

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY SYSTEM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Washington, D.C. 20210	CLASSIFICATION Unemployment Insurance
	CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL OUI/DPM
	DATE March 5, 2026

ADVISORY: UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM LETTER NO. 08-26

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES

**FROM: HENRY MACK, ED.D. /s/
Assistant Secretary**

SUBJECT: 2026 National Unemployment Insurance (UI) Convening Reimbursement Instructions

1. **Purpose.** To provide reimbursement instructions to states attending the 2026 National UI Convening occurring March 10 – 11, 2026, at the Frances Perkins Building in Washington, D.C.
2. **Action Requested.** The U.S. Department of Labor’s (Department) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) requests State Workforce Agency administrators to share the information contained in this Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) with appropriate staff.
3. **Summary and Background.**
 - a. Summary – This UIPL informs states and provides instructions for the Department to reimburse costs incurred for travel, lodging and per diem for up to two (2) individuals per state to attend the 2026 National UI Convening in Washington, D.C. The deadline for states to submit grant applications for travel reimbursement is **thirty (30) days after publication of this guidance.**
 - b. Background – ETA is prioritizing resources toward program integrity through a multi-faceted approach.¹ On February 6, 2026, ETA sent a letter to each of the 53 states and territories detailing their performance in relation to the Department’s goals (see Attachment V to UIPL No. 14-25). This letter also emphasized the importance of Data Validation to ensure the accuracy and quality of the data reported to the Department. It further emphasized the importance of data quality for the Benefit Accuracy Measurement (BAM) paid claims sample, which serves as the basis for calculating the improper payment rate.

¹ Section 9032 of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) (Public Law (Pub. L.) 117-2) provided an appropriation of \$2.0 billion to the Secretary of Labor to, among other things, detect and prevent fraud and ensure the timely payment of benefits. This amount was reduced to \$1.0 billion with enactment of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (Pub. L. 118-5).

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ETA has set the following performance goals for this fiscal year:

- To achieve a national improper payment rate below 10 percent;
- To achieve a national rate of Nonmonetary Determination Timelapse of at least 80.0 percent; and
- To achieve a national First Payment Timeliness rate of at least 87.0 percent.

This year, ETA UI Strike Teams² will engage directly with states whose performance has fallen short. ETA expects that all states will take meaningful steps toward timely reporting of accurate and complete data and will consistently meet the Core Measures Acceptable Levels of Performance (ALPs), data validation submission requirements, and the BAM paid claim completion requirements.

ETA is also working closely with states to strengthen program integrity through strategic feedback and a series of transparent listening and planning sessions. On February 9, 2026, ETA sent an email to state UI directors and administrators with an invitation to attend the 2026 UI National Convening in Washington, D.C., including a registration link. Working together, states and ETA will identify opportunities for ETA to support and accelerate state performance improvements with lasting impact and improved integration of UI activities.

4. Event Details and Reimbursement Instructions.

a. Event Details.

- Dates: Tuesday, March 10, 2026, and Wednesday, March 11, 2026
- Time: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (ET) each day.
- Location: U.S. Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20210

- b. **Reimbursement Instructions.** The Department will reimburse travel costs for up to two (2) individuals per state to participate in the National UI Convening. Reimbursable expenses cannot exceed Federal per diem rates. Reimbursable expenses may include actual costs incurred for transportation, hotel accommodation, and incidentals. Travel is authorized to occur on Monday, March 9, 2026, to ensure all attendees may be present when the convening begins.

² An ETA UI Strike Team includes staff from ETA’s National and Regional Office(s), with support from the UI Integrity Center. UI Strike Teams may also be deployed on an ad hoc basis outside the scope of this performance categorization to address other urgent high priority activities in the UI program.

The Department is not using state UI administrative funding to process the reimbursement; therefore, reimbursement will not be issued on the existing state UI administration grants.

States are required to submit a grant application package in order to receive reimbursement. Reimbursement will be made in full for up to two travelers' actual expenses. **The deadline for states to submit grant applications for travel reimbursement is thirty (30) days after publication of this guidance.** States that do not submit a grant application (at a minimum Form SF-424) by this deadline will not receive travel reimbursement.

i. ***Grant Application Package.*** To receive reimbursement, states must submit Form SF-424 application via Grants.gov as outlined below:

- Form SF-424 (OMB Approval No. 4040-0004) is available through grants.gov at https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424_4_0-V4.0.pdf for the total amount of reimbursement being requested (must be supported by travel documentation). Attachment II to this UIPL provides additional information on completing Form SF-424. States must input the UIPL number and event title as “UIPL No. 08-26 2026 National UI Convening” in Section 12 of Form SF-424.

States must also submit a separate completed copy for each traveler of the suggested travel reimbursement document included as Attachment II to this UIPL detailing travel expenses incurred. States may request an Excel copy of the document directly from the appropriate ETA regional office or download a copy from Grants.gov. States should submit the completed package(s) to the Office of Unemployment Insurance via email at ETA-UI-Inquiries@dol.gov with a copy to the appropriate regional office. The travel reimbursement document should be submitted at the same time as the state's grant application is submitted via Grants.gov, but no later than **thirty (30) days after the publication of this guidance.**

ii. ***Allowable Expenditures.*** The travel reimbursement documentation must include details on applicable expenses. These expenses may include the following:

- Airline and/or train fare³ for travel to and from Washington, D.C.
- Privately owned vehicle (POV) travel mileage and reimbursement, if applicable. POV costs may be reimbursed based on the federal POV reimbursement rate of \$0.725 per mile.
- Hotel accommodation expenses. Hotel reimbursement for up to three (3) nights based on actual expense documented by receipt, cannot exceed the Federal per diem rates for Washington, D.C. for March 2026 (\$276.00/night for lodging incurred plus taxes).

³ Airline and/or train fare is limited to coach class, unless another class is required due to a documented reasonable accommodation approved by the state UI agency prior to travel.

- Per diem for meals and incidentals based on the number of days on travel. A maximum of four days may be requested based on Federal per diem allowances, to include two full-rate days and two reduced rate days for the first and last travel days. The maximum per diem allowance is set based on the Federal per diem rates for Washington, D.C., for 2026 (\$92.00 for full days and \$69.00 for the first and last travel days).
- Miscellaneous fees may be reimbursed, including those incurred for baggage, parking, travel to / from airport and/or hotel to the venue at the discretion of the Department to assess whether the excess costs are necessary and reasonable in performance of travel. Appropriate documentation must be provided to support all expenditures.

Further details on Federal per diem rates and policies are available on the U.S. General Services Administration website at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel>.

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

6. **References.**

- American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), including Title IX, Subtitle A, Crisis Support for Unemployed Workers (Pub. L. 117-2); and
- UIPL No. 14-25, *Additional Planning Guidance for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Unemployment Insurance (UI) State Quality Service Plan (SQSP)*, issued July 24, 2025, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/uipl-14-25>.

7. **Attachment(s).**

- **Attachment I:** Additional Guidance for Completing Form SF-424.
- **Attachment II:** Travel Reimbursement Form for National UI Convening