and to place the claimants in them. The goal was to use the training opportunities available in each local JTPA SDA.

At the central office level, representatives from these three programs oversaw and monitored operations in the local offices. Because these individuals did not have direct supervisory authority over the local office staff, any problems that were identified were brought to the attention of local office managers for resolution. The central office project staff also worked closely together to resolve any cross-program coordination issues that arose. Other central office staff performed the payments function for the reemployment bonus and operated the mini-computer (Microvax) that was used for the weekly sample selection process and for the tracking system.

Finally, a policy committee chaired by the Assistant commissioner for Income Security and consisting of the heads of all the major NJDOL divisions involved in the project approved the design of the demonstration and periodically monitored its progress.

#### B. MECHANISMS FOR STRENGTHENING COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

Two main mechanisms were used to strengthen cooperation and coordination among the UI, ES and JTPA staff assigned to the project. First, two committees were established at the central office level to handle any coordination problems. The first committee, the policy committee, provided senior managers of NJDOL (the relevant Assistant Commissioners and division directors) a form to express their views and to resolve any major problems. In practice this committee met several times during the design period and periodically throughout the implementation period. In general, the senior managers themselves rather than their representatives took part in the meetings. Cooperation was further fostered by developing a second committee, the working group that consisted of the main project supervisors for UI, ES and JTPA as well as the data processing manager, the project manager, and representatives from NJDOL Planning and Research, USDOL and the evaluation contractor. This group met quite frequently, particularly early in the demonstration to address design and implementation problems.

Specific coordination problems at individual sites were addressed at meetings among the relevant central office staff.

The second main mechanism used to foster coordination concerned the training of local office staff. This training occurred both initially and on an ongoing basis. The training was based on a procedure manual, developed for the project, which provided a step-by-step guide to the delivery of services and copies of all forms required for the project. A separate manual was also prepared for the job search workshop, which provided an agenda for the workshop and a number of exercises that could be used. Since some procedures changed during the demonstration or required more detail, a method was developed to update the manual, based on the tracking system. When the offices logged on to the system through the terminals located in the local offices, they were informed about the existence of any new procedures. These procedures, which were prepared in a question-and-answer format, were then printed out and added to the manual. This proved to be an effective way to transmit information to the field in a timely manner.

Both the initial and the periodic training throughout the demonstration brought staff from the separate agencies together to foster cooperation. In the initial training the ES and JTPA staff were trained jointly since they were expected to operate together in the delivery of reemployment services. For ongoing training, meetings were held with the same level staff from all local offices to introduce a new or modified procedure and to reinforce the consistent application of other procedures. Most of these sessions also brought together staff from ES and JTPA or ES and UI to help foster a good working relationship. In general, these sessions were viewed as quite productive.

Finally coordination was emphasized through the monitoring of local office activities by central office staff. This monitoring consisted both of the review of reports on case flow generated by the tracking system and periodic site visits. These visits were used for training of any new staff or training of old staff if incorrect procedures were observed. These visits also provided a way for local office staff to raise any problems arising regarding coordination with other agencies. Such problems were discussed and addressed by the relevant central office staff.

### C. ASSESSMENT OF AGENCY COORDINATION

The NJUIRDP design required that central office staff from a number of separate divisions and local office staff from UI, ES, and JTPA local program operators work closely together to identify eligible claimants and to deliver services to them. As described above an organizational structure was developed and joint staff training was performed to foster these working relationships. However, one must ask whether the necessary linkages and working relationships did, in fact, develop.

At the central office level the answer to this question is clearly yes. Good working relationships were established among the members of the working group which included the individuals directly responsible for implementing the demonstration. Frequent meetings of this group were held, particularly early in the implementation phase, and there were many smaller meetings and conversations among individuals from the various divisions as operational issues arose. The generally smooth and cordial interactions among working group members were probably due to two main factors. First, the individuals themselves were easy to work with and they approached the project enthusiastically and with a spirit of cooperation. Second, the working group members could, in many instances, make decisions on behalf of their divisions and when they could not, the division directors were easily accessible to them so that decisions could be made. It is likely that high level departmental officials might be less accessible in an ongoing program which might not generate, on a continuing basis, the kind of interest that was shown by these officials in the demonstration.

This latter point applies not only to the top departmental officials but to all staff involved in the demonstration. That is, the morale of both the central and local office staff who were assigned to the project was high throughout the demonstration. Most staff enjoyed working on a special project which was attempting to develop new approaches to delivering services. Occasionally, some staff appeared to be uninterested and unmotivated, but they were the exception, and in most cases these staff were reassigned early in the demonstration. The high staff morale was, of course, favorable for the project, but to the degree this staff interest was due to the demonstration nature of the project an ongoing program might encounter less motivated staff and, consequently, might function less well.

Turning more specifically to local office staff, we can ask whether there was a high degree of cooperation between UI and ES for initial data collection and compliance monitoring and between ES and JTPA for service delivery. All the office developed the formal linkages in which the necessary reports were transmitted between UI and ES and in which treatment 2 members were provided services by ES and then JTPA. However, the degree to which staff from the three programs worked together as a team varied, as could be expected, by office. In some sites working relationships between UI and ES staff or ES and JTPA staff were close and there was a high level of communication, while in others there was relatively little interaction beyond the minimum that was needed to transmit information or to refer claimants back and forth between agencies. These differences among offices were probably due, in large part, to differences in the personalities of the various staff members which would vary among sites in any program. However, three more general points about local office staffing and organization can be made.

First, developing working relationships among disparate organizations and individuals takes time and only so much can be accomplished in a limited duration demonstration.

Second, the lack of direct supervisory authority for the local team leader (i.e., the ES counselor) was a problem at times. These individuals could not directly instruct either the ES staff or, of course, the JTPA staff to perform certain tasks. Nor were the specific roles of the ES staff, in particular, completely spelled out in the design. It was expected that each site would allocate the tasks in a way that best utilized the talents of the staff. Most of the time, this was not a constraint, and good working relationships were developed, but at times problems did arise. In those situations, a more structured division of tasks might have helped resolve the problems.

Third, the fact that the demonstration was operated from the central office but staff were supervised at the local level meant that the organizational arrangements for resolving problems and enforcing authority were not clear. They relied more on the good will of the staff to seek a solution than on formal organizational arrangements. In the case of JTPA there was a further barrier to overcome in that the local staff worked for the local service delivery organization which operated under contract to NJDOL and the central office staff concerned with JTPA worked directly for NJDOL. Nevertheless these central office staff generally worked directly with the local JTPA staff assigned to the project rather than through their line supervisors. Problems related to this division of authority also occurred when ES managers assigned non-demonstration tasks to demonstration staff whom the counselor had expected to be working on the NJUIRDP. For the most part, this situation appeared to be a problem initially, when the workload was not completely built-up, and the managers perhaps felt that these staff were underutilized.

Finally the high degree of central office supervision should not be ignored. The evaluation concluded that this supervision was both important to ensuring that the services were delivered and that the necessary linkages among the UI, ES and JTPA systems were maintained. An ongoing program might not have as large a supervisory staff, but substantial reductions might not yield the same level of service delivery or interagency coordination.

#### D. SUMMARY

In this chapter we described the mechanisms used in the New Jersey demonstration to promote interagency coordination. These mechanisms included (1) the establishment of two committees (a policy committee and a working committee) at the central office level that brought together staff from all agencies involved in the project and (2) the joint training of staff from each local agency involved in the demonstration. While similar mechanisms would contribute to interagency coordination in future program settings, it should be emphasized that it is essential for success that senior agency personnel make clear their commitment to interagency coordination.

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