Introduction and General Reporting Instructions

<u>**INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS**</u>   Page

A. Handbook Purpose

This handbook, contains instructions for use by State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) for the preparation and submittal of most Unemployment Insurance (UI) reports. ET Handbook 402, Unemployment Insurance Required Reports User's Manual, which shows how to report through the UI electronic entry system, should be used in conjunction with these instructions. See also Section Q., Other Reporting Requirements, below for other reports not contained in this handbook.

B. Reporting Policy

It is the policy of the Office of Workforce Security (OWS) to assure accuracy, uniformity, and comparability in the reporting of statistical data derived from State unemployment insurance operations through State adherence to Federal definitions of reporting items, use of specific formats, observance of reporting due dates, and regular verification of reporting items.

The National Office assists SESAs in meeting these requirements by setting forth definitions in specific instructions and through the Data Validation process. (See ET Handbook 361.)

C. Handbook Structure

Instructions contained in the UI Reports Handbook are divided into sections by category such as Claimant Activity or Fund Management Activity. Each report generally contains the following sub-sections:

Contents
Facsimile of Form or Screen
Purpose
Due Date and Transmittal
General Reporting Instructions
Definitions
Item by Item Instructions
Special Program Reporting

D. Handbook Revisions

Handbook revisions are distributed through Handbook Transmittals issued from the National Office. Dates of issuance are displayed at the bottom of each revised page.

E. Page Numbers

Page numbers are displayed at the bottom of each page. They consist of the section Roman numeral, chapter number, and then page within the chapter. Should it be necessary to place a page between two existing page numbers, a decimal number will be used. For example, if pages II-4-6 and II-4-7 already exist but it is necessary to place materials between them, then an II-4-6.5 will be used. Whole sections may be reissued when more page numbers are needed.

F. Forms

Hard copy forms are only to be used for those instances when electronic reporting is not possible because of hardware or software failure (see G. below).

G. Electronic Reporting

Report data contained in this handbook, unless specifically excluded, **will** be transmitted electronically. (Consult separate HB 402, Unemployment Insurance Required Reports User's Manual for electronic reporting instructions.) Data entry screens for electronic transmission resemble the paper form to the extent it was technically possible. Any report transmitted electronically should not be reported on hard copy either to the National Office or to the Regional Office unless there are specific instructions to the contrary. Electronic submittal is more timely and allows for immediate feedback to States on the numbers entered. It also allows the National Office to directly transfer the data into a National Office computer data base.

Reports ordinarily transmitted electronically may be transmitted by hard paper copy **only** if hardware, or software problems arise which will not allow for timely electronic transmittal. Paper transmittal should not be used to circumvent edits which stop transmission. Rather, errors should be investigated and corrected. If reports are submitted in hard copy, one copy of the report should be transmitted to the National Office to the address given in I below. To assure consistency between the State and National Office data bases, electronic reports submitted on paper should be resubmitted electronically when hardware or software problems are solved. If paper reporting is used, the reason that electronic reporting was unavailable should be specified in the comments. Due dates remain the same whether electronically transmitted or a hard copy is mailed. Sufficient time should be allowed for the reports to arrive on or before the required due date.

H.   Timeliness

Reports must be sent in time to arrive in the National Office by the due date. Delinquency on reports which are electronically sent is determined by the date on which the report was approved for transmission. This item is stored on the data base as **mldate**. The system automatically assigns an **mldate** at the time of approval. It can not be altered once assigned. Approval for transmission transfers a copy of the report data to a file on the State system. The National Office system polls each State system every night and retrieves these files. To assure that a report arrives in the National Office by the due date, it must be approved for transmittal by the day before the due date.   If there are communications problems in the National Office so that pick up of reports cannot be accomplished until after the due date, the report will still be considered on time if it was approved (**mldate**) before the due date.

Timeliness on reports which can not be submitted electronically is determined by the date of arrival in the National Office Unemployment Insurance Service's reports unit. Mail sent to wrong addresses, even within the National Office, take time to find their way to the proper office. Reports should be sent to allow for mail time.

I.   Mailing Address

For reports submitted by mail, unless otherwise specified in instructions, one copy should be sent to the appropriate Regional Office and one to the National Office at the following address:

> U.S. Department of Labor
> Employment and Training Administration
> Attn: OWS/UI-Reports, Rm. S-4231
> 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
> Washington, DC 20210

Submit faxes to 202-219-8056 to the attention OWS/UI Reports.

J.   Report Comments

Comments concerning policies, procedures, and/or local economic conditions that account for fluctuations in the data reported or that have special significant effects on the meaning of certain items in a report are useful in interpreting reports and reducing communications concerning reports.   Provisions have been made to include comments for electronic reports, Using meaningful abbreviations, space provided should be adequate.

K. Classification by Program

Claims and payment activities may involve one or more programs. Joint claims are classified for reporting purposes as follows:

1. <u>UI</u>. All UI claims, either alone or in combination with UCFE and/or UCX,

2. <u>UCFE</u>. All UCFE claims, either alone or in combination with UCX,

3. <u>UCX</u>. Claims involving only UCX.

L. Records Retention

Unless otherwise noted in specific instructions, source data supporting counts should be retained for at least three years.

M. Dollar Amounts

Unless otherwise specified, all dollar amount entries should be rounded to the nearest whole dollar. Dollar amounts which are totals of other dollar amounts appearing on the same form should be the sum of the rounded sub-part figures.

N. Procedures for Rounding Numbers

Unless otherwise noted, the 5/4 rounding method is to be used. That is, if the digit to the right of the digit to be rounded is 5 or more, round up to the next higher digit. If the digit to the right of the digit to be rounded is 4 or less, round down, that is truncate. Values which are totals of other values appearing on the same form should be the sum of the rounded sub-part figures.

O. Missing Values/Total Cells

For the six regular version workload reports (ETA 5159, ETA 5130, ETA 218, ETA 207, ETA 581, and ETA 586) any values not filled in will prevent the report from being transmitted to the National Office.

Incomplete reports are not acceptable. For non-workload reports or for workload reports other than regular versions, cells not filled in are assumed to be zero and are automatically zero filled when left blank.

P. State Codes

Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) two-digit alpha codes will be used for designating the State code unless otherwise specified. For electronically submitted reports, State and codes are automatically entered by the program.

Q. Other Reporting Requirements

Other UI reporting requirements not in this handbook, both electronic and paper, are in the following and should be consulted.

HB 315   Adjustment Assistance for Workers Under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Amendments of 1981
HB 336   State Agency Program Budget Plan
HB 361   Unemployment Insurance Workload Validation
HB 365   UI Quality Appraisal
HB 376   Handbook on Internal Security (ETA 9000)
HB 384   Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Servicepersons (UCX)
HB 391   Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE)
HB 395   Quality Control
HB 399   Unemployment Compensation Claims Filed Under the Interstate Arrangement for Combining Employment and Wages
HB 356   Disaster Unemployment Act Handbook (ETA 902)
HB 407   Tax Performance System

This list of reporting requirements is not all inclusive. Other OMB approved reporting is transmitted to SESAs via UI Program Letters, Reports and Analysis Letters, or other official directives.

R. Bureau of Labor Statistics

OWS cooperates with the Bureau of Labor Statistics in their collection of data for the ES 202, Employment, Wages and Contributions Report and for the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program. The data collected in these programs are also used by OWS.