

DLT2 Unemployment Insurance Program

DLT2.1 Unemployment Insurance Claims

The Unemployment Insurance Program is a federal/state program that provides benefits to insured and eligible persons who are out of work through no fault of their own. The program is financed by an employer payroll tax. The program encompasses two functions: the processing of claims and the adjudication of disqualifying issues. Besides processing routine claims, the program also administers several special programs designed to respond to specific circumstances affecting the labor market. These currently include:

1. Workshare Program, which allows employers to retain employees while maintaining acceptable payroll by collecting a percentage of UI benefits for up to 52 weeks.
2. Trade Adjustment Assistance program (under the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration) targets unemployed individuals in parts of the economic sector that may be adversely affected by economic and trade conditions.
3. Federal and State Extended Benefit Programs which provide additional weeks of benefits during periods of high unemployment.
4. Unemployment compensation programs for former Federal Military Personnel (UCX) and Unemployed Civilian Federal Employees (UCFE).
5. The Interstate Claims office administers unemployment claims filed by individuals who worked in RI and live out of state.
6. The Combined Wage Claim office administers unemployment claims that typically include the wages of two or more states.
7. Disaster Unemployment Assistance program provides Federal unemployment benefits to individuals impacted by a natural disaster.
8. Other Federal UI programs as determined by the Department of Labor.

This record series documents the processing of claims under these different programs. The unemployment insurance claims process and the documentation establishing the nature and validity of the claim remain much the same whether an individual who has lost employment files a routine claim, or a claim is being filed under one of the special programs. The process is now also almost entirely electronic—claims can be filed electronically on-line or by phone where UI staff field calls and complete electronic screens. Each individual file includes, but is not limited to, the following kinds of documentation and information: initial completed application, wage history, UI payment history, child support-related records, employee reports on termination, tax withholding and 1099 forms, monetary determination information, direct deposit information, and related correspondence, audits, purged accounts, and UI decision documentation.

Retention: Retain six (6) years after case completed.

DLT2.2 Central Adjudication Unit Files

Applications for Unemployment Insurance result in decision to grant benefits or to reject a claim as ineligible. Applicants denied benefits have the right to appeal a decision rendered. The Central Adjudication Unit (CAU) is responsible for addressing disputed UI claims and rendering determinations on each case. Upon reaching its conclusions, the CAU issues a notice to the claimant stating the basis of unemployment, the issue and the statute governing the situation, and the final decision. Claimants can appeal CAU decisions to the Board of Review* and, ultimately, to the District Court.

The Central Adjudication's work is conducted largely in electronic form. These records document the nonmonetary determination process. The documents relate to investigations and review of decisions on eligibility for benefits. They do not cover monetary entitlement decisions. Decisions may be appealed both electronically and in paper form. The records include the initial appeal form (available on-line), statements from employer and claimant concerning the original employment offer, claimant data, employer data, and employer and claimant statements relating to grounds for 'separation'.

UI has an adjudication expert system featuring a decision module. The program consists of a suite of questions, with 25 decision types available to claims adjudicators. The program is customized and takes into account model circumstances and variations. Based on the data entered, the program produces a formatted response, though adjudicators can add additional comments. The decisions are currently stored on a networked server.

RIGL §28-42, §28-43, §28-44, §42-16

a) Decisions not appealed to Board of Review

Retention: Retain 18 months from issuance of decision.

b) Decisions appealed to Referee

Retention: Retain three (3) years from date of CAU decision.

c) Decisions appealed to full Board of Review

Retention: Retain three (3) years from date of decision.

d) Decision appealed to the District Court

Retention: Retain twenty (20) years from date of decision.

e) Precedent Setting Cases

Retention: Permanent.

**Note: Board of Review hears appeals of Central Adjudication Unit decisions. The Board of Review is a separate entity from UI. Therefore, this schedule does not include the records of the Board of Review.*

DLT2.3 The Benefit Accuracy Measurement (BAM) Program

The Benefit Accuracy Measurement program is a diagnostic tool used by Federal and State agencies to determine the accuracy of Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims--those that have generated payment and those that have been denied. It is the responsibility of the BAM unit to determine the precision of the benefit tabulation, the cause and party responsible for any payment error, and corrective action to be taken by DLT.

BAM covers the three largest permanently authorized unemployment insurance compensation programs: State UI, Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees, and Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service Members.

The BAM program's documentation includes files containing the following types of records: claimant questionnaires, base period, benefit year wages, separation information, labor organization verification, work search verifications, and interstate requests of an individual's employment status.

Retention: Retain three (3) years.

DLT2.4 Fraud Investigation Files

The Fraud Unit is a field unit of the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) program. It works to preserve the integrity of both programs by investigating suspicious activity and identifying potential overpayments. The unit investigates complaints, which may originate from within or outside the department and government. The goal of the Fraud Unit's investigations is to make determinations with respect to overpayment of individuals. Upon completion of an investigation the unit prepares a report of its finding, together with supporting documentation, to either the UI or TDI program.

The records are case files arranged by month and year of completed investigation, and the name of the investigator. Retrieval is assisted by a computer database containing case profile information: name of individual, social security number, and case number. The records include background information supplied by other DLT units and consisting of historical unemployment, income support payment, and adjudication data. The file may also contain copies of business records (bank statements, payroll records, cancelled check) provided by companies as evidence of an individual's employment status. Finally, the file includes a copy of the report.

Records the Fraud Unit collects during an investigation are sent to UI and TDI, where they are ultimately scanned and digitized.

Retention: Retain three (3) years after case closed.

DLT2.5 Certificates of Records Destruction

Certification of Records Destruction forms (PRA003) signed by authorized agency official and submitted to, and signed by, the State Archivist/Public Records Administrator. Certificates authorize the disposal of records listed in this and other applicable schedules.

RIGL §38-1-10, §38-3-6(j), and §42-8.1-10

Retention: Permanent