| | | POLICY NUMBER 68 |
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| | **Administrative Policy** | |

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| **Title:** | **Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) Program** |
| **Program:** | **Division of Workforce Services, Bureau of One-Stop and Program Support – Wagner-Peyser** |
| **Adopted:** | **January 6, 2011** |
| **Effective:** | **January 6, 2011** |

## I.  PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this paper is to provide information and operational guidance regarding the provision of REA services to Reemployment Assistance (RA) claimants.

## II.  BACKGROUND

Unemployment Insurance claimants have always been a priority population served under the Wagner Peyser (WP) program. In Florida, RA claimants are required to complete a full registration in the state's management information system (MIS) prior to receiving reemployment assistance benefits. Subsequent to registration in the MIS, claimants may be provided designated services from their local career center or through mandatory reemployment programs such as the Priority Reemployment Planning (PREP) program or the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) program.

In 1994, the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) required states to implement a Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) system to determine the likelihood that claimants would exhaust their benefits prior to returning to work. In Florida, this ranking is used to populate claimants into the PREP or REA programs, with those claimants most likely to exhaust benefits going into PREP. The PREP program is administered in every region throughout the state and requires participants receive a staff assisted orientation along with initial assessment services. The REA program, on the other hand, is operated only in select regions, in addition to PREP, and

provides more intensive services to claimants that include an orientation, initial assessment, labor market information and development of an employability plan.

In 2010, the Florida Legislature passed a law (Chapter 443.091, F.S.) requiring RA claimants to register with DEO using the state's management information system (MIS) and report to the career center as directed by the RWB for reemployment services. Reemployment services include work search activities such as résumé writing, job interviewing workshops, etc. If the claimant does not report to the career center as directed for the scheduled reemployment services, he or she must be reported in Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM) as a *no-show*. EFM is the State's MIS used to record data and report compliance to RA regarding REA participation. The no-show report is automatically generated from the EFM Data Store and sent to RA for fact-finding. Claimants' eligibility for RA benefits may be affected and they will be subject to disqualification of benefits for any week(s) they do not report as directed to the career center.

The reemployment of RA beneficiaries and the reduction of erroneous payments are high priorities for the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). The REA program addresses both of these priorities. The goal is to ensure the RA claimants have access to the full array of employment and training services through the One-Stop Delivery System while also ensuring that claimants comply with the State's requirements to actively engage in seeking work as a condition of receiving benefits. Through several independent studies conducted by a contracted vendor from USDOL, it has been shown that claimants receiving REA services are more likely to return to work before exhausting benefits.

III. **AUTHORITY**

USDOL
Chapter 443.091, F.S.

IV. **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY**

The region's REA initiatives should be an integral part of its strategy for Reemployment Services (RES). Regions should develop a comprehensive and integrated service delivery model to ensure that RA claimants receive an enhanced level of services.

**PROGRAM GUIDANCE/REQUIREMENTS**

RWBs participating in the REA Program must provide intensive, one-on-one assessment interviews with REA participants. The following summarizes the major program requirements:

- REA participants are randomly selected each week from the region's Priority Re-Employment Planning program (PREP) pool of RA claimants. After the automated process

selects the REA participants, they are then placed into pre-existing events managed by the career center staff and scheduled for a one-on-one assessment interview.

- REA participants must receive, <u>at minimum,</u> the following four (4) services:

| Service Title | Service Code |
|---|---|
| *Orientation* | *098 or 101* |
| *Initial Assessment* | *102* |
| *Labor Market Information(LMI)* | *107* |
| *Employability Development Plan (EDP)* | *205* |

### REA Service/ Activity Description:

<u>Orientation</u>: An orientation about the career center's services with particular emphasis on accessing available labor market and career information. This can be a virtual, group, or individual orientation. *(Code:  098 – On-line Orientation) or (Code: 101 – Staff Assisted Orientation)*

<u>Initial Assessment</u>: A one-on-one assessment interview with a career center job counselor to review/identify the participant's strengths, weaknesses, and barriers to reemployment.  *(Code: 102 – Initial Assessment)*

<u>Labor Market Information (LMI):</u>   Provision of  LMI  unique  to  the  REA participant's experience, skills and desired occupation. *(Code: 107- Provision of Labor Market Information;*

<u>Employability Development Plan (EDP):</u>  The development of an EDP or Reemployment Plan unique to the REA participant's challenges, skills, and goals discovered during the initial assessment. The EDP should be thorough and complete as it will be provided to the participant to follow and is an area specifically  reviewed  during the quality assurance  monitoring. *(Code 205: Develop Service Strategies (IEP, ISS, EDP)*

- Each of the above service codes must be documented in EFM upon conclusion of the assessment interview. This is the only means of documentation to determine compliance with RA rules. Specific details regarding data entry can be found under the EFM section of this guidance.
- Additionally,  work search activities are *REQUIRED* for all REA participants.  Specific  details regarding the assigned work search activities must be noted in the EDP and documented in EFM as described in the 'work search activity' section.

***Employability Development Plan:***

The EDP must:

- Be completed jointly with the REA participant and should reveal the participant's strengths, weaknesses, barriers, and employment or training goals. <u>Specific</u> details should be included in the plan and reflect which party will be responsible for each action;
- Identify the specific work search activities applicable to the participant's needs, such as résumé writing, interviewing skills, etc.;
- Indicate referral to or approval of training, if appropriate;
- Document referrals to other appropriate services offered through the career center, as required;
- Include the signature of the participant and staff, and provide a copy to the participant.

**On-Line EDP in EFM:**

It is recommended that RWBs consider using the on-line EDP in EFM when assisting REA participants in developing their employability plan, although a hard copy EDP is acceptable.

- Regions using the on-line EDP **MUST** also complete the "Objective Assessment Summary (OAS)" in EFM as well. The OAS is located on the Plan tab under the Case Management Profile section of EFM.
- If a participant has completed the background wizard and/or résumé builder, some of their information will automatically populate an REA participant's background information into the Objective Assessment Summary. As a result, there is limited participant data that would need to be added to the OAS; however, it should be reviewed for accuracy.
- The OAS provides an excellent overview of a participant's job skills, work experiences, strengths, etc., and also identifies employability weaknesses or challenges where the participant could benefit from additional career center services such as résumé writing, interviewing workshops, training, etc.

**Note:** If career center staff is unable to complete an OAS for an REA participant, the participant may have an open registration in another region. Please contact your local Regional Security Officer (RSO) for assistance. If the participant has moved to your region, the RSOs in both regions will need to communicate to transfer the participant to the new region. Once this has occurred, career center staff will be able to access and complete the OAS for the REA participant. The OAS is only available for completion by the staff in the region in which the person has an open registration.

**Work Search Activities:** The REA Program requires that each REA participant's employability development plan (EDP) include specific work search and job placement activities. ***These services are mandatory but are NOT permissible uses of REA grant funds. These activities must be funded from other sources such as Wagner Peyser (WP), or WIOA funds, as appropriate.***

- Reemployment or work search activities **must** be identified and documented in the EDP at the time of the assessment interview. These will be reviewed during quality assurance monitoring.
- **All appointments for reemployment or work search activities <u>must</u> <u>be scheduled and resulted</u>[1] in the EFM event calendar. This is a critical component of the REA process.**
- Staff will be required to manually result the work search activities in EFM within seven days of scheduling the appointment. Work search activities that are scheduled in EFM will automatically record the service provided on the participant's service plan upon proper resulting by staff. (For how to set up activities, please refer to <u>Scheduling REA Work Search Activities in EFM</u>.)
- It is recommended that career center staff remind REA participants during the assessment interview and scheduling of work search activity appointments that they will be subject to the disqualification of benefits if they do not attend their scheduled work search appointment. It is also recommended that work search activities be scheduled no more than 21 days after the initial appointment. REA participants may contact the career center to reset the appointment if they cannot attend as long as it is scheduled within, plus or minus, seven days of the date of the originally scheduled work search activity appointment.
- Work search activities can be reset one time if the claimant is unable to attend the originally scheduled activity; however, regions are not required to re-schedule work search appointments.
- Staff must review the EDP Responsibility Statement (Appendix A) with each REA participant after scheduling the work search activity. The EDP Responsibility Statement must document the specified workshop(s) and date(s) the participant is to attend, and must include the date and signatures of both the participant *and* case manager. A copy of the statement must be provided to the claimant and the original kept on-site in the participant's file. Electronic retention of this document is permissible. Retention of the EDP Responsibility Statement is critical as it may be requested by RA during an appeals hearing.
- REA participants who are resulted as a "no show" in the EFM system are automatically sent to the Office of Reemployment Assistance for fact-finding.

<u>REA Data Capture:</u>

- The EFM system is used to capture REA data for federal reports.
- REA participants have an existing registration in EFM when they are selected from the PREP pool. Each REA participant enters an REA event with an attendance status of 'registered' and have two service codes, 102-Initial Assessment and 107-LMI, attached to their activity plan. Two additional service codes, 101-orientation and 205-EDP, are required to be manually entered on each participant's activity plan before full credit is provided for the interview. After all services have been provided, staff **must** result each participant's attendance in EFM to either "attended" or "no-show". If one of these statuses is not marked, the region will not receive credit for the assessment.
- All REA participant data must be entered into the EFM system in a timely manner. Seven (7) days following the initially scheduled REA appointment the system locks down all

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[1] **Result means a participant's attendance was marked as either "attended" or "no-show".**

attendance results. Participant records that have not been managed will be moved over to the *red flag report*.

- The red flag report contains all REA participants who have not received all required services or those who have not had their attendance status changed. Staff must go into each participant's record to update services as needed. Regions will not receive credit for assessments that are flagged on this report until all issues have been resolved successfully. Unresolved cases on this report will be removed after 90 days.

**Claimants Failing to Report:**

*Assessment Interview:*

- REA participants who fail to report for their REA assessment interview must be resulted as a "no show" through EFM.
- The RA adjudicators conduct fact-finding on REA participants who are "no shows" and make determinations on payment or disqualifications.

*Work Search Activities/Workshops:*

- REA participants who fail to report for scheduled work search activities must be resulted as a "no show" in EFM. A report will be automatically generated for RA adjudicators to conduct fact-finding on REA participant no-shows for work search appointments.
- Career centers are **not** required but may reschedule REA participants who do not attend their initially scheduled work search activity appointments.   If an REA participant is rescheduled for an appointment, the work search activity must be scheduled and resulted in the EFM event calendar.

**RA Eligibility Review Program**

- Under the requirements of the REA grant, the REA assessments are not considered complete until an eligibility review under the Eligibility Review Program (ERP) has been conducted.
- Staff from the Office of Reemployment Assistance conducts eligibility reviews on REA participants who have completed their assessment interviews.
- The career center does not have any responsibility for the completion of the ERPs and the ERPs do not impact any funding at the Regional level.

**BEST PRACTICES**

- *Appointment Reminders* – Having staff call REA participants a few days prior to their scheduled appointment to remind them of the appointment has increased the "show rate" for REA participants. Some regions have required their Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) participants, who must participate in work activities, to come into the career centers to make those reminder calls to REA participants.  This also helps to satisfy required work activities for those TANF recipients. Other Regions have had full-time or temporary staff make the reminder calls.

- *Follow up with REA Participants Who Have Not Found Employment* – It is recommended that Regions establish a process to follow-up with REA participants who have not found employment after all required services have been rendered. The follow-up period is up to each region to establish given their local policies and procedures. Please note:  the REA Program does NOT require follow- up, but it is recommended as a best practice.  As an example, some Regions have initiated an alerts system in EFM for 30 days prior to soft exit for follow-up.  Also, please note that any follow-up with REA participants must be paid from WP or WIOA funds, as appropriate.

V.    **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A - EDP Responsibility Statement

## Appendix A - EDP Responsibility Statement

I understand that I am required by law to participate in the activities assigned under the Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) program and listed on this Employability Development Plan Responsibility Statement. By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have been informed of the re- employment activities that I am required to attend and refusal to participate may adversely affect my unemployment compensation benefits. If for any reason I am unable to attend my assigned activity, I must immediately contact the career center at (__)___-____.

| Workshop Name | Date/Time Scheduled |
|---------------|---------------------|
|               |                     |
|               |                     |
|               |                     |

_____          _____
Participant Signature                                          Date


_____          _____
Career Center Staff Signature                                Date