

How to Connect To Your State Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Files

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Background

- Every state, DC, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands operate state Unemployment Insurance programs – 53
- Each of the 53 state UI programs maintain a wage record file
- As of 6/30/08 - 153,954,877 individual wage records
- Wage records filed each quarter

Two-Fold Purpose

- Pay Claims – Employee wage records used to determine monetary eligibility for individuals filing a claim for unemployment insurance.
- Calculate UI Employer Tax – Employers pay state unemployment insurance taxes. Employee wages are one part of the UI tax calculation.

Whose Wages Are Reported?

- Workers in “Covered” Employment – Most workers are covered by UI, including for-profit, non-profit, state & local governments.

Whose Wages Are Not Reported?

- Federal employees, self-employed individuals, those working in exempted employment

Wage Record – What Does it Look Like?

- Fields Common to all States – SSN, total wages paid, employer account number and report quarter
- Other Fields – Employee name (virtually all states), tips & hours worked (very few states)
- Employee Name – Some states capture entire first and last name, some states capture entire last name and 1st initial of the 1st name, while still other states only capture the 1st initial of the 1st name and the 1st three characters of the last name.

Diversity

- To summarize, UI is a state program operated under Federal oversight. States use a variety of methods to capture wage record data. States capture different pieces of wage record data. Additionally, the states do not have uniform organizational structures. But, I will try to help you navigate these barriers

Identify the Organization

- Directory of state UI tax administrators
 - <http://www.workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/unemploy/agencies.asp>

- Identify the organization responsible for the wage record file – not always the UI administration

- If not successful, contact USDOL for assistance

Negotiate an Agreement

- MOU
- Cost – Do we need to pay?
- Determine access method
- Identify UI contact to transfer data