

Department of Labor



At A Glance

SCOTT D. JACKSON, Commissioner

Kurt Westby, Deputy Commissioner

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 - 659

Recurring operating expenses: Federal - \$83,230,272; State - \$84,387,376

Capital Outlay: Federal - \$89,884; State - \$130,902; CEPF - \$50,045

Website - www.ct.gov/dol

Mission

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

Statutory Responsibility

The Connecticut Department of Labor meets the needs of workers and employers to become competitive in the global economy. For workers, this is accomplished through income support between jobs, assistance in searching for jobs, protection and fairness on the job, training programs, and information about the economy, wages and the workplace. Services offered to businesses include workplace data, labor market information, recruitment assistance, regional job fairs, programs to help maintain and upgrade employee skills, such as apprenticeship and incumbent worker training, CONN-OSHA guidance and consulting services, and tax credit information. Informational services to workers and employers, as well as enforcement responsibilities include the payment of wages, health and safety, employment of minors, family and medical leave, 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.

Public Service

Employment and Training Assistance and Unemployment Insurance Programs

- *American Job Center Services:* CTDOL receives federal funding under the *Wagner-Peyser Act* to provide universal access to an array of labor exchange services offered at *American Job Center (AJC)* locations throughout Connecticut. These services include assistance with career choices and job search, referrals to jobs, placement assistance for jobseekers, reemployment services to claimants receiving unemployment insurance, and employer recruitment services to businesses with job openings. Additional resources include computers with Internet connection, copiers, fax machines; and résumé writing, interviewing and career exploration workshops. During 2016-2017, a total of 20,133 *Wagner-Peyser* program participants received services (staff-assisted or self-service) at AJC offices, with 204,075 staff-assisted services provided statewide. In addition, 4,126 individuals received résumé preparation assistance at CTDOL-sponsored events and job centers.
- *Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits* are provided to unemployed persons while claimants look for new work or take part in approved training programs. This year the agency further enhanced its online benefits filing system, located at FileCTUI.com that allows claimants to file a first time (initial) or re-opened claim by using the web. Furthermore, in order to provide better service to customers, resources allocated to phones were shifted so as to be able to provide better online services. During the year, \$655 million in benefits was provided to unemployed workers needing assistance while securing their next job. The average number of weeks a claimant collected benefits before finding new employment was approximately 17 weeks.
- *Reemployment Programs for Unemployment Insurance Claimants:* During periods of unemployment, the agency provides a variety of federally-funded reemployment services to residents. Reemployment assistance to UI claimants is delivered through the Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (UI RESEA), Unemployment Insurance Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (UI REA) and the Enhanced Reemployment Services (ERS) programs. The goal of these programs is to provide UI claimants early access to services that will help get them back into the workforce faster. The UI RESEA and UI REA programs also serve as prevention/detection programs regarding improper UI payments.
- *Unemployment Insurance Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (UI REA) program:* Offered in the Bridgeport, Hartford, Hamden, New London, and Waterbury *American Job Centers*, claimants selected to participate in the program report in-person. Claimants are then referred to an appropriate service(s) and/or training consistent with a reemployment plan. UI REA services include:

- UI eligibility assessment and referral to adjudication if a potential issue is identified
- Provision of labor market and career information specific to the claimant's needs.
- Registration with *CTHires*, the state's job bank.
- Orientation to *American Job Center* services.
- Development/review of an individualized reemployment plan; includes work search activities, accessing AJC services, and training if approved.
- Referral to at least one reemployment service and/or training, based on assessment of the claimant's most critical need.

A total of 2,209 initial UI REA appointments were scheduled with 1,622 appointments successfully completed and 1,828 claimants participating in a required reemployment activity.

- *Enhanced Reemployment Services (ERS) program*: ERS identifies UI claimants who are likely to exhaust their benefits, unlikely to return to their previous occupations, and will need workforce services to find new employment. Orientation sessions conducted for 131 ERS participants included providing labor market information, career guidance and assistance with the *CTHires* state job bank, overview of AJC services, and details on UI benefit rights and responsibilities. Many ERS participants also benefited from employment services and training. The ERS program was replaced upon the statewide implementation of the UI RESEA program which serves the same target population in a more robust manner.
- *Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (UI RESEA)*: UI RESEA is similar to UI REA, which is an earlier version of the program. UI claimants determined to be most likely to exhaust benefits and transitioning veterans receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members are the target populations for the RESEA program. From October 2016 to June 2017, CTDOL completed 8,007 initial RESEA appointments. For this same time period, 6,390 claimants participated in a required reemployment activity.
- *Pathway to Reemployment*: To augment outreach efforts to UI claimants beyond RESEA, Pathway to Reemployment introduces other UI customers to the workforce programs available through the AJC network. The program, offered at affiliate AJC offices in coordination with AJC partners, is primarily for first-time claimants who may be particularly unaware of the services available. Similar to RESEA, an orientation includes provides guidance on UI work search requirements, labor market information, web-based tools, and CTDOL's *Job & Career ConneCTion* to assist with reemployment efforts. Participants are provided with the *My Reemployment Plan*, information about the *CTHires* job bank, résumé development, and online job search tools. Started as a pilot in March 2017, the program served 309 claimants through the period ending June 30, 2017.
- *DOL's Business Services Unit* helped Connecticut employers to hire, train and retain workers by analyzing the needs of businesses and customizing solutions. Between July 2016 and June 2017, Business Services staff assisted employers with more than 588

employer recruitments attended by approximately 4,566 jobseekers. In addition, Business Services provided employers these services through state-funded training programs:

- *The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Program* helps employers upgrade employee skills, thereby helping businesses to remain competitive and avert layoffs. Employers provide a 50% or greater match for each training program, which includes training in manufacturing, engineering, bioscience and allied health. This year, CTDOL provided \$525,137 in Incumbent Worker Training funds to 75 Connecticut employers with 1,190 employees participating. Legislation requires that a minimum of 50% of the Incumbent Worker Training funds go to new employers, however, CTDOL surpassed this requirement and provided 93% of the funds to new employers, far surpassing the legislative requirement.
- *The Manufacturing Innovation Fund Incumbent Worker (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. Since April 2015, a total of 228 companies have been approved for \$7.96M in funding to train 8,588 workers. Approximately 20% of those workers have already achieved an upgraded position due to skills training and 78% of the companies completing training report that upgraded skills are expected to increase production rate. The program is in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Community Development.
- *Jobs First Employment Services (JFES)* serves families receiving state cash assistance, Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), through the agency's partnership with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Workforce Development Boards. During fiscal year 2016-2017, thousands of participants received employment services from *American Job Center* staff or through contracted service providers. Services included job search assistance, vocational education, adult basic education, subsidized employment, case management and other support services such as transportation benefits. Nearly 14,000 were served in the previous year, but due to the implementation of a new business system, the exact total is unavailable until 2018.

Approximately 90 JFES staff received training on several different topics including *Presentation Skills*, Resume Writing, Substance Abuse Treatment, Professional Ethics and Case Notes Writing, and Motivational Interviewing. Staff also received training on administering and interpreting the "Do what You Are" personality-type assessment tool.

JFES staff continued to build the Jobs First component within the *CTHires* system that enables Jobs First case management and administrative staff to track activities and successes of Connecticut's Job First participants more accurately.

- *Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)* helps individuals return to suitable employment as quickly as possible following employment loss. Participants are part of worker groups certified by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) whose jobs were believed to be affected by increased imports or a shift in production 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 individuals 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 19 companies were approved, with the workers determined by USDOL to be adversely affected by foreign trade and certified as eligible to apply for TAA; petitions filed on behalf of workers from four companies were denied.
- *Individual applications*: 881 individuals were identified by USDOL as potentially eligible to apply for TAA benefits and 552 eligibility determinations were issued in response to submitted applications.
- *Training*: 334 individuals entered TAA-approved training programs and 513 were active in training, with training payments totaling nearly \$1.37M.
- *Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA)*: \$3.9M was provided for 7,734 weekly TRA claims, including 4,006 weeks of basic TRA, 3,548 weeks of additional TRA, and 178 weeks of completion TRA. Individuals 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)*: \$77,265 in payments was issued to eligible workers.
- *Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN)* is geared to lend timely re-employment assistance to workers that will soon be losing their jobs. The federal program requires Connecticut employers of 100 or more full-time workers to give 60-days advance notice of a plant closing or mass layoff. The 60-day advance notice allows state and municipal entities to offer workforce assistance to affected employees prior to layoffs. The state's *Rapid Response Team*, headed by CTDOL, reaches out to Connecticut employers contemplating or experiencing plant closings, helps to ease the impact of layoffs, and assures workers are offered a full range of benefits and services.

Prior to layoffs, the agency's Rapid Response staff conducts "*Early Intervention*" sessions where employees can learn about unemployment benefits, job search assistance, training opportunities and receive information about community services and local agencies that provide support to dislocated workers and their families.

From July 2016 to June 2017, the Unit made 199 initial outreach calls and responded to 44 WARN notices affecting 3,596 workers. Staff made 107 employer and/or union visits and provided 187 presentations to 3,521 impacted workers, which included 26 on-site job search and/or career planning workshops, 22 webinars, and 13 information sessions or workshops.

Employment sites where face-to-face contact was not possible were provided information packets, benefiting an additional 1,089 dislocated workers, including human resources managers and union representatives. An additional 580 webinar invitations were sent to workers who were part of large layoffs but whose employers declined on-site visits or had employees who work remotely. As a means of layoff aversion, the Unit coordinated three company-specific job fairs for 450 jobseekers.

The Unit submitted seven 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. Four of the seven petitions, covering 626 workers, were certified as TAA eligible. One petition resulted in negative determination, one was withdrawn, and one was terminated when workers were found to be eligible under a prior certification.

- *CTHires (Connecticut Helping Individuals and Employers Reach Employment Success: www.cthires.com)* is the agency's workforce development system that provides cost-free services via the Internet to individuals and employers 24/7. From July 2016 through June 2017, a total of 2,131 registrations from businesses were processed by *CTHires* staff. During this same period, employers posted 38,916 new Connecticut job orders and jobseekers placed 7,753 new résumés into the system. In addition, 128,488 jobs have been indexed from corporate websites. Indexing allows jobseekers to click on a job title and be taken directly to the job listing on the employer's website. Jobseekers can post their résumés online while employers can post jobs and search the résumé bank for qualified candidates.
- *STRIDE (Skills, Transitional Support, Respect, Integrity, Direction, and Employment):* Through an agreement with the state's community colleges, CTDOL funds Quinnebaug Valley Community College's STRIDE re-entry program that provides transitional support services to incarcerated and paroled individuals. The program offers job search and job placement assistance and services to support self-sufficiency and re-integration into the community. Services this year included pre-release classroom instruction and case management; transportation for job-related activities; and assistance at the *American Job Center* offices, including online job searches. During the current year, 159 individuals participated with 97 securing employment.
- *Regional Hiring Events:*
 - *Career Fairs:* Five Connecticut Career Fairs were held this past fiscal year, including a veteran-specific Heroes4Hire Job Fair co-sponsored by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, as well as Diverse Ability fairs focused on hiring individuals with disabilities. The fairs drew 873 company recruiters and 2,050 jobseekers.
 - *Recruitment events at the American Job Centers:* Between July 2016 and June 2017, Business Services staff assisted employers with more than 588 employer recruitments attended by approximately 4,566 jobseekers.
- *Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)* program provides a federal tax credit for employers hiring individuals from specified groups and a new target group identified as *The Long*

Term Unemployed. A total of 6,830 tax credit certifications were granted between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017.

- CTDOL's *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, in fiscal year 2016-2017, CTDOL staff processed 60 H-2A job order certifications for temporary foreign agricultural workers. A total of 54 pre-occupancy housing inspections in connection with agricultural certifications were also completed.
- The agency's *Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers* program provided outreach services to 604 workers, including information on available workforce services, referrals to healthcare providers, and related supportive services. Agricultural employers received recruitment assistance, mediation, interpreter services, and technical guidance on compliance with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker regulations.
- The *Jobs Funnel Initiative*: Comprised of public-private joint efforts around the state, the program places unemployed and underemployed individuals in a variety of employment opportunities including construction and non-construction jobs in both union and non-union settings and apprenticeship training programs. The Funnel partnerships have placed 4,429 individuals into jobs since their inception.
- *Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)*: Since the program began in 2000, approximately \$5.4M has been administered by CTDOL to help create self-sufficiency, enhance careers and build assets. IDAs are matched savings accounts designed to help low-income individuals and families save money to purchase assets. The Legislature has appropriated approximately \$2.9M for the IDA program and \$600,000 for the CT Housing Trust Fund IDA program to leverage \$907,500 in federal funds and more than \$1.18M in contributions from other financial partners. This has helped 475 low- and moderate-income families in CT to become asset owners.
- *Job Corps vocational training program*: Administered by USDOL, served over 400 students at the Hartford and New Haven locations. Low income youth (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.

Workforce Policy Advisors

Through its *Office of Workforce Competitiveness* (OWC), CTDOL serves as the Governor's principal workforce development policy advisor. OWC works to coordinate employment, education and training programs and promote innovative strategies and ideas that will stimulate employment opportunities and job growth. OWC staff also provides technical assistance to the

Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC) whose members represent Connecticut businesses, employers, key state agencies, regional/local entities, organized labor, community-based organizations and other stakeholders.

Apprenticeship Services

The *Office of Apprenticeship Training* administers Connecticut's Registered Apprenticeship system, which is supported by the state's general fund and industry support from registration fees. Registered apprenticeship is a proven solution for training and retaining talent and offers individuals the opportunity of "learning while earning." Currently, 1,608 active employer-sponsors and 5,081 registered apprentices are involved in the program. In addition, 969 apprentices completed their apprenticeship training while 2,474 new apprentices were registered in the program this year – a significant increase over last year's total of 342. This year, the program expanded into the insurance and healthcare sectors through new industry partnerships.

The Office provides registration, monitoring, technical assistance and consulting services for the administration of apprenticeship agreements per state regulations and standards. Registered Apprenticeship provides a structured training strategy that combines on-the-job training with related technical instruction.

As part of its efforts to expand registered apprenticeship within the manufacturing sector, the program administers the *Manufacturing Innovation Fund*, a collaborative effort funded by the Department of Economic and Community Development to subsidize wages, classroom instruction, and credentialing for apprentices registered by manufacturers. To date, nearly 115 companies and 310 registered apprentices have participated in this initiative.

The office also administers the *American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI)* which has the goal of growing registered apprenticeship in advanced manufacturing as well as non-traditional sectors such as information technology, healthcare and businesses services.

The office also qualifies employers for tax credits, works with the Department of Education, Department of Consumer Protection and other state agencies, and performs outreach to veterans, employer and manufacturing groups, and many community-based organizations to promote Registered Apprenticeship in Connecticut.

Veterans' Services

Office for Veterans' Workforce Development (OVWD) helps Connecticut veterans through its team of Veterans' Employment Representatives located at *American Job Centers*, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs offices, and various outstations throughout the state.

During the year, employment and training services were provided to more than 5,900 veterans. In partnership with both the state and federal Department of Veterans Affairs and the Connecticut Military Department, demobilization services were also provided to returning troops from the CT National Guard and U.S. Armed Service Reserves.

In April 2017, OVWD sponsored a *Heroes4Hire* job fair, that featured 95 employers and was attended by more than 850 veterans. In addition to having the chance to meet with representatives from companies with job openings, veterans were provided information on veterans' benefits, vocational rehabilitation, résumé critique assistance, education and career options, and career development guidance.

OVWD continues to work toward ending veteran's homelessness and chronic homelessness through its Homeless Veterans Employment Program. Under a state grant, 3 employment specialists provide information on federal, state and local programs to assist veterans with their needs and refer veterans to USDVA and CTDVA for housing needs and the *American Job Centers* for employment and training needs. During fiscal year 2016-2017, staff met with 108 homeless veterans or those at risk of becoming homeless, and provided job assistance and helped secure housing. More than 35 of these clients are employed, with 81 placed in housing, 32 placed in training, 72 referred to VA services, and 82 sent to other supportive services.

In September 2017, veterans in need were provided services by OVWD staff at Stand Down. This event, held at the State Veterans' Home in Rocky Hill, offered opportunities for veterans who are homeless, chronically unemployed, or have difficulty adjusting in society. CTDOL services included résumé writing assistance, online job search guidance and registration for employment services.

Transitioning services were also provided by OVWD staff to Connecticut's National Guard and Army Reserve troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. At three demobilization briefings, services were provided to more than 75 Army, Marines, Sailors and Airman. Services included information and referrals to benefits and federal training programs, and education, and employment programs offered through the *American Job Centers*. Unemployment information was also provided to those discharged from active military service. OVWD staff participated in numerous 30, 60 and 90 day follow-ups with these units and their families. This important transitioning process for retuning troops is accomplished through the joint efforts of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, CTDOL's veterans' staff, CT Department of Veterans' Affairs, USDOL, and the Connecticut Military Department.

Safety and Wage Services, Public Guidance, and Labor Market Information

- *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 on request, and the division offers no-cost technical assistance and information services on workplace hazards.
- The *Wage and Workplace Standards Division* recovered more than \$8.9M in owed wages for Connecticut workers this year. The Division enforces approximately 160 state statutes and administers a wide range of workplace laws, including the \$10.10 minimum wage,

overtime laws, wage payment laws, prevailing wage, employment of minors, Family and Medical Leave Act, and misclassification of workers as independent contractors.

- *State 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 to the general public. More than 80 percent of the cases filed with the State Board of Labor Relations are resolved short of a Board hearing, largely due to successful mediation efforts of Assistant Agents.
- *State Board of Mediation and Arbitration* provides mediation and arbitration services to employers and employee organizations in the public and private sector. The objectives of the Board are to save jobs by maintaining peaceful employer/employee relations and to promote equity between labor and management by resolving labor disputes.
- The *Employment Security Appeals Division* conducts appeal hearings from decisions granting or denying unemployment compensation benefits through two levels of appeal. The first level (Referee Section) decided 13,929 appeals while the second level (Board of Review) decided 1,685 appeals. This Referee Section participated in the tri-annual USDOL-ETA National Review, during which it exceeded all federally-mandated quality standards.
- The *UI Tax Division* conducted nearly 1,200 employer audits and approximately 9,000 individual wage investigations. These examinations resulted in the reclassification of more than 6,500 workers and the discovery of more than \$50 million in previously unreported payroll.
- The *Wage and Workplace Standards 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 a job without health benefits. This also creates an unfair advantage over companies abiding by state laws. Law-abiding employers cannot compete against those employers who intentionally undercut them by not paying all taxes and benefits for workers, and do not pay lawful employment-related taxes on workers – resulting in higher taxes for those employers that follow the law. Information. During the year, in an effort to deter misclassification, CTDOL's Wage and Workplace Standards Division visited 321 construction projects and reviewed 601 contractor records. This resulted in the issuance of 239 Stop Work orders, which requires cited employers to show proof of appropriate coverage, such as worker's compensation, before worksites can be re-opened and work resumed.
- The *Office of Research*, in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 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. Employers, career counselors, educators, economic developers, training program planners, policy makers, economists and the general public use the information.

The Office of Research also produces the *Labor Situation* report and partners with the Department of Economic and Community Development to produce the *Economic Digest*. The *Labor Situation* provides a monthly and over-the-year snapshot of the state's industry sectors and unemployment rate. The *Economic Digest* provides data and articles on the state's workforce and economy.

The Office of Research has worked with the Department of Education, CT State Colleges and Universities, and UCONN to establish the P20-Win – a data sharing system to link individual student records across the education institutions and into the workforce. This permits 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 industry of employment and wages earned for all graduates of Connecticut's Higher Education System.

- The *Lean Government Process Improvement* program actively promoted its services to state agencies and organizations this year through public outreach events. The program, which consists of formal classroom training and group sessions, works in a team setting to map out work processes, identify customer values, and find ways to slash waste. The goal is to promote increased productivity, fewer errors and improve quality by eliminating unnecessary reports and paperwork and streamlining approval processes and information retrieval.

Grants and Awards

- *Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA)*: In fiscal year 2016-2017, CTDOL received \$34M in federal funding that was used to provide workforce services to approximately 6,400 individuals and to help state workforce partners increase the availability of employment and training assistance. The CTDOL and Workforce Development Boards developed new employment and training initiatives to promote employment opportunities that show the best potential for job growth, and funded projects to strengthen Connecticut's workforce and businesses.
- *Shared Work*: The agency continues to use the \$1.2 million federal grant to develop new technology and outreach materials to help promote the Shared Work unemployment insurance program to Connecticut employers. To promote the website, informational materials and video, increased social media was accompanied by electronic newsletters and radio promotions. Due to increased outreach efforts, this year the program has served 2,609 UI claimants and 278 employers, of which 25 were new to the program. **Outreach has** also included informational workshops with PowerPoint presentations for both employers and employees to help explain the benefits of Shared Work. CTDOL is launching a second phase of promotional efforts including a prerecorded informational webinar and radio

announcements to spread awareness and the benefits of participating in the program. Materials can be found at: www.sharedworkct.com.

- *Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (UI RESEA)*: The agency was awarded a UI RESEA federal grant of \$1.388 million for the program year January 2017 through December 2017. This program addresses reemployment needs of transitioning military veterans receiving unemployment compensation and claimants identified as most likely to exhaust benefits. UI RESEA also helps to prevent and detect UI improper payments. CTDOL transitioned from the older UI REA program to UI RESEA, which provides UI claimants with the intensive employment services required. A claimant selected for RESEA attends an in-person meeting at an *American Job Center* for an orientation to AJC services. This includes labor market and career information specific to the person's job skills and employment prospects; an assessment of the claimant's needs; and an individualized reemployment plan.
- The *Disability Employment Initiative*: Connecticut was one of eight states to receive a grant under the U.S. Department of Labor's Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). Awarded in October 2013 to CTDOL's Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC), the three-year \$3,058,706 grant enhanced employment services to individuals with disabilities in the public workforce investment system. The grant timeframe was extended, and in 2017, a series of Diverse Ability job and career fairs helped jobseekers find employment.

In October 2016, Connecticut was among six states to receive another federal grant under Round VII of the DEI. Awarded again to OWC, this three-year, \$2.5 million youth-focused project involves the northwest, southwest, south central and eastern workforce development regions. This project seeks to increase the participation of youth with disabilities ages 14-24 in the workforce system's career pathways programs, attain industry recognized credentials, and provide paid internships and experiential learning opportunities.

- *Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) Grant*: This \$6 million federal grant for an "Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative" involves bringing innovative approaches to the design/delivery of employment and training services that have the potential to generate long-term improvements in the workforce system. Administered by CTDOL in partnership with the Eastern CT Workforce Development Board, the grant runs from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2019.

Connecticut's model is focused on the current hiring needs of Electric Boat (EB) for skilled labor. Developing curriculum specific to EB's need for trades workers; providing short-term training to unemployed and under-employed jobseekers; and placing training graduates in jobs at EB or other area employers are goals of the initiative. The project will be evaluated by an independent evaluator with potential replication of the project's model elsewhere in the state and across the country.

As a result of the grant, 544 participants were enrolled in the WIF grant; 351 were enrolled in customized occupational training, 202 completed training, and 231 were employed in jobs following training with – 169 of these in jobs at EB.

- During 2016-2017, CTDOL administered *National Dislocated Worker Grants* (formerly National Emergency Grants under the previous Workforce Investment Act). The grants, awarded by the USDOL to serve dislocated workers, include the following:
 - *Job Driven National Emergency Grant:* CTDOL was awarded \$3,392,350 to implement a program to help dislocated workers get back to work, with focus on the long-term unemployed. CTDOL and Workforce Development Board partners (the Northwest Regional WDB, the Eastern CT WDB, and Workforce Alliance) provided services under this grant. The grant, originally ending September 2016, was extended through June 30, 2017, allowing the following achievements to be accomplished: CTDOL's Office of Apprenticeship Training placed 258 apprentices with 45 new and 118 existing employer sponsors; CTDOL purchased an employment tool for use by its Office of Research and the state's five WDBs to access labor market information for expanding job-driven strategies, particularly for dislocated workers; and the WDBs served 241 dislocated workers with all receiving intensive re-employment services and 196 enrolled in occupational skills training. Following training services, over 162 obtained new jobs.
 - *Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant:* CTDOL was awarded \$3,889,995, ending June 30, 2017, to partner and conduct regional planning with the state's five local Workforce Development Boards with the goal of identifying new or growing employment opportunities and sector strategies to build talent pipelines. Concurrently, three WDBs (Capital Workforce Partners, EWIB, and The WorkPlace) would provide programs for enhanced employment and training services for dislocated workers. The grant was extended through June 30, 2018 and as of June 30, 2017, a total of 152 dislocated workers were receiving intensive re-employment services, occupational skills training, and on-the-job training. In addition, CTDOL's Office of Apprenticeship Training provided informational workshops to approximately 120 *American Job Center* users and economic development partners about these programs.
- CTDOL's *Office of Research* continues its work to coordinate CTDOL's workforce training data into a unified system. Under a three-year USDOL Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) awarded in June 2014, a \$823,791 grant is being used to place Jobs First Employment Services, unemployment insurance benefits, unemployment insurance wages and related databases into one system that will link with the education database. The goal is to better utilize the links between Connecticut's education system, workforce training system, and successes in the labor market.
- From July 2016 to June 2017, the agency's website had 4,579,915 unique visits. Approximately three million of these visits were for information related to unemployment insurance benefits. A total of 395,000 people made inquiries on wages and workplace standards; 112,509 obtained information on job-seeking skills or youth employment;

15,466 sought employer recruitment information; and 9,776 were interested in veterans' services.

- FileCTUI.com is now in its second year of allowing claimants to file a first time (initial) or re-opened claim by using the web. Prior to this improvement, claimants had to use wait on the phone and speak to a Customer Service Representative to complete a new claim. Approximately 95% of claimants are now using the web to file for benefits – an increase of 45% from the previous year. The site also provides an Online Assistance Center for those seeking answers to commonly-asked unemployment insurance issues.
- The *Connecticut Job & Career ConneCTion (JCC)* received 323,085 page views from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. The site provides job descriptions, education and training requirements for each job category, wage information and employment projections for nearly 800 occupations. Included in the JCC is the VETCENTRAL website, which allows military veterans to find similar civilian occupations by military code, rank, or branch of service.
- A total of 146,773 page views were generated by the agency's *Connecticut Education & Training ConneCTion* over the past year. It serves as a leading online source of information on education and training in the state that provides access to thousands of training programs and courses.

Outreach/Public Education Services

- The agency's *web and social media presence* expanded through its Facebook and Twitter sites. Efforts to increase social media awareness include web banners, daily and scheduled tweets, and inviting state policymakers to visit CTDOL's Facebook page. The agency expanded its outreach and education efforts through new Facebook graphics, electronic flyers, newsletters, online publications and new web pages.
- The agency's newest web page, JobCenterCT.com, offers a simple overview of employment and unemployment services – the agency's recent effort to provide an easy way to find information on services that often offer comprehensive options. The page provides access to workshops, the *CTHires* job bank, recruitment events as well as the online filing site for claimants.
- The agency's *Speaker's Bureau* includes a diverse pool of agency experts available for public speaking engagements on topics and issues within the agency's jurisdiction. Topics include employment law, worker health and safety, labor market information, hot jobs, résumé writing, job interview tips and techniques, workforce development, and unemployment insurance. Approximately 250 speaking requests are handled each year by a CTDOL subject matter expert.
- CONN-OSHA's monthly *Employer Roundtable Discussion series* featuring guest speakers, panel discussions and an overview of state and federal safety and health regulations for the workplace, was joined this year by periodic Business Seminars offered by CTDOL's Office of Workforce Competitiveness. Seminars included an employer's guide to handling

worker's compensation correctly, and understanding the laws surrounding medical marijuana in the workplace. Participation for the monthly roundtables averages 40 attendees per event, while business seminars, advertised and archived under BusinessCT.com, drew up to 100 attendees.

- The 22nd *Connecticut Learns and Works* consortium, an annual education and workforce development [conference](#), was attended by over 250 participants. The goal is to showcase innovative ideas and practices that can be used in the classroom, in training venues, and to promote cutting-edge technology. Beginning in 2018, the conference is transitioning into multiple smaller events being held at educational facilities and worksites. Geared for counselors, educators, case managers, employment and training professionals, job developers, recruiters and private sector business, the new events will be held mornings or afternoons and feature one or two topics. The event is a joint effort of the agency's Employee and Organizational Development Unit, Communications, Office of Research, and the Office for Workforce Competiveness.

Improvements/Achievements 2016-2017

- *FileCTUI.com* is the new agency portal for all services related to the filing of unemployment compensation benefits, with most of these services available 24/7. Customers may file a new claim, reopen an existing claim, file a weekly claim, check the status of their weekly benefit payment or use a variety of self-serve options in the "Quick Links" section to request additional services and support. As a result of these changes, customers avoid significant wait times and more than \$500,000 in infrastructure and technology support costs are saved. For those who may have difficulty using these self-service options, in-person assistance is available from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at full-service American Job Centers (AJC) and limited hours at affiliate AJC offices.
- *Credit Card/ACH Repayment program*: This program allows individuals with a UI overpayment to use their credit card, debit card or e-check to repay these owed benefits. Since 2015, more than 11,000 transactions have been made through this service, resulting in the recovery of more than \$2.8 million dollars.
- *Separation and Information Data Exchange System (SIDES)*: This web system expedites the process of gathering separation information from employers. Implemented in 2016, the project was funded through an award of approximately \$1 million in federal funds. SIDES enables electronic communication and transmission of unemployment insurance (UI) separation information between UI agencies and large multi-state employers or third party administrators (TPAs). A new employer website provides separation and wage information electronically for small- to medium-size employers who do not exchange information with the SIDES web services. Benefits to employers in using SIDES include savings in operational, postage and handling costs; standardized questions that result in improved quality of adjudications reports and decisions; and the ability to protest cases more quickly through an expedited data exchange. Since CTDOL went live with SIDES to the present,

there are seven TPAs participating (totaling 4291 employers). In addition, 52 employers are using E-Response.

- *Integrity:* Through a grant from USDOL, CTDOL successfully automated a system that prevents improper UI benefit payments using a cross match of the National Directory of New Hires and current Connecticut claimants filing for benefits. On average, this system improves the integrity of the UI payment process by preventing an estimated loss of \$12.5 million to the unemployment trust fund.
- *Fraud Prevention:* A federally-funded Unemployment Compensation Fraud Prosecution Unit has resulted in more than 227 arrests for unemployment insurance fraud and approximately \$2 million recouped for the state's UI Trust Fund. The Unit, a partnership with CTDOL and the Chief State's Attorney's Office, identifies, investigates, and prosecutes offenders for collecting benefits to which they were not entitled.
- *CTDOL's paperless option* for unemployment insurance benefits is currently saving more than one million dollars per year. CTDOL currently issues about 30,000 benefit payments weekly, and providing payment via direct deposit or debit card saves on printing, mailing and re-issuing lost checks; Benefit Eligibility Rights (booklet) and claim instructions; and the annual tax form UC-1099 are examples of paperless options.
- *Social Security Verification:* An automated process that verifies every Social Security number through the Social Security Administration database has now prevented approximately \$16.6 million in improper UI payments.
- *Return-to-Work Crossmatch:* Utilizing employer-submitted "New Hire or Rehire" information, hundreds of cases are reviewed each week for fraudulent activity. This prevention program diminishes opportunities to fraud the unemployment insurance program and prevents approximately \$5 million yearly in improper payments.
- *Treasury Offset Program (TOP):* A partnership with the Internal Revenue Service and the US Department of Labor that allows for the interception of federal tax returns when individuals have not repaid unemployment insurance benefits they were not entitled to collect. Amount recovered to date: approximately \$17.5 million. Amount of penalty received to date: approximately \$2 million.

Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity

The agency is firmly committed to the principles and objectives of equal employment opportunity for all individuals and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity employer. The agency ensures compliance with the state's Affirmative Action regulations and Contract Compliance laws, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Employment Practices Act, Title, VII of the Civil Rights Act, and other applicable laws. The agency's Office of Diversity and Equity coordinates and monitors programs and has undertaken numerous steps this past year to further equal opportunity in its hiring, promotions, training and other employment-related duties.

Details can be found in the agency's Affirmative Action Plan, which was approved November 8, 2017 by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. Despite the continuing hiring freeze and budgetary concerns, the agency was able to achieve 67% of its hiring goals, 56% of its promotional goals, and 100% of its program goals.

For fiscal year 2016-2017, demographic information is as follows: 58% of the agency's employees are female and 42% are male. For racial makeup, 62% are White; 20% are Black; 13% are Hispanic, and 5% are Asian/Native American/Other.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

Wage and Workplace Standards Violations

Labor Department investigators recovered \$8,907,321.37 in legally due wages for employees during the past fiscal year. This included \$2,463,964.50 recovered by wage enforcement staff responding to 1,385 complaints that owed wages had not been paid. Wage and Workplace Standards staff also returned \$1,889,840.82 to 1,792 workers who were not paid for overtime work or who were paid less than minimum wage, and recovered \$3,182,160.20 by enforcing the state's prevailing wage laws. An additional \$1,360,908.59 was recovered for 1,503 employees for time-sensitive situations such as business closings, and \$10,447.26 was recouped in back pay owed to nine service workers hired by private contractors.

Violations of prevailing wage laws were determined after investigators conducted 21 payroll audits and made 24 site inspections. A total of 655 employees received owed wages as a result of non-payment of prevailing wage rates.

Violations were found in 70 additional cases concerning employment of minors in the workplace (hours of labor, night work of minors, prohibited employment of minors, working papers/certificates of age), meal/rest periods, personnel files, and drug testing issues.

A total of 239 Stop Work orders were issued to employers that did not comply with Workers' Compensation requirements. Following on-site investigations, these companies were required to cease work on a construction project until certain workplace regulations were met. In some cases, it was determined that employers misrepresented employees as independent contractors, a practice that causes an economic disadvantage to companies following the law and to those workers that are misclassified.

Unemployment Compensation

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) *UI Tax Division* administers an equitable UI tax program that protects both workers and employers through the fair enforcement of the UI law. UI benefits paid to unemployed workers totaled \$700 million. Of that amount, \$650 million was paid to claimants formerly employed by employers paying quarterly UI taxes under the regular UI benefits program, and \$50 million was provided to claimants formerly employed by non-taxable employers and/or under other programs. Total taxes paid by more than 100,000 employers whose employees were covered by UI totaled \$800 million.

Population and Employment Data

Through its Office of Research, the agency completes special state, local, or sub-state regional studies and economic analyses to provide information support 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 be able to respond quickly to critical areas of workforce need, are a fundamental part of the Governor's vision for Connecticut's workforce and economic development efforts.

Occupational Analysis Products and Publications

The Office of Research website contains an exhaustive collection of data and tools useful for *Workforce Investment Planning* and understanding the labor market of Connecticut and each of the state's five Workforce Investment Areas, including population and population density, labor force, employment and wages by industry sector, and new housing permits. In addition, detailed information on residents in need of workforce investment services such as high school dropouts, Medicaid recipients, adult probationers, Temporary Family Assistance recipients, and other residents with barriers to employment is included. Also incorporated is information on commuting patterns, long-term unemployment insurance claimants, a work area profile for each Workforce Investment Area as well as appendix tables and historical data on the aforementioned topics for comparisons and trends analysis.

- *Connecticut Career Paths* is a planning guide developed for mainly high school students and those making or guiding career choices. Nearly 500 occupations are profiled, along with their employment levels, growth potential, expected earnings, skills requirements, and education paths. A new Connecticut Career Paths edition was published this year and distributed to schools, colleges, libraries and job centers throughout the state.
- *Connecticut's Reemployment Portal* displays occupations with similar characteristics such as knowledge areas, tools and technology, and general work activities of selected occupations to connect jobseekers with helpful information and current job openings.
- *Training and Education Planning System (TEPS)* is a tool designed to aid the analysis and discussion of the demand and supply of talent in Connecticut's workforce. It is intended to help identify where there may be skill shortages or surpluses in the labor market, and thereby guide investments in education and training programs by program planners and administrators, as well as by individuals considering career options. The program is intended primarily for educational administrators and workforce development training providers that are considering whether or not to develop a new program, expand or contract an existing one, or drop an existing program, by showing where there may be a need for trained workers.
- *Economic Indicator Scorecards* are monthly updated economic indicators that present an overall picture of the current conditions in the Connecticut labor market, business climate, consumer sector and the current/future overall. These include charts, trends, year-to-year changes and data for 24 economic indicators.

- The *Connecticut Economic Digest* is a monthly publication aimed at analysts and decision makers in the state. It contains useful and timely articles relevant to understanding Connecticut's economy as well as a monthly summary of the state's labor market data.

CONN-OSHA

- *Report on inspections:* The Occupational Safety and Health Division conducted safety and/or health compliance inspections at 271 public worksites. Violations were documented in 203 of those inspections, with citations resulting in for 980 hazards identified as follows: 556 "serious" violations; 411 "other than serious" violations; six "regulatory" violations; three "willful" violations; and four "repeat" violations.
- *Report on consultations and trainings:* CONN-OSHA provided safety and health consultations to 365 private-sector businesses that collectively employ 18,975 workers; during these consultations 1,723 hazards were identified. CONN-OSHA conducted 161 consultations at public sector workplaces with a total of 11,108 employees; during these consultations 232 hazards were identified. Additionally, safety training programs and outreach were provided to 16,926 employees.

Mediation and Arbitration

- During the year, 341 grievances were filed for arbitration and 946 formal grievance arbitration hearings were scheduled, resulting in 453 cases being successfully closed and 71 awards issued. Expiration notices on 226 private sector contracts were received. In compliance with Federal/State Statutes, the Board of Mediation and Arbitration imposed binding arbitration on 379 municipal contracts and four state contracts. Mediators responded to a total of 517 requests for grievance/contract mediation.