



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

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DUA ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday September 21, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Council Attendees: Richard Marlin, John Drinkwater, Christopher Carlozzi, 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, Laura Santiago, Richard Jeffers, Mark Costello

A virtual meeting was held via Zoom.

Motion was proposed to approve the August 2023, meeting minutes.

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

Katie Dishnica, Director of DUA, advised that hybrid Advisory Council meetings can be arranged if members request it. We have the option to utilize a conference room and Zoom at the same time.

Executive update

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

The first update is that Laura Santiago has assumed the role as Acting Director of Revenue. Laura has been with DUA since 2009. She is very knowledgeable on the employer side of the business. Previously, Rick Jeffers was overseeing Revenue and as the Executive sponsor of the EMT project.

The second update is regarding the new EMT System. Rick Jeffers, Executive Sponsor of EMT, reminded members that the new EMT system went live on 9/12. The date was chosen intentionally since businesses and TPAs are not as busy in September. In October, all employers and TPAs will use system to file wage reports and make quarterly payments. So far, there has been a lot of activity. There has been over 14,000 unique employers' login, over 1500 TPAs have logged in successfully, and over 11,000 transactions performed. A couple hundred wage reports were filed and Revenue activity such as payments have been made to DUA by employers. Internally, the DUA team is feeling comfortable with the new system.

Question by Christopher Carlozzi: Have you seen any questions from employers or on the user side? We sent information out to members with links that were provided by DUA.

Answer by Rick Jeffers: There are how to videos on EMT. Questions received have been about navigating the new system. The mass.gov site will continue to be updated.

Comment by Katie Dishnica: There is a chart on the EMT page on mass.gov that outlines when employers need to use UI Online and when they need to use EMT.

Question by Rich Marlin: The fault of the last system was that updates were not able to be made. Will DUA have the ability to make changes on the new system? For example, when new wage requirements were updated.

Answer by Rick Jeffers: There are a lot of new benefits to the new system. One is that with new technology, updates can be made, and quickly.

The third update is regarding redetermination regulations. David Gold, Chief Counsel, informed everyone that a public hearing has been scheduled for 10/16. It has been posted in several newspapers and will be held at 100 Cambridge St.: second floor conference room. The meeting will also be accessible via Zoom. If there any questions or you would like the notice sent to you, please let David know. Any changes and updates from the meeting will be discussed at the November DUA Advisory Council meeting.

The fourth update is regarding grants. Mark Costello, Chief of Staff, gave an update. DUA is partnering with USDOL for Identity verification services. Claimants will be able to verify their identity through login.gov and USPS. There was a meeting with USDOL regarding technical requirements. An update from that meeting will be given at October's DUA Advisory Council meeting. The grant money will go towards integration services. The majority will be funded by USDOL. They have committed to funding for two years with the hope of going past the two years.

UI trust fund

Lisa Hammerle, Director of the Department of Economic Research provided an update on the UI trust fund. A monthly report from 9/15 was published,

- As of 8/31 the ending balance of the UI trust fund was \$3.33 billion.
- YTD preliminary employer contributions through August was \$736.83 million.
- YTD Benefits paid out were \$1.45 billion to approximately 594,000 initial and continuing claims.
- An annual report will be published on 10/15 and will have updated projections.

mass.gov/uitrustfund

Discussion/ Questions: Katie Dishnica reminded members that the next meeting is 10/19/2023. Rich Marlin asked if the next meeting could be moved to 9am. Everyone agreed with the change.

Question by Christopher Carlozzi: Are there any updates regarding the Federal Department of Labor?

Answer by Katie Dishnica: It is still ongoing. There are no updates at this time.

Next meeting October 19, 2023, 9:00 AM– 11:00 AM. Please let Sara or Katie know if you are unable to attend the meeting.

Meeting adjourned