

To: {STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY}

Mathematica Policy Research is conducting a national survey for the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), Center for Employment Security and Research (CESER) under a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Unemployment Insurance (OUI). The survey is part of the Unemployment Insurance Lower-Authority Appeals Information Technology Assessment. We are asking your state to help with this important study by completing the attached survey. Please note that OMB has granted permission for us to conduct this survey under the Paperwork Reduction Act; our approval number is 1205-0436, and we estimate that it will take about 36 minutes to complete this survey, which is voluntary, based on pretests we conducted with nine states.

OUI seeks to understand each state's Lower-Authority Appeals (LAA) procedures and practices, their IT systems and tools, and successful appeals practices currently in use. This analysis will result in a more complete understanding of LAA best practices, the factors that influenced states' decisions to adopt changes, and the issues states faced implementing those changes.

The key study objective is to identify ways to improve LAA processes across the country, overcome common obstacles and challenges, and meet the needs of the states and the unemployed. The survey will examine the current processes, systems, and tools that all 53¹ State Workforce Agencies use to perform the core functions of first-level appeals adjudication². It will provide insights about four key areas of a state's appeals program: (1) methods and processing in LAA appeals operations; (2) IT systems and tools used in LAA appeals operations; (3) laws, regulations, and policies affecting the LAA appeals process; and (4) emerging approaches and promising trends.

A final report will contain information on the current IT systems in use, emerging trends, new solutions, and innovative approaches in appeals adjudication. A metadata repository will be developed that will serve as a one-stop for up-to-date information about LAA processes and the technology used by each state. When considering implementing changes, states will be able to search this repository for agencies like theirs, the practices they have in place, and information on their outcomes.

The survey is in the form of an editable PDF and is designed to be completed primarily by the director of LAA or a designated member of your staff who has knowledge of LAA processes. The survey is organized by topics, so that it can circulate among relevant staff with specialized knowledge of particular areas to complete the survey. You may enter all of the answers at once; enter some responses, save them, and forward the link to other staff members to complete segments; or print and distribute sections of the survey to staff for completion and later electronic entry.

If you have any questions please contact: (TBD)

Thank you for helping in this important effort.

¹ Includes: Puerto Rico, District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands.

² Nine states (California, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia) took part in a pilot pretest of the survey instrument and will not be included in this second stage survey.