

MONTHLY MEETING AGENDA - Minutes

Wednesday, August 4th 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Department of Workforce Service

1385 S. State Street, Room 157, Salt Lake City

WDD Transition (Sandy Terry)

- a. Official July 1st
 - b. Service area plans being developing
 - c. Understand employer needs in different regions
 - d. Look at skill needs
 - e. Now organized by function to gain expertise and limit hand-offs with customers
 - f. One-stop administrator – new, manages building/facilities
 - g. All offices still providing mandatory services, but have flexibility to how provide them
 - h. A lot of workers in new positions
 - i. Work Keys – job skill/career assessment tool
 - j. Regional Councils – working to draft legislation for new workgroups – will include community advocates in bill
2. Wait Times (Casey Erickson)
- a. Initiatives to expand access points – opening up a chat feature – will be behind the MyCase access, have 62,000 customers registered on it. (Out of 175,000 cases). Going to see how it goes, how it affects wait times. If closed, chat feature will send an email. Initial phase of customer support team. Can access computers at service centers.
 - b. Gina Cornia – can you track how many calls are dropped? Have recently had technical issues with phones, had a lot of calls coming in, offering over time and other strategies to get on top of the caseload. Systems sometimes goes down with changes being made to eRep. Target has been to see dramatic decrease by October. Restructuring business model to get people through interview process quicker.
 - c. Not have everyone on the phones, which is part of the issue. Trying to get the benefits out even if there is a wait up front. Trying to stay timely on the applications so people can get their benefits. Trying to move people who are just trying to check status to a chat feature, and have employees on phone doing interviews.
 - d. Timeliness – were getting a decision a lot quicker before eRep, are under 20 days for most and under 30 for medical.
 - e. Calls dropped – maybe have too many lines.
 - f. Team of 15 to chat function, one is a Spanish speaker.
3. eRep (Debbie Herr)

- a. Have addressed the technical problems and put reports in place in eRep to identify those issues so notices don't go out. Other issues with notices, some of the language is not great, are working on this right now. Next week will start prioritizing which notices need to be rewritten and fixed first.
4. UI Training of Frontline Staff
 - a. Provided UI guide to outreach workers. Help desk is very informative, issue is making sure frontline staff is familiar with UI help desk. Worried about having staffs give UI information that they don't know, but now have access to UI help desk.
 - b. UI training for frontline staff at end of month.
 5. Utah's Back to Work Initiative
 - a. Soft launch July 1st, letters went out just about three weeks ago. 700 sent out at first, today about 1600 are out. Targeting people who are getting their first week of benefits.
 - b. Getting a lot of employer input – so can take more UI customers, about 8200 that would be potentially eligible for the program, so going to send letters to them.
 - c. Workforce Dev specialists are getting employers on board. More employer interest than customer interest. Most employers in good standing are eligible unless government or temp services.
 - d. 65,000 employers could potentially participate, were targeting emerging industries with a record of hiring over the past year.
 6. General Assistance Open Enrollment (Jeff Webster)
 - a. Went pretty well. Had a total of 1548 applicants. Some things were different during Open Enrollment – developed screening tools for online apps and for staff to follow through. Not to screen people out, but to give them information on the parameters. Everyone did a follow-up with eligibility services. Some people filtered out for regular eligibility (time limits, etc). If potentially eligible, were directed to a specialized eligibility team. When medical reports come in, they screen for eligibility. Last report received – about 725 had been referred to specialized eligibility team. Some may not have been referred to team yet, waiting on medical records.
 - b. In process of verifying medical forms.
 - c. About half applied online.
 - d. Of 725, as of today, 146 have been referred to SOAR team. Combination of short- and long-track cases. Don't have this broken down yet. Some that have been referred have already used some of their months.
 - e. June stats – 138 cases closed GA – 38 were approved for social security, 79 total closed for a positive closure reason (includes 38), 59 closed for time limits.
 - f. Caseload in June was 331. Keeping an eye on cases – aim for another open enrollment.
 7. TANF Emergency Funds (Diane Lovell)

- a. Expire Sept. 30th – will provide a detailed update at Sept. meeting.
 - b. Customers who are currently enrolled will switch over to regular TANF funding.
 - c. What specific programs? Substantial amount used to support housing. Goes through DCC.
8. Email Access through E-Query (MyCase)
- a. Email was not as good as the chat option. Do have email and those come in – case closures, concern, complaint. Are banking on the chat function – team doing this is looking for information to build a better online system for customers to have access to at MyCase. Will be a survey for customers who use chat to see what information they need.
 - b. Interested in feedback. Technological issues? Pop ups for chat. Same feature online app and UI has. Can keep record of chat for a short time period.
 - c. Gina Cornia – can customer print out the chat? Not yet, but will be able to.
 - d. This is great for deaf/hard of hearing customers.
9. Unemployment Insurance
- a. UI Trust Fund – Had EAC meeting on July 21st, have changed projections – anticipate will have larger revenues next year than originally anticipated – employment tax rates are going to be going up significantly this year (over next 2-3 years), a lot of employers have had a lot of chargebacks to their accounts and multiplier increasing.
 - i. Potentially \$12 million under on June 30th, 2012. OMB just changed some of their projections on unemployment rates for coming years, may revise projections.
 - ii. Meeting with Rep. Dunnigan about potential proposals.
 - iii. Subcommittee of EAC – will be sitting down and working on a proposal. One of the proposals is do nothing, keeping an eye on that.
 - iv. Sheila – national discussion on interest rates for borrowing, is a pretty good chance Feds will continue to give interest free loans. They do expire at the end of this year.
 - v. No real idea on reduction of benefits – more looking like a \$15 million tax increase and a \$15 million benefit deduction. Don't feel need to make mass changes, and most changes temporary.
 - b. EUC - passed, will go through the end of November (has a phase out), 7505 claims taken last week. Extremely long wait times, which was expected, but still not as bad as last year. Avg. about 30 minutes at beginning of week. Worked 7-7 last week. Have done most of the catch up, paid out \$20 million last week. Were able to take claims within one hour after president signed.
 - i. Retroactive benefits??? DOL said Governor needs to execute agreement to get extended benefits – can't be any benefit reduction, but got approval for the SSA/UI offset change, will go into effect first week of December.
 - ii. Sheila – was it regrettable that did not have people continue to file, which had earlier. Bill – if had done that, might have paid people who were not

entitled to benefits if they were not extended. Then would have to send out overpayment letters.

- c. UI rates and initial claims – pretty much stable, not seeing movement up or down.

10. Immigration and the List (Dave Lewis)

- a. Leak did come from DWS
- b. Kristen will be setting up a private meeting with advocates to talk about the issue
- c. DWS really being chastised towards DWS – mainly for not proactively turning over the data to federal authorities. – Not the role of DWS. Where people stand on immigration issues has nothing to do with their jobs. Under strict orders and federal and state regulations to protect the data.
- d. A couple of renegade employees who stepped over the line. Not representative of the entire staff. Staff is concerned, feel they are guilty by association. Feel there is a cloud of bigotry at DWS. Now people are associating DWS with the list. Didn't even get a copy of this until a few weeks into the investigation. Were able to quickly identify the 2 employees involved. Expected to find a larger conspiracy. Found them and fired them.
- e. Questions from Advocates:
 - i. Karen Silver: several years ago a few employees stole similar information for identity theft. DWS promised that they had fixed the problem so people couldn't breach it like that anymore.
 - 1. Have about 1000 employees who have access to the database, DWS continuously look at opportunities to look at security, auditing, etc. No way to absolutely prevent this, doing the best they can to prevent it.
 - ii. Lincoln Nehring: Not see an explanation from DWS about why the sharing of this list is bad – why we have the laws that protect the information. How can we make DWS employees understand the importance of these regulations to keep this information protected? Overall concern about the culture of DWS that allowed this to happen. This is regardless of the immigration status of individuals. UTDVC – shelter residents now terrified and are afraid to apply for services. Years of trust developed and now a lot of that has been denigrated.
 - iii. Bill Starks – DWS should not even ask about immigration status, have right to protect their information. Judi – a few years ago noticed that the rules for Medicaid eligibility were wrong, were able to get it changed, but caseworker supervisors did not know how to apply the rule – so Luz Robles and Judi went in to do the training. Gina – also the food stamp rule change.
 - iv. Remind employees that immigrants who come here do not get everything for free. Everyone pays taxes. They do contribute to the economy.

11. Dave Lewis:

- a. As a management team, are prepared to go through the labor intensive work to track any decrease in applications – or whatever advocates think is appropriate. Want to look at the data and work to rebuild trust.
- b. Food stamp rule change – workforce is encouraged to talk about issues up the management line. Followed proper channels, that is a key difference between these employees and the 2 who generated the list.
- c. I spend a lot of time in the field, trying to understand what is going on with staff. Understands the linking of the food stamp rule change and the list, we have employees who have strong political views, but now workers know DWS is serious, and will not allow this to happen. Will find you within a few days and file criminal charges.
- d. DWS Action Plan:
 - i. Kristen Cox granted personal interviews with all media that were interested
 - ii. On July 26th issued individual letters to everyone on the list. Of the 1300 names on the list, DWS determined 1,290 discrete names, all but 64 are current DWS employees.
 - iii. Issued instructions to staff on how to respond to questions if undocumented residents are concerned and call.
 - iv. Imaging Operations unit – manager has conducted interviews with staff to stress the importance of data security.
 - v. Want to make sure all workers that have access to the system have their access set appropriately.
 - vi. Monthly Meeting
 - vii. Tomorrow meeting with Spanish Advisory Council to get feedback
 - viii. Received numerous emails and phone calls calling for Kristen and Dave to stand down.
 - ix. Working with feds – ICE/INS
 - x. Internally – considering the following: specialized teams to work with mixed citizenry households; strengthening new employee training, zero toleration policy on improper case access,
 - xi. Make sure people have a business reason to access cases.
 - xii. Federal and state audits. What types of random sampling and audits that can be done to protect data.
 - xiii. DWS has been involved with early development of a cultural awareness training – pilot session scheduled for 27th of August. Are sending Carolyn Parsons, Diane Lovell and other supervisors to get feedback and see what application it has for DWS.
 - xiv. IT professionals – security, voluntarily comply with optional federal standards.

12. Responses of Advocates to Plan

- a. Karen Silver – have you planned for meetings with other community groups that work with immigrants?

- i. Yes, are working to set up more meetings, plan on getting to all the different agencies over the next few months.
- b. Judi Hilman – incident is diminishing to the feeling of safety. Can this be the opening to get the message out to communities – proactiveness to let people know they can apply, should apply, doing PSAs for the community, etc. To address the fear issue. How can we build a more proactive message into the plan? How can the community have structured impact on your plan? Can we have the plan in writing and have a window to respond to the plan in writing? Bring some of the tools into the plan.
Bill Tibbits – feds have a lot of material on this, with food stamps they often will pay for the PSAs, etc.
Kori – very concerned about effect on citizen children of illegal immigrants – have done a lot of work to build these bridges and now are seeing people hiding or not applying.
 - i. Can build these into the plan. At this point – will take it under advisement – get back to you later.
 - ii. Dave would like to see some of the material.
- c. Another meeting with DWS and advocates will be scheduled on this issue.