

**JLARC's
Evaluation Plan
for the UI
Training Benefits
Program
Briefing Report**

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JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND
REVIEW COMMITTEE

STUDY TEAM
Nina Oman, PhD

PROJECT SUPERVISOR
John Woolley

LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR
Keenan Konopaski

Copies of Final Reports and Digests are
available on the JLARC website at:

www.jlarc.leg.wa.gov

or contact

Joint Legislative Audit & Review
Committee
1300 Quince St SE
Olympia, WA 98504-0910
(360) 786-5171
(360) 786-510 FAX

REPORT SUMMARY

JLARC Plans a Three-Tiered Approach to Evaluate the UI Training Benefits Program

As part of extensive unemployment insurance (UI) legislation passed in 2011, the Legislature directed JLARC to conduct a thorough evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Employment Security Department's unemployment insurance Training Benefits Program. Most of the changes made to the Training Benefits Program apply to participants entering the program starting July 1, 2012.

JLARC's study approach has three tiers:

Tier One	Describes the implementation and operation of the program. This approach is called a Process Evaluation .
Tier Two	Describes key facts about the program, such as numbers of participants, their characteristics, and program costs. This is called a Gross Impact Analysis .
Tier Three	Determines whether the positive or negative outcomes of program participants are a direct result of the program; Tier Three will also assess whether the program is cost-effective. This is called a Net Impact Evaluation with a Cost-Benefit Analysis .

JLARC's Approach Is Cost-Effective, as it Leverages Existing Resources to Meet the Study Requirements

- Most of the Process Evaluation will be carried out by JLARC staff using available capacity. A survey of participants, non-participants, and employers will require additional funding.
- The Gross Impact Analysis relies on a study that the Legislature already requires of the Employment Security Department.
- The Net Impact Evaluation and Cost-Benefit Analysis may rely on a model newly developed by the Employment Security Department; some additional resources will be required for reviewing the work to ensure it is credible and objective. The Department plans to publish its new study in January 2012.

Study Completion in 2015

The 2011 UI legislation includes a number of triggers for completion of JLARC's report. Based on these triggers and a forecast by ESD, JLARC anticipates it will present its report in December 2015.

Both the Process Evaluation and Gross Impact portions of the study will include an analysis of the effects of the 2011 legislation's changes to the Training Benefits Program. For example, the Process Evaluation may examine how ESD implements changes related to the elimination of certain deadlines for displaced workers. The Gross Impact Analysis will reflect any changes in enrollment resulting from expanding definitions of displaced workers.

Adequately capturing the outcomes from the Training Benefits Program requires at least three years of follow-up information. Thus the 2015 Net Impact Evaluation is unlikely to include full analyses of the changes of the 2011 legislation (such as eligibility) on recipients after 2011. It will contain information on the outcomes of participants receiving benefits prior to 2011.

Study Cost Estimates

The staff costs associated with JLARC completing the study will be absorbed within existing resources. JLARC will require the following additional funding to complete the study:

FY 12: \$20,000 for review of ESD's January 2012 Net Impact Evaluation/Cost-Benefit Analysis on the UI Training Benefits Program

FY 15: \$122,000 for consultants to conduct surveys for the Tier 1 Process Study and for review of and assistance with the Tier 3 Net Impact Evaluation/Cost-Benefit Analysis

FY 16: \$48,000 for consultants to conduct surveys for the Tier 1 Process Study and for review of and assistance with the Tier 3 Net Impact Evaluation/Cost-Benefit Analysis

This estimate does not reflect ESD's costs for refreshing its study data.