Labor & Economic Growth

Unemployment Insurance Agency

ADVOCACY PROGRAM
2007 ANNUAL REPORT
(MESC ACT)

The Unemployment Insurance Agency's Advocacy Program was created by legislation passed in December 1989 which added Section 421.5a to the Michigan Employment Security Act. The purpose of the Advocacy Program is to provide information, consultation, and representation services to unemployed workers and employers who are involved with unemployment insurance appeal hearings. Since the Program's inception in 1991, over 157,602 customers have been serviced through the Advocacy Program.

A. During CY 2007, nine thousand six hundred and five (9,605) unemployed workers requested Advocacy services. Of those, 8,946 unemployed workers were provided consultation and representation services.

B. During CY 2007, five thousand eight hundred and thirty five (5835) employers requested Advocacy services. Of those, 5,202 employers were provided consultation and representation services

C. Unemployed workers fully expended the appropriation in CY 2007.

D. Employers fully expended the appropriation in CY 2007.

E. In 2007, the Advocacy Program continued to provide services to customers at the appeal level. The number of cases opened and closed reflect a great awareness of the Program's services among both unemployed workers and employers. The Advocacy Program provided information and consultation only services in 6% (854) cases) of the cases opened in CY 2007. In some of these cases, the unemployed workers and employers decided not to continue to the hearing with their cases after consulting with an Advocate.

The Advocacy Program does not provide services at the hearing if the Advocate determines the case lacks merit. During the consultation the Advocate discusses the issues involved, reviews documentation and prepares witnesses and the customer for the hearing. The Advocate determines whether, in his or her opinion, the case has merit under UI law and explains to the customer the merits of the case. The Advocate also explains the hearing processes and assists the customer in presenting the pertinent facts involved at the hearing.