

Department of Workforce Development: Unemployment news for employers highlight UI reforms, tax savings under Walker Administration

Posted on Tuesday, Oct 31, 2017

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MADISON – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) sent annual rate notices this month to all Wisconsin employers covered under the state's Unemployment Insurance (UI) system and, as with every annual notice, included a brief UI news update.

Among the highlights is a reminder that employers covered under Wisconsin's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program have saved an estimated \$637 million in UI taxes since 2013 due, in part, to UI reforms put forth by Governor Walker's administration that have strengthened the integrity of the UI system and improved the balance of the UI Trust Fund.

DWD Secretary Ray Allen issued the following statement:

“When Governor Walker took office, he made advancing pro-growth reforms and providing Wisconsin workers with the tools and programs needed to successfully reenter the workforce a top priority, and the much-improved balance of Wisconsin's

UI Trust Fund demonstrates that those initiatives are working. Wisconsin's UI Trust Fund balance was over \$1.4 billion in the black at the end of August 2017, an increase of \$317 million compared to the same time last year and nearly a \$2.8 billion swing since the Governor took office. Additionally, the amount of UI taxes paid by employers in 2017 through August decreased \$132 million (19 percent) when compared to the same time last year."

Since January 2011, Wisconsin's UI program has undergone significant statutory changes and operational improvements through the collaboration of the Walker Administration, UI Advisory Council and Wisconsin Legislature. Today, workers are required to perform four work search actions per week, unless waived, and are connected to the resources offered by expert staff at each of Wisconsin's Job Centers located across the state by registering at JobCenterofWisconsin.com.

Wisconsin has also introduced enhanced online internet claim filing services, which have made claim filing more efficient and user-friendly and allowed staff to focus on individuals who are new to the online system and need assistance in filing a claim. Combined with the significant reforms championed by Governor Walker and endorsed by the Wisconsin State Legislature, Wisconsin's UI program is more accountable to the taxpayer, more efficient for customers and more effective at facilitating a rapid return to work for those who are forced to rely on UI benefits.

The 2017 Unemployment News for Employers is available online at <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uitax/newsletter/> or https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/publications/ui/uct_17289_p.pdf