



To: Co Chairs Senator Bob Hackett and Representative Mark Fraizer

From: Rep. Lisa Sobecki

Memorandum Re: Further Request of Items to be included in Revised UCMIC Report, released August 5, 2021 and Misc. Requests for Council

October 14, 2021

Co-Chairs Hackett and Fraizer: Below are further request for items to be included in the Revised Unemployment Compensation Modernization and Improvement Council Report, initially released and approved by the Council August 5, 2021, as well as misc. requests for the Council.

Item 1: Fully address specific suggestions for the improvement of constituent services including:

1. Not all Ohioans have access to internet or home devices to complete online function of claims;
2. Call Center hours should be flexible and account for the variety of possible availability for Ohioans;
3. Unemployment Insurance application, instructions, and correspondences should be in multiple languages with plain language requirement, similar to Federal legal requirements.

(See page 3 for full list of previously submitted recommendations.)

Item 2: Address specific concerns raised by various audits released by the Auditor of State including the Performance Audit released September 23, 2021.

Item 3: Emphasize the need for continual Legislative Oversight of ODJFS Unemployment Operations, and include policy suggestions for improving Ohio's Unemployment Insurance program.

Item 4: Acknowledge the need to address Ohio's Unemployment Trust Fund solvency through future legislative action. House Bill 614 of the 133rd General Assembly did not allow for the Council to address this issue, however, solvency will be a key issue in the future that must be prioritized by the legislature.

Additionally, moving forward:

1. The UCMIC should continue to meet on a monthly basis throughout the rest of this year and up to the implementation of the new State Unemployment System. Once the system is live, the UCMIC should meet once every 2 weeks to provide continual and timely oversight of ODJFS for at least six months after the system's launch.
2. The UCMIC should also allow the public an opportunity to provide in-person testimony next calendar year, as required by House Bill 614.
3. Furthermore, Deloitte US should be invited to appear before the council and provide a presentation regarding their involvement with Ohio Unemployment Operations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly should you have any questions or need clarification.

Rep. Sobecki Submitted Recommendations

Note: Highlighted Recommendations were Partially Included in the UCMIC Initial Report.

Accessibility:

1. **Technology issues:** Not all Ohioans have access to internet or home devices to complete online-only options
 - a. Provide in-person options during hours that provide availability for individuals who work all shifts, including night and weekend options
 - b. Amplify capacity for agents to assist individuals with filing claims over the phone
2. **Hours of operation:** Ohioans work a variety of jobs throughout the course of the day and may not be able to connect with an agency during standard business hours
 - a. Provide options for individuals who may need to connect with the agency outside of the typical 9-5, such as late-night hours or weekend hours
3. **Call center/online chat accessibility:** maintain staffing so individuals may connect with agents either by phone or provide an online chat option to ensure minimal wait times

Language Accessibility

1. Provide all website information and application materials in a number of languages, including but not limited to English, Spanish, Somali, Nepali, and Arabic

Notices and Correspondence

1. Provide all correspondence, notices, and similar materials in a number of languages, including but not limited to English, Spanish, Somali, Nepali, and Arabic
2. Streamline notices provided to individuals to provide an easy to understand format, with plain language.
3. Expand explanations of individuals' right to appeal and reasons for denials, etc.
4. Work with legal aid organization partners to determine how best to present legal notices and information to individuals. Put purpose of notice on first page.
5. Allow for continual access to correspondences.

System Issues

1. Identify areas where individual user experience can be streamlined or improved, ex: document submission, image/scan uploads, and other account issues
2. Provide a way for individuals to check on the status of above mentioned document submissions to confirm the status of the update
3. Allow for individuals to review and make edits to documents and claims that have been submitted

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