
MONTHLY MEETING AGENDA

Date: Wednesday, Nov. 4th
Time: 1:00 – 2:30 PM
Location: Department of Workforce Services
Room 401
1385 S. State Street
Salt Lake City

Conference Call-in Number: 1-866-456-0016
Access Code: *2658942* (be sure to hit * before and after code)

DWS/Work Supports:

1:00 Welcome and Introductions

Dave Lewis – new Director of Communications at DWS

1:05 Follow-Up Items

- a. E-Rep Conversion – customer tools & resources (Diane Lovell)
Started conversion in Oct., will continue through first six months of the new year. Have customer information cards – how to avoid long waits, other resources, etc. Melissa will send these out by email. Also have customer flyers. Also, give feedback if hear of any issues.
- b. ARRA Grant Applications – update/status (Mike Richardson)
Paid SLCC to talk to investors about green jobs and renewable energy. Grant submitted for \$4.3 mill – (will be close to \$8 mill). Have created pathways that will be created for all of these occupations. This is how DWS is approaching workforce services now. These will be 4 and 5 star jobs. Pathways across the whole state, assessment component, will really set up pathways to high wage jobs across the state.

Karen – many of these jobs are very male dominated --- what are approaches to making sure women are getting into these jobs.

1:15 Unemployment Insurance (Bill Starks)

- a. Social Security Offset and Unemployment Insurance – update
-- Bill Starks: one little hiccup in this deal – to make it revenue neutral, agreed to lower benefit amount by \$3 to fund increased benefits to retirees. However, right now are paying an additional \$25 on every benefit as part of ARRA – is set to expire at end of year, and then fade out, paid until June 2010. This will go into effect around that time. There is a non-reduction rule (federal additional compensation – sec 2002 of bill) – which says cannot reduce average weekly benefit amount after Dec. 31, 2008 or \$25 agreement will stop. Okay

right now, but if it is extended, we could lose it if reduce benefit amount. Could put it into law and then say it won't go into effect until the \$25 thing ends.

-- Melissa Smith: can we still remove the SS offset and get a slightly larger benefit reduction in future?

Karen Silver – or can we apply for an exception to the \$25 add'l compensation.

Bill Starks – will know if they are going to extend this by the end of the year.

Keep us posted on the outcome the extension, and will continue to brainstorm ideas.

- b. Update on current issues being considered, UI extensions, additional federal dollars, etc.
Fed-state extension if state stays over 6.5 UI rate for 3 months, and if we do hit this, fed's pay all of this, where state usually pays half. However, state and federal employers will have to pay 100% of the extended benefits. Potential of passing a trigger bill. Won't matter if this is not extended.

Right now is legisl to introduce 14 add'l weeks in every state – debated in the Capitol. And those over 8.5% will get add'l 6 weeks. Senate version passed 14 weeks for all states. But other bills are attached to it that are holding it up.

Right now we have 26 weeks of reg UI benefits, plus 20 weeks of EUC, and starting Sun, Nov. 8th we trigger in to EUC Tier II – will trigger another 13 weeks of EUC.

Karen – can people who have expired benefits, can they reapply for these additional weeks?

Bill – yes, if you've exhausted your 26 plus add'l 20 weeks, you can apply for the add'l 13 weeks. Will send a notification on the 9th to everyone who qualifies.

- c. Special Administrative Fund – discussions on using those dollars for certain programs.
Bill Starks - Leg has obligated all of it until June 2010. Kristen put some intent language that in the future, it would be used for purposes of workforce development and UI. EAC got together a subgroup on Oct. 15th to brainstorm ideas on how to spend this money. Is usually \$2.5 mill a year. Fund is penalties and taxes for benefit overpayments and businesses paying late. Came up with a list – about 20% go back to UI program for compliance activities (get \$2 for every \$1 to the trust fund). 80% for workforce development programs.

Purpose clause of the fund has all things to be used for and “at the discretion of the legislature” is in the law.

1:30 General Assistance (Helen Thatcher)

- a. Monthly Reporting Update
Technical problems with reporting, so unable to give report this month.
- b. Statewide Working Group (Melissa Smith, Jeff Webster, Karen Silver)
-- Update on impact of what high caseloads will have on SS applications.

1:40 DWS Budget & Legislative Priorities (Bill Greer, Mike Richardson)

Update and discussion of FY2010 and FY2011 budgets.

-- All the agencies are meeting right now with the Gov to see what his budget will be. Gov is

looking at “how much can we cut?” Gov plans to present a balanced budget with no tax increases. DWS made requests for FS, Medicaid, CHIP and low-income poverty support program (is a federal mandate – about \$50,000 will bring in about \$200,00). Requested add'l \$\$ \$ for GA. DWS wants them to understand that not funding us and not cutting us is about a 10% budget cut for DWS. One-time funding for FY10 has a lot of one-time funds, so if don't give more for FY11 – now looking at another 8-10% cut. Have to meet fed \$\$\$ for FS and Medicaid.

-- Have received confidential leg audit, probably won't be presented until January.

-- Budget audit will be presented to Exec Approps in November. Haven't seen the recommendations section yet on this. Know that the TANF replacement will come up as an issue – is in the leg audit as well. Concerned about DWS coming up with money and then using it however DWS wants, and legislature has no pay.

-- asked for \$7 mill in supplementals and \$9-15 mill for new year. \$4 mill for current year FS match.

-- Economists say recession is officially over – we are bottomed out, but that doesn't mean things are improving, they just aren't getting worse.

-- Bill has been hearing 4% reduction from Gov's office or legislature. **Asked for add'l dollars for GA – emphasize the growing need – can't let legislature ignore the growth in the caseloads!!!** Presentation of in depth budget review will certainly get their attention on the growth in caseloads and the financial need. Presentation on transition from 2010 to 2011. Are taking a cut BEFORE they get into budget cutting. Also looking at the „eligibility” gap. Between those receiving the benefits, and the number of people who qualify to receive them. About 44% of the population of eligible FS recipients don't receive them. Once people get on FS, probably won't go back to lower levels again. Won't stay at high point all the time, but will be higher at the bottom than have been in the past.

-- once Gov's budget comes out, DWS supports it.

Melissa – meeting with advocates and DWS to schedule a legislative strategy session?

-- Bill would like to let Alli Isom set that up through Kristen Cox.

1:55 DWS Changes (Diane Lovell)

a. Demand Driven Approach – Comment Period

Documents out for comment period right now – had 5 working groups developing various service areas – 9 throughout the state. Central region will remain relatively in tact. Summit, SL, Tooele county. Service areas, menu of services, outcomes, -- recommendations are on the website so can see those and comment on them. Formula funding and partnering with the employer community.

Melissa – how are employees needs addressed through this?

Dave – All the programs will continue as it is – would be interesting to talk about, as moving forward (these implementation work teams are not set in stone) – demand driven guidance; program policy and training (btwn DWS and customers); menu of services and outcomes (what services will they be providing?)

WIA state plan (transcends this) and have to address how are serving customers with needs.

DWS heard consistently from employers that people need basic skills before they are sent to job sites.

New assessment tools to be added, looking at national tools.

Implementation team to address up-front processes in the employment centers. Don't have a lot of employment counselors there, a lot telecommute. Need front-end staff that are trained to answer questions. [**** steve avery****]

A team on unemployment – 35% exhaust their benefits, how can DWS intervent.

Also looking at administrative staffing and admin costs. New demand driven will cost no more than existing division, and if possible, will cost less and not impact services. Kristen will not lay people off – ESD has absorbed workload of 100 people since the start of the year.

Special population strategies. – Look into Cheetah program.

Implementation time table – gonna push it back just a little bit – all project teams will be chartered in next 7-10 days. Full scale implementation expected in March. Need a little more time to work out bugs in ESD. June 2010 E-Rep to be totally operational.

Mike Richardson – legislative initial reaction good, has also been meeting with individual legislators.

b. **DWS Structural Changes**

Two deputies reporting to Kristen Cox – Chris Love will be retiring at end of January, he will be replaced by John Pierpont. Greg Gardner will continue and be over all the administrative functions of DWS and John Pierpont will be over all of the operations (UI, ESD, Demand Driven).

2:10 DWS Notices – Spanish/English (Debbie Herr)

A CAP pantry outreach staff has noticed that most of the notices that go to Spanish only speaking households are in English, which is very confusing.

Kate (works for SLCAP food pantry) – help people apply for FS, Medicaid, make appt with employment counselor. 75% of the time, the Spanish-speaking only people bring in English letters. They have no idea what they need to turn in or how to get in touch with DWS if have problems.

Diane – surprised to hear 75% -- will look into this.

2:20 Contractor Services at Employment Centers (Karen Silver)

It appears there is an outside contractor providing job help services to DWS' clients at employment centers. The contractor uses DWS space, computers and supplies. The name is Covenant. Can we get more information about the arrangement? Is it part of efficiencies, cost savings?

Karen – this is a regional thing. Covenant is working with multiple-barriered people to help them find work. Where does Voc Rehab fit into this? They should be working with DWS to get those referrals first.

Contract agreements have been going on for many years. Would like more information on costs.

DOH/Health:

No Health Meeting this Month.

Topics Welcome!

We find these meetings are most productive when topics are generated by the community. Please email ideas for topics to melissa@caputah.org or lincoln@healthpolicyproject.org. Thanks.