



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

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DUA ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday October 19, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Council Attendees: Richard Marlin, John Drinkwater, Christopher Carozzi, Sam Larson

EOLWD/DWD/DUA/Public Attendees: Katie Dishnica, David Gold, John Saulnier, Jeannie Pena, Mavis Smith, Jason Salgado, Sara Bahrehmand, Victoria Ireton, Rena Kottcamp, Emma Hornsby, Wendy Filosi, Houda Amoakuh, Paul Fitzgerald, Mark Costello

A virtual meeting was held via Zoom.

Motion was proposed to approve the September 2023 meeting minutes.

- Motion was seconded.
- Vote on Motion – all in favor to approve.

Executive update

Katie Dishnica, Director of DUA, provided an executive update.

The first update is that Paul Demakis recently retired from the Deputy Chief Counsel position. John Cronin will assume this role and will report to David Gold.

The second update is since the last advisory council meeting in September, the WBA increased to \$1033, effective October 2023.

The third update is regarding the redetermination regulations. A hearing occurred earlier this week. The next step is to review comments and bring back any revisions of the regulations to discuss at the November Advisory Council meeting.

The fourth update is regarding EMT. It is going well with over sixty-four thousand employers accessing the new system. After employers have filed their quarterly wages that are due at the end of October, DUA can start to focus on phase two of the EMT project, or the claimant side of unemployment. In order to launch the new system, enforcement was shut off. These include certified assessments for past due debts, court judgements, and levies. They have now been turned back on. This is slowly increasing, with only a little at a time being sent out to ensure it is functioning properly.

The fifth update is regarding Program Integrity. If you receive any questions, please point people to the advisory posted on mass.gov. There was an issue with constituents using a search engine to search for the unemployment website. Sponsored sites that are not valid DUA sites have been coming up in search results. Claimants should go to mass.gov to file an unemployment claim. DUA is working to get those fraudulent sites taken down. That has resulted in claims being hacked and the payment method being changed. There is a dedicated phone queue that has been created to work with claimants on this issue. There is an integrity symposium coming up in December that DUA will be attending. Information from this meeting will be shared at the January DUA Advisory Council meeting.

The sixth update is regarding tax intercepts. Tax intercept notices are sent out in October. DUA is working on removing claims that were reported as fraud from being sent a notice. This is just the intent notice. Claimants can request a review of the notice if they believe they should not have received the notice.

UI trust fund

Lisa Hammerle, Director of the Department of Economic Research provided an update on the UI trust fund. The annual outlook report was sent on 10/15 and provided a status on the trust fund as well as projections for the 2023-2027 outlook period.

- YTD employer contributions through September 30 are \$738 million with a projected year-end total of \$852 million.
- YTD Benefit payments \$1.59 billion with a projected 2023 year-end total of \$2.08 billion
- The balance of the UI trust fund is \$3.22 billion, and the balance is projected to be \$2.87 billion.
- According to the projections DUA is looking at a Schedule C next year, and a D and E in the out years.

mass.gov/uitrustfund

Discussion/ Questions: Katie Dishnica reminded members that the next meeting is November 16, 2023. Rich Marlin asked if the next meeting could be moved. After some discussion everyone agreed to move the meeting to Wednesday November 15, 2023, at 1030AM.

Questions

Question by Chris Carlozzi: Is there an update on the two billion?

Answer by Katie Dishnica: We continue to work with DOL but no updates at this time.

Question by Rich Marlin: Are there other states besides MA experiencing this issue? Is this a multi-state issue?

Answer by Katie Dishnica: I can't comment on that.

Question by Chris Carlozzi: will it affect anything in October or next month with redetermination on a federal level regarding our standing?

Answer by Katie Dishnica: I am not able to share any information at this time.

Next meeting is November 15, 2023, at 1030AM. Please let Sara or Katie know if you are unable to attend the meeting.

Meeting adjourned