

Connecticut Department of Labor

At a Glance

DANTÉ BARTOLOMEO, *Interim Commissioner*

Daryle Dudzinski, *Deputy Commissioner*

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Established - 1873

Statutory Authority - C.G.S. Sec. 31-1 to 31-403 (excluding chapter 568)

Central Office - 200 Folly Brook Blvd., Wethersfield, CT 06109-1114

Average number of full-time employees – 615

Intermittent hires – 235

Recurring operating expenses 2020-21: Federal - \$109,358,436; State - \$97,465,492

Capital Outlay: Federal - \$96,071; State - \$4,456,399; CEPF - \$0

Website: www.ct.gov/dol

Mission

The Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL) is committed to providing the state's jobseekers and businesses with services to strengthen our workforce, communities, and the state's economy.

Since March 13, 2020, CTDOL has administered multiple state unemployment and extended benefits as well as federal unemployment programs that were stood up under the CARES Act, CARES Act II, and American Rescue Plan Act to assist workers displaced by the COVID-19 global pandemic. The agency has administered regular state unemployment and extended benefits programs as well as federal Lost Wages Assistance; Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation; Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation; Pandemic Unemployment Assistance; and two separate rounds of Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation. From March 2020 to March 2021, CTDOL processed more than 1.5 million unemployment applications—an amount the agency would typically receive over a 10-year period. Since March 2020, the agency has disbursed approximately \$9.7 billion in unemployment funding.

Statutory Responsibility

The Connecticut Department of Labor assists workers and employers to help them become—and stay—competitive in the global economy. CTDOL administers income support for workers who are between jobs; provides employment search assistance and job training; ensures wage protection and fair

treatment while on the job; trains the next generation workforce through our Registered Apprenticeship Program; and provides data and analysis on the economy, wages, and the workplace.

Services offered to employers include: workplace data; labor market information; recruitment assistance; regional job fairs; programs to help maintain and improve employee skills such as apprenticeship and incumbent worker training; CONN-OSHA guidance and consulting services; tax credit information; informational services to workers and employers; enforcement responsibilities including payment of wages, health and safety, employment of minors, family and medical leave, and representation by labor organizations; and resolution of labor disputes. As the Connecticut arm of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the agency collects, analyzes, and disseminates workforce data to inform businesses, the general public, government planners, and policymakers about employment issues and trends. Pursuant to reporting requirements of CGS 4-61mm, CTDOL does not have a volunteer program.

Workforce Services and Programs

American Job Center Services: CTDOL and its federal and state partners provide universal access to an array of labor services offered at American Job Center (AJC) locations throughout Connecticut. These services include assistance with career choices and job searches; employment referrals; placement assistance for job seekers; reemployment services for claimants receiving unemployment insurance; employer recruitment services to businesses with job openings; workshops covering résumé writing, interviewing, and career exploration; and provides access to computers with Internet connection, copiers, and fax machines.

During state fiscal year (SFY) 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) a total of 29,976 Wagner-Peyser program participants received services (staff-assisted or self-service) through AJC offices, both in person and virtually, with 71,709 staff-assisted services provided statewide. In addition, statewide virtual workshops began in November 2020, and included Fundamentals of Resume Writing, Successful Job Search Strategies, Interviewing Techniques and LinkedIn. CTDOL offered 124 virtual workshops that were attended by 4,645 individuals.

Business Services: Business Services helps Connecticut's employers to hire, train, and retain workers by analyzing the needs of businesses and developing customized solutions. From July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, a total of 2,052 business registrations were processed by CTHires staff. During this same period, employers posted 56,965 new Connecticut job orders and jobseekers placed 6,910 new résumés into the system. In addition, 142,161 job orders were indexed from corporate websites.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG): This program helps Connecticut veterans through its team of Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs), located at the American Job Centers (AJCs). DVOPs provide individualized career services to eligible veterans and their spouses with significant barriers to employment, as well as other special populations that include certain transitioning service

members; members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in a military treatment facility or warrior transition unit; and the spouse or other family caregiver of such Armed Forces members. A “family caregiver” is someone who provides personal care services as a parent, spouse, child, step-family or extended family member, or as an individual who lives with, but is not a member of the family of, the veteran. The program emphasizes meeting the employment needs of economically or educationally disadvantaged veterans. LVERs conduct outreach to employers to promote the hiring of veterans and facilitate veteran employment, training, and placement services within the AJCs. In partnership with the Department of Defense and the Connecticut Military Department, JVSG staff assist military troops and their families, including returning troops from the CT National Guard and U.S. Armed Service Reserves, by participating in Yellow Ribbon Events and Soldier Readiness Program briefings that inform troops and their families about the services available to them.

Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA): In SFY 2021, CTDOL received \$32 million in federal funding, provided workforce services to approximately 4,900 clients, and helped state workforce partners increase the availability of employment and training assistance. CTDOL and Workforce Development Boards created new employment and training initiatives to promote employment opportunities that show the best potential for job growth and funded projects to strengthen Connecticut’s businesses and workforce.

Connecticut’s State Apprenticeship Expansion: As part of the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) grant allotments, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration awarded \$1,067,532 to the CTDOL Office of Apprenticeship Training. Beginning July 1, 2020, the office undertook this three-year project to:

- Expand the number of first year Licensed Construction Trades Registered Apprentices in Connecticut by 800 in three years;
 - Support and encourage Registered Apprenticeship Program diversification, including increasing the diversity of apprentices and growing apprenticeship across industry sectors;
 - Support the integration of Registered Apprenticeship Programs into state workforce development strategies, education, and economic development strategies and programs.

Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative: With the support of the General Assembly and the Bond Commission, five regional partnerships have implemented training programs administered by CTDOL under the Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative. Program proposals from the states' five WDB Regional Partnerships were submitted to CTDOL as follows:

- The Capital Workforce Partnership- Manufacturing, Healthcare, Construction & Transportation
- Eastern Workforce Investment Board Partnership- Healthcare & Manufacturing
- Workplace Inc. Partnership- Healthcare & Manufacturing
- Northwest WIB Partnership- Manufacturing focused on plastics manufacturers
- Workforce Alliance Partnership- Hospitality

This funding provides support to train qualified entry-level workers for manufacturers and employers in industries experiencing work shortages. The certified pre-apprenticeship training programs were developed in consultation with employers or modeled after the Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative in consultation with industry partners. These training programs continue to address Connecticut's sustained workforce shortage by expanding the number of manufacturing workforce pipeline job placements within the state and providing training and job placement to healthcare and other industry sectors which continue to experience long-term workforce shortages.

Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) lends timely re-employment assistance to workers who will soon lose their jobs. This federal program requires Connecticut employers with 100 or more full-time workers to give 60-days advance notice of a plant closing or mass layoff to allow state and municipal entities to offer workforce assistance to affected employees *prior* to layoffs.

Rapid Response (RR) and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

Both the Rapid Response (RR) Team and the TAA program, headed by CTDOL, respond to WARN notifications and other potential layoffs or closings. **RR team members** reach out to Connecticut employers considering or experiencing plant closings to offer voluntary assistance which helps ease the impact of layoffs and ensures that workers are offered a full range of benefits and services prior to layoffs through Early Intervention sessions. These sessions inform employees about unemployment benefits, job search assistance, training opportunities, community services, and local agencies that provide support to dislocated workers and their families. RR Unit staff continue to respond to several thousand emails and phone calls from employers, displaced workers, and union representatives who have a variety of questions and issues related to ongoing pandemic related job losses.

RR Team activity during the program year included:

- Made 345 initial outreach calls regarding potential layoffs and responded to 57 WARN notices affecting 4,502 workers. The RR staff made 41 employer and/or union visits (either in-person or virtually) providing 79 presentations to 1,575 impacted workers, which included two Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) information sessions and 32 webinars for workers from companies that did not avail themselves of Rapid Response services prior to layoff.
- Sent 7,924 webinar invitations to workers whose employers either declined pre-layoff presentations or who were identified after layoff as being part of a mass reduction in force.
- As a means of layoff aversion, RR staff reached out to 1,542 employers that were participating in CTDOL's Shared Work program to make appropriate referrals to Economic Development or other resources if the employers indicated ongoing difficulties emerging from a downturn in business. RR Unit staff also offered assistance to 51 employers that submitted pandemic WARN notices indicating that layoffs were expected to be temporary.
- Submitted 20 TAA petitions on behalf of workers whose jobs were believed to be affected by increased imports or a shift in production to a foreign country. Thirteen petitions covering 1,148 workers were certified TAA eligible. Four petitions were still pending investigation at the close of the program year. Three petitions resulted in negative determinations.

TAA staff help workers return to suitable employment as quickly as possible following employment loss. Participants are part of worker groups certified by the U.S. Department of Labor whose jobs were believed to be affected by increased imports or a production shift to a foreign country. Benefits to eligible workers include job training; job search assistance; relocation and readjustment allowances; health coverage tax credit; and wage subsidies for workers 50 years of age and older who return to lower-paying work.

TAA activity during the program year included:

- Worker group certifications: Petitions filed on behalf of workers from 20 companies were approved, workers were determined to be adversely affected by foreign trade and certified as eligible to apply for TAA. Petitions filed on behalf of workers from three companies were denied.
- Individual applications: 1138 workers were identified by USDOL as potentially eligible to apply for TAA benefits, and 395 eligibility determinations were issued in response to submitted applications.
- 165 workers participated in training, with training payments totaling nearly \$914,954.36.
- Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA): \$542,626 was provided for 1,047 weekly TRA claims, including 117 weeks of basic TRA, 825 weeks of additional TRA, and 105 weeks of completion TRA. Workers who satisfy applicable program requirements may receive one or more types of TRA income support: up to 26 weeks of basic TRA; up to 65 weeks of additional TRA; and up to 13 weeks of completion TRA.
- Reemployment / Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (R/ATAA): \$22,218 in payments was issued to eligible workers.

Job Corps Vocational Training: Administered by USDOL, this program served more than 400 students at the Hartford and New Haven locations. Low-income youths ages 16-24 receive intensive wraparound services including life skills and social skills training; career and mental health counseling; basic health care; residential housing; a bi-weekly living allowance; an annual clothing allowance; driver education; on-the-job training; high school diploma and high school equivalency attainment; academic and career technical training; employability skills training; job placement and retention; and support services after graduation. CTDOL has an assigned staff member providing on-site support to the Hartford Job Corps Academy and New Haven Job Corps Center.

Jobs Funnel Initiative: Comprised of public-private joint efforts around the state, the program places unemployed and underemployed clients in a variety of employment opportunities including construction and non-construction jobs in both union and non-union settings and apprenticeship training programs. Jobs Funnel partnerships have placed 5,000 clients into jobs since its inception in 1999.

Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Program: Agricultural employers receive recruitment assistance, mediation, interpreter services, and technical guidance on compliance with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker regulations. In SFY 2021, outreach services were provided to 1,562 workers,

including information on available workforce services, referrals to healthcare providers, and related supportive services.

Manufacturing Innovation Fund Incumbent Worker Training (MIF IWT) Program: Provides financial assistance to Connecticut manufacturers for growing innovative and technology-based manufacturing businesses. MIF IWT helps employers meet emerging market needs and improve productivity and efficiency by enhancing the skills of their current workforce. Despite training delays caused by COVID-19, the program served 45 manufacturing companies and trained 2507 Incumbent Workers in PY 2021.

Foreign Labor Certification Program (previously called Alien Certifications Program): Ensures that employers have exhausted all efforts to hire American workers before recruiting foreign workers prior to receiving certification. Acting as an agent for USDOL, staff processed 100 H-2A job order certifications for 1,466 temporary foreign agricultural worker positions and conducted 52 pre-occupancy housing inspections in connection with agricultural certifications for the 2021 growing season.

Unemployment Services and Programs

The following information regarding the State of Connecticut's Unemployment Insurance program is reported pursuant to CGS 31-250. Due to the ever-changing nature of this program and the needs of its consumers, legislative suggestions remain under consideration.

Unemployment Insurance (UI): Monetary benefits are provided to unemployed workers while they seek new work or take part in approved training programs. The COVID-19 pandemic created a massive increase in unemployment applications. The agency has received more than 1.5 million unemployment applications—more than 10 years of applications—in a single year. Since March 13, 2020, CTDOL has paid out more than \$9.7 billion in state, federal, and extended benefits program benefits.

The agency improved consumer experience through the development of and continued enhancements for the Consumer Contact Center and FileCTUI.com—the online application site for all unemployment programs. Individuals can file a first-time unemployment claim, re-open a claim, complete a weekly certification, or apply for any of the federal unemployment benefits programs. Functionality enhancements over the past year include a callback appointment scheduling feature, drop down menu for services, and continually updated information on the status of federal programs.

Since it was established in July 2020, the Consumer Contact Center has handled more than 1.5 million claimant calls and cases.

Unemployment Compensation: The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Tax Division administers an equitable UI tax program that protects both workers and employers through fair enforcement of the UI law. CTDOL administered nearly \$1.4 billion in state unemployment benefits in SFY 2021. Of that amount, nearly \$1.1 billion was paid to claimants formerly employed by employers paying quarterly UI

taxes under the regular UI benefits program, and about \$300 million was provided to claimants formerly employed by non-taxable employers. Total taxes paid by more than 112,000 employers whose employees were covered by UI totaled \$695 million.

Reemployment Programs for Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants: The agency provides a variety of federally funded reemployment services to UI claimants through the Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (UI RESEA) program which serves claimants who are either profiled as most likely to exhaust benefits or those receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-service members (UCX). The goal of this program is to provide UI claimants early access to services provided by the American Job Centers that will help get them back into the workforce faster. The UI RESEA program also serves as a prevention/detection program for improper UI payments. After a temporary suspension of the program during the pandemic, CTDOL resumed the RESEA program on October 30, 2020, with virtual services and in-person services upon request. CTDOL completed 6,481 virtual Initial RESEA appointments. For this same time period, 5,642 claimants participated in a required reemployment activity.

CTDOL redesigned the RESEA program delivery of services to meet the challenges of these unprecedented times. This included the ability to access forms online, creating platforms to conduct virtual workshops, and technology efforts that included the use of video conferencing through Microsoft Teams. These much-needed virtual changes were fully implemented in February 2021 and have been a great success as shown by higher participation rates of selected claimants as well as greater customer satisfaction.

Shared Work: Using federal resources through the CARES Act and other legislation, Connecticut expanded capacity of its Shared Work program to help businesses prevent layoffs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Shared Work allows employers to reduce overhead by temporarily cutting employee hours and using partial unemployment benefits to help replace some of the lost wages. Employees keep their jobs at a reduced schedule and retain their benefits, while companies preserve their labor force and avoid expensive recruitment, hiring, and training when business improves.

The program has 1,477 companies with more than 33,400 employees participating, up significantly from the year prior to the pandemic when the program served just over 200 companies. The U.S. Department of Labor's decision enabling the federal government to reimburse the Trust Fund for unemployment costs normally charged to the employers until January 1, 2021 created increased business interest in Shared Work.

In 2020, CTDOL launched a series of Shared Work promotions including video, social media, newsletters, and radio spots. Materials can be found at: www.sharedworkct.com.

Treasury Offset Program: This partnership with the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Department of Labor allows for the interception of federal tax returns when claimants have not repaid unemployment insurance benefits they were not entitled to collect.

State Income Tax Intercept: Through a partnership with the Department of Revenue Services, this program enables CTDOL to intercept state income tax refunds to recover debts.

Interstate Benefit Intercept: This program allows CTDOL to intercept benefits being paid to claimants filing UI claims in other states to repay monies owed for overpayments of benefits in Connecticut.

Other Departments

Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC): OWC supports the agency's workforce development efforts by providing guidance and technical assistance to the Office of Workforce Strategy, key state agencies, community-based organizations, businesses, and various workforce and education committees. OWC manages grants, strategic initiatives, and special projects for the Labor Commissioner.

State Board of Labor Relations: The following information regarding Connecticut's State Board of Labor Relations is reported pursuant to CGS 31-102. The Board of Labor Relations defines and protects the statutory rights of employees including the right of public employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations. The Board also encourages and protects the right of employees and employers to bargain collectively and remedies certain practices on the part of employees and employers that are detrimental to the collective bargaining process and general public. More than 80% of cases filed are resolved prior to a Board hearing, largely due to successful mediation efforts of Assistance Agents. A total of 337 cases were filed with the Board in fiscal year 2020-2021

The State Board of Mediation and Arbitration (SBMA): The following information regarding Connecticut's State Board of Mediation and Arbitration is reported pursuant to CGS 31-100. It provides the services of mediators for impasses in contract negotiations and grievance disputes. Mediators also provide outreach and educational programs on the art of dispute settlement. The Board provides arbitration services for the purpose of mediating disputes concerning the application or interpretation of the terms of collective bargaining agreements. This year, SBMA provided mediation services for 212 grievance or interest arbitration cases. Settlements were achieved in many instances saving significant tax dollars for many towns and cities. Over 350 contracts expired in 2021; many required mediation services while a significant number necessitated the imposition of binding arbitration.

The Board administers the Binding Interest Arbitration Statutes under Section 7-473c, Municipal Employees Relations Act (MERA), and Section 5-276, and State Employees Relations Act (SERA). Under MERA the Board fully processes the statutory requirements from inception to completion.

Employment Security Appeals Division: An autonomous, quasi-judicial agency housed in the Department of Labor, its primary function is to hear and decide appeals arising from decisions made by Connecticut's Unemployment Compensation Department, from which it is statutorily independent. From

July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, the lower authority (Referee Section) decided 25,676 appeals and the higher authority (Board of Review) decided 1,658 appeals.

The Office of Apprenticeship Training (OAT): Administers Connecticut’s Registered Apprenticeship system, which is supported by the state’s general fund, federal funding, and industry registration fees. Registered apprenticeship is a proven solution for training and retaining talent and offers individuals the opportunity to earn while they learn valuable skills.

OAT provides registration, monitoring, technical assistance, and consulting services for the administration of apprenticeship agreements. Registered Apprenticeship provides a structured training strategy that combines on-the-job training with related technical instruction. The office also qualifies employers for tax credits; works in collaboration with the Department of Education, Department of Consumer Protection, and other state agencies; and performs outreach to veterans, employer groups, unions, schools, and community-based organizations to promote Registered Apprenticeship and Registered Pre-Apprenticeship. Currently there are over 1,750 active employer-sponsors and over 6,600 registered apprentices enrolled in the program. In addition, nearly 1,000 apprentices completed their apprenticeship training while over 3500 new apprentices were registered in the program this year.

Connecticut Occupational Safety and Health Division (CONN-OSHA): Enforces health and safety standards in public sector workplaces by conducting safety inspections, responding to complaints or requests, and investigating fatalities and serious accidents. Citations are issued where violations are discovered. Safety training and onsite safety and health consultations are provided to private and public sector employers upon request, and the division offers no-cost technical assistance and information on workplace hazards.

CONN-OSHA’s monthly Employer Roundtable Discussion series is being held virtually and features guest speakers, panel discussions, and an overview of state and federal safety and health regulations for the workplace. Participation in the monthly roundtables averaged 40 attendees per event.

CONN-OSHA conducted safety and/or health compliance inspections at 236 public work sites in SFY 2021. Violations were documented in 187 of those inspections, with citations resulting in 1,216 hazards identified as follows: 1,054 “serious” violations; 158 "other than serious" violations and four “regulatory” violations.

CONN-OSHA provided safety and health consultations to 269 private-sector businesses that collectively employ 8,874 workers. During these consultations 1,296 hazards were identified. CONN-OSHA conducted 106 consultations at public sector workplaces with a total of 6,290 employees; during these consultations 412 hazards were identified. Additionally, safety training programs and outreach were provided to 7,537 employees.

Wage and Workplace Standards Division (WWSO)

The Division recovered more than \$4.3 million in owed wages for Connecticut workers in this fiscal year. The Division enforces more than 160 general statutes and administrative regulations which include minimum wage; overtime wage payments; prevailing wage; standard wage; employment of minors; misclassification of workers as independent contractors; and working conditions.

Despite the pandemic, the Division conducted 38 inspections at construction project sites and reviewed contractor records and issued 70 Stop Work Orders, which require cited employers to show proof of appropriate coverage—such as worker’s compensation—before worksites can be re-opened and work resumed. The Division and the UI Tax Division work together to ensure workers are not misclassified. Workers misclassified as independent contractors can experience a loss of many worker protections such as UI benefits, workers’ compensation coverage, no overtime pay, pay below minimum wage, and often go without health benefits.

A total of 329 cases were assigned to the workplace standards team during this fiscal year. Violations were cited in the following areas: personnel files; electronic monitoring in prohibited areas; electronic monitoring not posted; meal periods; working papers not available at place of business; night work of minors at restaurant or other prohibited employment of minors at restaurant or other; prohibited hazardous employment of minor; and working papers/certification of age.

Public Act 19-1 “An Act Concerning the Workforce Training Needs in the State and Revisions to and Regulation of Gratuities Permitted or Applied as Part of the Minimum Fair Wage” was signed into law by Governor Ned Lamont on January 6, 2020. Section 7 of the public act requires the Commissioner of Labor to begin conducting random wage and hour audits of tipped workers not later than 30 days following the date of adoption of regulations and in not less than 75 restaurants in the State of Connecticut. In total 158 Restaurants were visited: 58 in New Haven County, 9 in New London County, 4 in Windham County, 37 in Fairfield County, 35 in Hartford County, 8 in Middlesex County, 3 in Tolland County, and 4 in Litchfield County.

Communications

During 2020-2021, there were nearly 40 million unique visits to CTDOL’s website. Of these, 24 million page views were for employment insurance benefits, approximately 378,000 were wage and workplace questions, and 78,000 were visitors obtaining information about job-seeking skills or youth employment.

The communications unit sent out 53 press releases from July 2020 –July 2021. The agency’s social media feeds were active with 4,500 user engagements on 935 Twitter posts; 22,300 user engagements on 1,400 Facebook posts, and 325,000 views of 22 videos posted to YouTube.

CTDOL expanded its online presence through its social media channels and launched campaigns that increased awareness around unemployment filing, Shared Work, federal benefits, and filing 1099 tax forms. Additionally, communications launched new web pages to keep up with federal benefit changes and improved existing web pages with plain language and enhanced readability. The unit implemented

several redesigns of the agency homepage to keep content updated, and in August 2020, launched Info to Your Inbox to connect directly with the public, an email blast system with about 7,000 sign ups.

Office of Research: In cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Education and Training Administration (ETA), the office collects, analyzes, and delivers information on the state's labor market. Information is collected and disseminated on employment levels; unemployment rates; wages and earnings; estimates of available labor; employment projections; business staffing patterns; and career planning information. A survey of workplace injuries and illnesses and a census of work-related fatalities are conducted annually. In addition, the Office of Research completes special state, local, and regional studies and economic analyses to provide information for economic transition; workforce development initiatives; education program analysis and development; and responses to major layoffs or disasters. Strategies for addressing issues such as labor gaps and for positioning the state's educational and workforce systems to respond quickly to critical areas of workforce need are a fundamental part of Connecticut's workforce and economic development efforts. Employers, career counselors, educators, economic developers, training program planners, policy makers, economists, and the general public utilize the information.

The department produces the Labor Situation report and, in partnership with the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Economic Digest, which provides data and articles on the state's workforce and economy. The Labor Situation provides a monthly and over-the-year snapshot of the state's industry sectors and unemployment rate.

The Office of Research is both a participating agency and the Data Integration Hub for P20-WIN, Connecticut's State Longitudinal Data System which links individual student records across education institutions and in the workforce to permit the building of safe, de-identifiable databases to evaluate education programs and their impact on workforce outcomes. An example of the potential of this linkage is the Legislative Report Card that annually traces (by school and program of study) the employment and wages earned for all graduates of Connecticut's Higher Education System. P20-WIN has expanded to include other agencies and the Office of Research acts as the Hub for all P20-WIN data requests.

In response to increased demand for information regarding Unemployment Claimants during the COVID-19 crisis, the Office of Research created a webpage to provide demographic details of Unemployment Insurance claimants to policymakers and the public.

Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity

The agency's Office of Diversity and Equity is charged with developing, implementing, and monitoring the agency's affirmative action plan. The plan documents the agency's good faith efforts to achieve compliance with the law and to further equal opportunity in its hiring, promotions, training, and other employment-related duties. During the plan period of May 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020 the agency achieved 50 percent of its hiring goals, 64 percent of its promotional goals, and 100 percent of its program goals. Details can be found in the agency's Affirmative Action Plan which was approved on January 13, 2021 by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

Agency Improvements and Efficiencies

FileCTUI.com: The agency portal for all services related to filing unemployment compensation benefits, questions, and information on federal programs. Claimants may file a new claim; reopen an existing claim; file a weekly claim; check the status of their weekly payment; or use a variety of self-serve options to request services and support. Several enhancements and self-service features were added including a callback feature allowing customers to select a specific date/time for a Consumer Contact Center agent to assist them. This new option has alleviated the need for the customer to remain on hold to wait for an agent.

Credit Card/ACH Repayment: This program allows claimants with a UI overpayment to use their credit card, debit card, or e-check to repay owed benefits.

Employment and Training

The Employment and Training program serves both employers and the workforce through workshops, educational programs, and the publication of the Employer Resource Guide which provides tools for job seekers. This year the program developed and implemented new statewide Virtual Employment Workshops with attendance tracking capabilities to help job seekers build skills despite the pandemic. The program also created a new online form to help customers request virtual and in-person services, including UI assistance, through the American Job Centers (AJCs) and established a new service for job seekers that allows them to connect remotely from home with AJC staff.

Workforce Services and Programs: Developed and implemented new statewide Virtual Employment Workshops with attendance tracking capabilities for all interested job seekers. CTDOL offered 124 virtual workshops that were attended by 4,645 individuals. Created a new online form to help customers request virtual and in-person services, including UI meaningful assistance, through the American Job Centers (AJCs) found on the CT DOL website. Developed a new service for job seekers with no access to technology in the five comprehensive AJCs. Utilizing a public workstation with video conferencing technology, job seekers can communicate with AJC staff located in the AJC or other locations, while maintaining social distancing. Updated and maintained the interagency “Employer Resource Guide” and “Employer Reference Card” which offer road maps to the many programs, services and incentives for businesses. Available in electronic format, these annually updated resources provide important marketing and training tools for business services professionals.

Occupational Analysis Products and Publications

The Office of Research: The website contains an exhaustive collection of data and tools useful for Workforce Development Planning as well as understanding Connecticut’s labor market and each of the

state's five Workforce Development Areas, including population and population density, labor force, employment and wages by industry sector, commuting patterns, and new housing permits. In addition, the site offers detailed information on residents in need of workforce investment services such as young people without a high school diploma, Medicaid recipients, adult probationers, Temporary Family Assistance recipients, and other residents with barriers to employment.

Connecticut Career Paths: Developed for high school students and others making career choices, Connecticut Career Paths is a guide that profiles nearly 500 occupations, along with their employment levels, growth potential, expected earnings, skills requirements, and education paths. Connecticut Career Paths is distributed to schools, colleges, libraries, and job centers throughout the state.

Training and Education Planning System (TEPS): Designed to aid the analysis and discussion of the demand and supply of talent in Connecticut's workforce, TEPS helps identify where there may be skill shortages or surpluses in the labor market. Program planners and administrators can use this information to guide investments in education and training programs, especially related to program development, expansion, or elimination.

Economic Indicator Scorecards: Monthly updated economic indicators that present an overall picture of the current conditions in the Connecticut labor market, business climate, and consumer sector. These include charts, trends, year-to-year changes, and data for 24 economic indicators.