

SIDES and SIDES E-Response Fact Sheet

The Problem

Responding to paper-based unemployment insurance (UI) information requests fully and within tight deadlines creates a significant and costly administrative burden on companies today, putting a strain on the bottom line. This problem is compounded for employers and third-party administrators (TPAs) with operations in multiple states, since – until recently – no single national standard existed to help states and employers easily and electronically exchange key information about UI claims.

The Solution

Developed through a strategic partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) and state UI agencies, the **State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES)** and **SIDES E-Response** offer employers and TPAs – free of charge – a secure, electronic and nationally-standardized format in which they can easily respond to UI information requests, attach documentation when needed, and receive a date-stamped confirmation of receipt. Now, employers and TPAs in states implementing the SIDES and SIDES E-Response systems can adopt an electronic standardized format to better anticipate and supply the data needed for UI information requests, reduce follow-up phone calls, and streamline their UI response processes, reducing paper work while saving time and money.

The Options

For employers with a limited number of UI claims throughout the year, the **SIDES E-Response** website provides an easy and efficient portal for electronically posting responses to information requests from state agencies. SIDES E-Response is available in participating states to any employer or TPA with internet access.

The screenshot shows the SIDES E-Response website interface. At the top left is the logo for UI SIDES (State Information Data Exchange System). The main header reads "SIDES E-Response". Below the header, there is a "Welcome to the Employer Website for the Unemployment Insurance Separation Information Data Exchange System" message. A note says "Please Login using the instructions provided by the State Agency". The login form includes fields for "State" (a dropdown menu), "Federal Employer Identification Number", "State Employer Identification Number", and "Identification Number/Access Code". Each field has a question mark icon. There are "Cancel" and "Login" buttons at the bottom of the form. A footer note states "Copyright © 2008 - 2009, National Association of State Workforce Agencies. All Rights Reserved."

SIDES provides a more automated data-sharing and file-tracking interface between employers' IT systems and state agency networks. SIDES is an integrated computer-to-computer interface designed for employers and TPAs that typically deal with a large volume of UI information requests. SIDES is especially helpful to those that operate in multiple states.

SIDES UI Information Flow Process



Both options are completely *free of charge* for employers and TPAs, although there will be internal IT system development costs in integrating the SIDES option. Please review the *SIDES* and *SIDES E-Response Fact Sheets* and *Comparison Chart* for more details.

In addition, both options have multiple layers of security that are implemented to the highest standard, given the sensitive data exchanged between state UI agencies and employers and TPAs.

The Benefits

SIDES and SIDES E-Response have the potential to significantly improve the UI information exchange process. While the best option depends on the specific needs of each company, both options offer a range of benefits.



SIDES and SIDES E-Response give employers and TPAs an electronic way to simplify and streamline responding to UI information requests, saving time and money by:

- eliminating delays related to paper mail delivery, and allowing more time to gather information and respond timely;
- ensuring more complete information is provided through standard edits, validations and business rules, reducing time-consuming follow up phone calls; and
- reducing paper handling, staff time and postage costs.

In addition to the significant administrative cost savings offered by SIDES and SIDES E-Response, both options address two of the largest causes of UI overpayments: incorrect initial eligibility decisions (job separation issues) and working while receiving UI benefits. Many UI overpayments, which could be prevented by receiving timely and accurate information, negatively impact employers’ bottom lines. In FY 2010, the UI system paid \$144 billion in federal and state unemployment benefits to 11.4 million beneficiaries. The USDOL estimates 10.6 percent of these benefits were paid improperly.

Benefits of SIDES and SIDES E-Response

- ✓ Saves time and money
- ✓ Provided for FREE
- ✓ Reduces staff time
- ✓ Reduces paper work
- ✓ Helps keep UI rates as low as possible
- ✓ Provides an electronic, nationally standardized data format
- ✓ Includes data checks to ensure the exchange of correct and valid information
- ✓ Provides tools for a healthier bottom line

With this in mind, using SIDES or SIDES E-Response will help employers keep UI rates as low as possible by providing accurate, quality and timely information to state UI agencies.

SIDES and SIDES E-Response are available free of charge to every employer and TPA in any state implementing the SIDES and SIDES E-Response systems. As of September 30, 2012, 42 states will be using SIDES and SIDES E-Response. To find out if your state is participating, please visit [\[LINK\]](#).