

# Unemployment Insurance Agency MICHIGAN EMPLOYER ADVISOR

Spring 2014

FROM THE  
**director**



## *Dear Employer:*

As we come to the end of the first quarter of 2014, there are over 81,000 employers utilizing the new Michigan Web Account Manager (MiWAM) to process their interactions with UIA. Additionally, there are more than 1,700 accounts for third party administrators and over 400,000 MiWAM claimant accounts have been created.

As is to be expected with a drastic overhaul of an entire system, there has been a learning curve involved for both our staff and our customers. We are constantly working to make just the right adjustments to provide the optimal service for our customers.

But even in the midst of the tweaks and adjustments, MiWAM has been successful in making customer interactions with the agency and performing simple functions more convenient and more efficient. You can read about some of the improvements and positive changes in the story about UIA's process improvements (RPM) on page 4.

Also, in the issue, you can find out about other processes made easier by MiWAM. Read about how to request a Seeking Work Waiver (p. 3) or Client Level Reporting for PEOs (p.4).

I would also like to announce that I will be retiring from the Unemployment Insurance Agency at the end of April, 2014. After 32 years of service to the State of Michigan, I'll be turning in my ID badge. The Agency will be left in the hands of a new director — Sharon Moffett-Massey. Sharon Moffett-Massey has most recently been serving in a dual role with the UIA as Chief of Staff and Acting Director of Customer Service. She brings with her a wealth of technical knowledge, leadership and 21 years of experience in unemployment insurance. She has served the UIA in several capacities, including as director of the Grand Rapids and Lansing Remote Initial Claims Centers. Moffett-Massey graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in political science. I know the agency will be left in capable hands as it continues to provide the best service possible to Michigan businesses, and unemployed workers.

Shaun Thomas, Director  
Unemployment Insurance Agency

## THE MICHIGAN EMPLOYER ADVISOR

is an Unemployment  
Insurance Agency newsletter  
for Michigan Employers about  
unemployment insurance.

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# 2014 Employer Seminars

The Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) is once again offering free seminars to acquaint employers with the unemployment insurance system in Michigan.

The employer seminars, presented by the Office of the Employer Ombudsman and subject matter experts from around the UIA, cover hot topics including:

- How Benefits are Charged to Employers
- How an Employer's Tax Rate is Calculated
- Working Part-Time and collecting Unemployment Benefits
- Acquisition of a Business
- The Appeal Process
- Refusals of Work
- Seasonal Denial Periods
- Michigan Web Account Manager (MiWAM), and more.

Ten seminars will be held throughout the state beginning May 21, 2014. To register for a seminar in your area, please click on the seminar you would like to attend and complete the on-line registration. Please register early. Sessions are expected to fill quickly.

For questions about the seminars, please contact the Office of Employer Ombudsman at 1-855-4-UIA/OEO; 313-456-2300; or email [OEO@michigan.gov](mailto:OEO@michigan.gov).

## 2014 Employer Seminars Schedule

DATE	CITY	LOCATION
May 21	Ann Arbor	Learning Resource Center – 4135 Washtenaw Ave. <a href="http://2014annarbor.eventbrite.com">http://2014annarbor.eventbrite.com</a>
July 16	Detroit	Cadillac Place – 3024 W. Grand Blvd., Ste. L-150 <a href="http://2014detroit.eventbrite.com">http://2014detroit.eventbrite.com</a>
July 30	Traverse City	Northwestern Michigan College – The Hagerty Center – 715 E. Front Street <a href="http://2014traversecity.eventbrite.com">http://2014traversecity.eventbrite.com</a>
August 13	Saginaw	Delta College – 1961 Delta Rd (Lecture Theater, Room G160) <a href="http://2014saginaw.eventbrite.com">http://2014saginaw.eventbrite.com</a>
August 20	Kalamazoo	Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center Haworth College of Business, WMU 3110 Schneider Hall, Room 2000 <a href="http://2014kalamazoo.eventbrite.com/">http://2014kalamazoo.eventbrite.com/</a>
September 10	Lansing	State of Michigan Library & Historical Center – 702 W. Kalamazoo Street <a href="http://2014lansing.eventbrite.com/">http://2014lansing.eventbrite.com/</a>
September 17	Clinton Twp.	Macomb Intermediate School District – 44001 Garfield (Central Training Room 100 A&B) <a href="http://2014clintontwp.eventbrite.com/">http://2014clintontwp.eventbrite.com/</a>
September 23	Muskegon	Michigan Alternative & Renewable Energy Center – 200 Viridian Drive (Room 204) <a href="http://2014muskegon.eventbrite.com/">http://2014muskegon.eventbrite.com/</a>
September 24	Grand Rapids	Wisner-Bostrall Applied Technology Center at Grand Rapids Community College 151 Fountain Street NE (ATC 118-124) <a href="http://2014grandrapids.eventbrite.com/">http://2014grandrapids.eventbrite.com/</a>
October 7	Marquette	Michigan Works! Marquette Service Center – 1498 O'Dovero Drive <a href="http://2014marquette.eventbrite.com/">http://2014marquette.eventbrite.com/</a>
October 8	Gaylord	3962 Wilkinson Road (Rm. 125) <a href="http://2014gaylord.eventbrite.com/">http://2014gaylord.eventbrite.com/</a>

For questions about the seminar, please call the Office of the Employer Ombudsman at (855) 484-2636 or (4-UIA/OEO), 313-456-2300 or email [OEO@michigan.gov](mailto:OEO@michigan.gov).

# Registration and Seeking Work Waiver

An unemployed worker collecting unemployment insurance benefits normally is required to be available for full-time, suitable work and seeking work every week the worker is claiming benefits.

But did you know that for short term layoff periods, employers may request a waiver for this requirement when their employees will be returning to their job within 45 days?

This waiver is referred to as a Registration and Seeking Work (RSW) waiver. Under the RSW waiver, the registration and availability requirements are also waived. The workers are not required to register for work with Pure Michigan Talent Connect or seek other employment.

Employers request waivers during short term unemployment periods because they want their workforce to be available to return to work as requested.

The criteria for establishing a waiver are:

- The separation must be a layoff for lack of work
- The layoff is temporary (work will be available within 45 days)
- The request must be received before the layoff occurs (no later than the week prior to the layoff)

## Requesting a Waiver

With the implementation of MiWAM, it's faster and easier than ever for employers to request a Registration and Seeking Work Waiver for short term lay off periods. In the past, employers had to submit the request in writing and receive approval for the waiver request. Now the waiver can be requested and approved in minutes.

How to request a RSW in MiWAM

1. Employers must log into their MiWAM account.
2. Click on the Account Services tab and view the Benefit Services sub-tab.

The screenshot shows the MiWAM user interface. At the top right, it says "User Information: You are signed in as test1575662". Below this is a table with three columns: TAX, NAMES AND ADDRESSES, and I WANT TO... The table contains information about the user's account, including Federal Employer ID, Contributing, Balance, Pending Pymts+Rpts, and Pay Effective Balance. Below the table are several navigation tabs: QUARTERS, ACTIVITIES<sup>9</sup>, NOTICES<sup>25</sup>, REPORTS/PAYMENTS HISTORY, ACCOUNT SERVICES, LETTERS<sup>13</sup>, REPORTS AND PAYMENTS, ACCOUNT MAINTENANCE, TAX ISSUES AND ASSESSMENTS, BENEFIT SERVICES, and WOTC. The BENEFIT SERVICES tab is currently selected, and it shows a list of services: Determinations and Decisions, Request Advocate, School Denial, Seeking Work Waiver, and View Benefit Charges & Credits. At the bottom of the page, there are links for Michigan.gov Home, LARA Home, Contacts, and UIA Home.

3. Click "Seeking Work Waiver." Enter the required information and press the "Submit" button.

The screenshot shows the "Request for Registration and Seeking Work Waiver (RSW)" form. At the top right, there is a "Cancel" button. The form title is "Request for Registration and Seeking Work Waiver (RSW)". Below the title, there is a paragraph of text: "Waiver of Registration for Work, Availability and Seeking Work Requirements under Section 28 (1) (a) is requested for the following employees on a temporary layoff, not to exceed 45 days." Below this text, there are three input fields: "Multi-Unit Number" with the value "000", "Last Day Worked" with a date picker, and "Back to Work Date" with a date picker and a "Required" label. Below the input fields, there is a paragraph of text: "If this waiver request covers all employees laid off on the Last Date Worked entered above, press Submit". Below this text, there is another paragraph of text: "If this waiver request is limited to employees working at a specific location, please enter the name of the location below. Only employees laid off from this specific location will be waived from registration for work, availability, and seeking work. All other employees laid off on that date will be required to register for work, be available for work, and seeking work." Below this text, there is an input field for "Work Location of specific waived employees".

# Client Level Reporting

Under a recent amendment to the Michigan Employment Security Act (MES), Professional Employer Organizations (PEOs) in Michigan must register their client entities with each having its own individual UIA Employer Identification number. PEOs were required to convert to client level reporting by January 1, 2014.

Under the new law, PEO's are required to notify the UIA within 30 days of acquiring a new client entity, and within 30 days of ending PEO the relationship. The law also makes clear that the PEO is considered the employer, for purposes of claims management and hearings, of the employees it leases back to its client entities.

With Client Level Reporting, the PEO can now provide the UIA with needed information from its clients to keep track of the unemployment "experience" and calculate the state unemployment tax rate for each client entity. The PEO can then file Form UIA 1028, Employers Quarterly Wage/Tax Report on behalf of each of its listed client entities, and make one quarterly tax payment on behalf of those entities.

For more information about Client Level Reporting, view or download the Client Level Reporting Toolkit for PEOs at [michigan.gov/uia](http://michigan.gov/uia). Click the Employers tab.

## RPM Update

To implement positive changes for business, LARA, in partnership with the Department of Treasury, Environmental Quality and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, launched Reinventing Performance in Michigan (RPM), a metric-driven customer service model for all state government departments to eliminate the bureaucratic red tape that is hurting the state's job providers.

Recognizing that State government still has too many delays, duplicative forms and impractical regulations and practices, RPM works with state employees, stakeholders and customers, to identify the issues that drive business satisfaction to produce real and meaningful change.

Before new businesses can start up in Michigan, one of the first things to do is register with the UIA to file tax reports. Until now, that process was frustrating and time-consuming. The UIA underwent an RPM process improvement where the Agency significantly reduced its processing and customer response times for those who opt to use the new online system – MiWAM.

A once confusing, paper-intensive and lengthy tax filing process for customers is now much more efficient. Tax reporting changes that took the state more than two weeks to complete, and anywhere from six to eight weeks to be reflected on the employer's account, are now done within one business day, allowing customers to view changes to their UIA account balance in real time.

This amounts to a 98 percent savings in processing time, due in part to the establishment of an online process for submitting forms and tax payments.

The UIA also made other process improvements to benefit its customers. At one time, it took the state anywhere from 90 days to six months to provide customers with a tax registration number. Today, the customer is given notification of their tax registration number within two business days, cutting the processing time by 98 percent.

Likewise, account numbers that were not provided to customers when sending in their tax reports and payments (often causing a delay in the crediting of reports and payments), are now provided within three to five business days – a 90 percent reduction in processing time.

As a result of these changes, customers are able to establish federal credits quicker and stay current with tax payments to remain in good standing with the IRS.

To further simplify the tax filing process, the UIA eliminated 430 forms and consolidated 41 out of a total of 1,011.

For more information about RPM, visit the RPM web page at [www.michigan.gov/lara](http://www.michigan.gov/lara).



# Holiday Pay

## **Q** How Does Holiday/Vacation Pay Affect Unemployment Benefits?

**A** If an unemployed worker is entitled to vacation or holiday pay, these types of payments may be used to reduce a worker's unemployment benefits.

Holiday and vacation payments reduce unemployment benefits by 40 cents for every dollar paid up to a claimant's weekly benefit amount, and by one dollar for payments equal to or greater than the weekly benefit amount — up to 1.6 times the weekly benefit amount. If holiday or vacation payments exceed 1.6 times the claimant's weekly benefit amount, there is no entitlement to unemployment benefits for the period the holiday or vacation pay is paid or allocated.

In order to ensure claimants receive their proper unemployment benefits, employers should report the gross amount of the holiday or vacation pay and the period to which it is allocated to the Unemployment Insurance Agency.

However, to reduce an unemployed worker's benefits, the employer must assign the vacation or holiday pay to a specific period or the employment contract must do so.



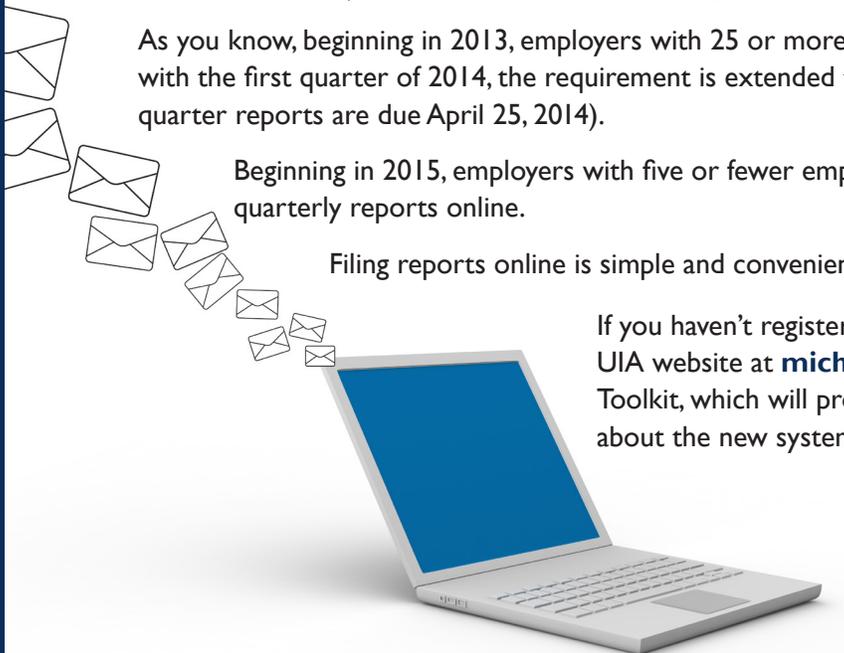
## Reminder—Employers with More Than Five Employees Must File Reports Electronically

As you know, beginning in 2013, employers with 25 or more employees were required to file online. Beginning with the first quarter of 2014, the requirement is extended to employers with six to 24 employees (first quarter reports are due April 25, 2014).

Beginning in 2015, employers with five or fewer employees will also be required to file their quarterly reports online.

Filing reports online is simple and convenient and can only be done with a MiWAM account.

If you haven't registered for a MiWAM account, do it today. Visit the UIA website at [michigan.gov/uiia](http://michigan.gov/uiia). You can also link to the MiWAM Toolkit, which will provide you with everything you need to know about the new system, including how to sign up.



### THE MICHIGAN EMPLOYER ADVISOR

is an Unemployment Insurance Agency periodical for Michigan Employers about unemployment insurance. Submissions should be related to UIA programs and services.



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Please direct questions, suggestions and comments to: [employeradvisor@michigan.gov](mailto:employeradvisor@michigan.gov)