The Quarterly Connection

YOUR LINK TO THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION REGARDING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE, WORKERS’ COMPENSATION, and LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

Note: Throughout this newsletter, “UI” refers to “Unemployment Insurance” and “WC” refers to “Workers’ Compensation.”

Department Name Change

The Department of Employment and the Department of Workforce Services are now a single department known as the Department of Workforce Services. This exciting change benefits all of our customers as staff strive to meet the Department of Workforce Services’ values:

Customer Service: We continuously improve the customer experience by working to improve our programs and services and by listening objectively to customer needs. We strive to meet or exceed our customer expectations by providing superior service to all our internal and external customers.

Professional Development & Empowerment: We maintain the highest level of staff competency through structured professional development and training which allows us to better serve and empower the needs of our staff and customers.

Collaboration: Our success is dependent upon the collaborative efforts of our team, communities, customers and providers to consistently seek improvements in the utilization of our programs and services.

Communication: We are committed to promoting honest and open communication with our internal and external customers. We first listen to understand and then communicate ideas, results and information.

Trust & Honesty: We value honesty and trust. We hold true to these values that guide us to serve the State of Wyoming and its citizens to the best of our ability.

What does the department’s name change mean to you? On a practical basis, the new Department of Workforce Services will continue to provide the excellent service our customers expect and deserve.

On a technical basis, the new agency name, Department of Workforce Services, impacts:

- UI and WC tax payments: Checks should be made payable to the “Department of Workforce Services.”
- Agency letterhead: Department of Workforce Services will now appear on all outgoing mail.
- Internet site: Work is in progress to provide a customer-friendly Internet site that will meet the needs of all Department of Workforce Services’ customers.
- Forms: New reporting forms will reflect the new department’s name. We will continue to process forms that were provided by the department under the Department of Employment name prior to the reorganization.

The UI Taxable Wage Base for 2011 is $22,300.00

The WC Corporate Officer/LLC Member Average Wage per quarter for 2011 is $10,172.49

Slowed, but not stalled

The fourth quarter of 2009 and the first quarter of 2010 – the lowest point of Wyoming’s economic downturn – employers in the state added 39,902 new hires who had not worked for that particular employer before. A new hire survey conducted by the Research & Planning (R&P) section captured information direct from employers about the types of new hires, what they earned, and what level of education employers required. For example, there were 1,336 truck drivers, heavy & tractor trailer, hired during this period; those hired for this occupation earned a median hourly wage of $17.00. Of these truck drivers, 78.9% were still employed one quarter after hire. For more information about the new hires survey see http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/energy.htm#new_hires_survey.
Under the federal/state UI program, each state maintains a UI Trust Fund. UI taxes paid by a state’s employers are credited to the state’s fund. Each state draws monies out of the state’s fund to pay UI benefits. When a state’s fund goes broke, it borrows funds from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) so it can continue to pay UI benefits.

Since November 2008, 33 states have had to borrow funds for UI benefit payments. As of May 10, 2011, 28 states still have outstanding UI loan balances. Wyoming is one of just 17 states that has not had to borrow federal funds during this recession.

This is good news for Wyoming employers. Employers receive a 5.2% credit against Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) taxes annually when their state UI taxes have been paid timely and in full. Under current federal statutes, the FUTA credit is incrementally reduced annually for employers in states that continue to borrow federal funds to pay UI benefits. In addition, interest on the federal loans must be repaid by borrowing states, potentially adding an additional UI tax burden on their employers.

As of April 30, 2011, Wyoming’s UI Trust Fund has adequate funds to pay UI benefits for a year. As the economy slowly recovers, the Fund is projected to increase, providing an additional safety net for Wyoming employers and claimants.

Addresses

Employers can request separate mailing addresses for UI benefit claim-related notices, WC injury claim-related notices, and tax information for both programs. If an employer does not specify separate addresses, the tax address is the official mailing address used for all notices.

Most notices for benefit claims and injury claims have time limits. Failure to respond within the time limits may result in charges to the employer’s accounts.

The employer has the responsibility to keep all addresses current. An address change must be submitted in writing to:

Employer Services
PO Box 2760
Casper, WY 82602

If multiple addresses are submitted on a single employer, be sure to clearly indicate the appropriate use (UI claims, WC injury, UI/WC tax, etc.) for each address.

New Hire Reporting

All Wyoming employers are required to report new hires (including re-hires and temporary employees) within 20 days of hire (Wyoming Statute 27-1-115). The new hire report is SEPARATE from the quarterly UI and WC reports.

New hire reporting speeds up the child support income withholding order process, expedites collection of child support from parents who change jobs frequently, and quickly locates non-custodial parents to help in establishing paternity and child support orders. New hire reporting helps children receive the support they deserve. Employers serve as key partners in ensuring financial stability for many children and families and should take pride in their role.

To report new hires, go to www.wy-newhire.com.

Toll Free Fax: (800) 921-9651
Toll Free Phone: (800) 970-9258
www.wy-newhire.com

Paper Reports – Please Fill All Fields

If you file your quarterly reports on division-supplied paper forms, please complete all applicable fields. For example, UI needs to know the total wages, excess wages and taxable wages, taxes due, total UI amount due. WC needs to know the number of employees, total wages and taxes due for EACH class code listed on the form. If there were no wages for a specific class code, indicate this with a zero in each field.

Filing on WIRE (https://doe.state.wy.us/wire) can solve all of these problems.

The envelopes provided by the division with each quarterly packet are designed to handle paper forms with a single fold. We ask that you do NOT staple the forms or checks. Please single-fold the form or WIRE remittance slip, insert the check between the folds and place in the provided envelope.