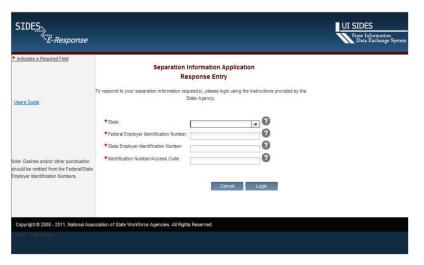# SIDES and SIDES E-Response Fact Sheet

The Problem

Responding to paper-based unemployment compensation (UC) information requests fully and within tight deadline can be challenging for companies today. This problem is compounded for employers and third-party administrators (TPAs) with operations in multiple states, since – until recently – no single national standard existed to help states and employers easily and electronically exchange key information about UC claims.

The Solution

Developed through a strategic partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) and state UC agencies, the **State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES)** and **SIDES E-Response** offer employers and TPAs – *free of charge* – a secure, electronic and nationally-standardized format in which they can easily respond to UC information requests, attach documentation when needed and receive a date-stamped confirmation of receipt. Now, employers and TPAs in states implementing the SIDES and SIDES E-Response systems can adopt an electronic standardized format to better anticipate and supply the data needed for UC information requests, reduce follow-up phone calls and streamline their UC response processes, reducing paper work while saving time and money.

The Options

For employers with a limited number of UC claims throughout the year, the SIDES E-Response website provides an easy and efficient portal for electronically posting responses to information requests from state agencies. SIDES E-Response is available in participating states to any employer or TPA with internet access.

SIDES provides a more automated data-sharing and file-tracking interface between employers' IT systems and state agency networks. SIDES is an integrated computer-to-computer interface designed for employers and TPAs that typically deal with a large volume of UC information requests. SIDES is especially helpful to those that operate in multiple states.

Both options are completely *free of charge* for employers and TPAs, although there will be internal IT system development costs to integrate SIDES. In addition, both options have multiple layers of security that are implemented to the highest standard, given the sensitive data exchanged between state UC agencies and employers and TPAs.

The Benefits

Both systems offer an impressive array of benefits and have the potential to significantly improve the UC information exchange process. SIDES and SIDES E-Response give employers and TPAs an electronic way to simplify and streamline responses to UC information requests, saving time and money by:

- eliminating delays related to paper mail delivery, and allowing more time to gather information and respond;
- ensuring more complete information is provided through standard edits, validations and business rules, reducing time-consuming follow up phone calls;
- reducing paper handling, staff time and postage costs; and
- keeping UC tax rates lower by reducing improper payments.

Benefits of SIDES and SIDES E-Response

- ✓ Saves time and money
- ✓ Provided for FREE
- ✓ Reduces staff time
- ✓ Reduces paper work
- ✓ Helps improve UC rates by reducing erroneous payments
- ✓ Provides an electronic, nationally standardized data format
- ✓ Includes data checks to ensure the exchange of complete and valid information
- ✓ Provides tools for a healthier bottom line

In addition to the significant administrative cost savings offered by SIDES and SIDES E-Response, both options address two of the largest causes of improper UC payments: lack of accurate information about why a worker was separated from his or her job, and claimants who work while receiving UC benefits.

Improper UC payments, which could be prevented by receiving timely and accurate information, negatively impact employers' bottom lines. With this in mind, using SIDES or SIDES E-Response will help employers lower UC rates by providing accurate, quality and timely information to state UC agencies.

Beginning in July 2014, Pennsylvania will be registering employers to use SIDES E-Response for their Notice of Application and Request for Separation Information Form UC-45. If you are a Pennsylvania employer and are interested in registering for SIDES E-Response, please visit www.dli.state.pa.us and click on the SIDES link to download the instructions and application.

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