

Client Training HQ

Importance of Responding to Unemployment Claims For Federal Employers

This document is intended to help explain the importance of responding timely and adequately to all unemployment insurance claim requests for federal employers.

What is Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE)?

The UCFE program provides unemployment compensation for federal employees who lost their employment through no fault of their own. UCFE is administered by the states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands who act as agents of the federal government. In general, the unemployment insurance (UI) law of the state in which the former federal employee had their last official duty station in federal civilian service will be used to determine eligibility for UCFE benefits. Accordingly, the same terms and conditions that apply to individuals eligible for regular state UI typically apply to UCFE claimants.

The state will ask the claimant for a SF-8, Notice to Federal Employee About Unemployment Insurance, and a SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action to establish the UCFE claim. Federal employers provide these forms to their employees upon separation. The individual must continue to file weekly or biweekly claims for UCFE benefits according to the instructions given by the state agency where the UCFE claim is filed.

Responsibilities of Federal Agencies

The federal agencies are responsible for providing UCFE information to their employees, coordinating with the State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) to provide timely wage and separation information, and the timely payment of the quarterly billings for UCFE benefits paid to their former employees.

An Adequate Response

The term adequate can be quite subjective. A good rule of thumb to help ensure the response is adequate is to answer all of the questions presented to you regarding the specific separation.

- Answers should be detailed, but concise.
- Your response should also contain all necessary supporting documentation to back up the answers.

A Timely Response

While defining adequate may be subjective, the timely factor is not.

- A timely response standard deadline for all UCFE 931 claims is 10 days.

Change How You Think About Responding

By responding timely and completely to UCFE information requests from the state UI agency, federal agencies help ensure correct charges are assessed to the federal agency and help maintain UCFE program integrity.

Importance of Documentation

Documentation is typically your best defense against paying out unnecessary unemployment benefits. A reimbursing employer **pays dollar-for-dollar on all benefits paid** out to claimants. It is very important that you document events as they occur. Something that, at the time, may seem like a minor detail, could end up being a key piece of information or documentation in a future unemployment claim.

Documentation Best Practices

In a voluntary quit case, the claimant has the Burden of Proof. This means that the claimant must show that a compelling and necessitous reason existed (either work related or personal) that every reasonable attempt was made to preserve the employer/employee relationship, and that there was no other alternative, but to quit.

- Get all resignations in writing with the employee's signature.
- If the resignation is verbal, ask that the employee put it in writing.
- Gather the last intended day of work, the reason for quitting, and the signature of the employee resigning.

In a discharge case, the employer has the Burden of Proof to show that an employee demonstrated a willful and wanton disregard of a policy or expectation as an employee.

- Document all details of the final incident(s).
- Provide a copy of the violated policy along with the signed acknowledgment.
- Provide copies of any prior related warnings.

Handling Benefit Charges

As a part of your UC Service Team, you will have a Charge Analyst working behind the scenes watching the charges coming in against your account. Your UC Charge Analyst will help you:

- Watch charges coming in against your account.
- Investigate charges received when a favorable decision is on file.
- Protest erroneous charges.

More Training is Available!

More unemployment compensation training is available on our [Connections site](#).

The information provided is intended as general guidance and is not intended to convey any tax, benefits, or legal advice. For information pertaining to your company and its specific facts and needs, please consult your own tax advisor or legal counsel.