

# Nebraska Rapid Response Guide

April 2020

NEBRASKA

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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Rapid Response plays an important role in providing customer-focused services to dislocated workers and employers, promoting economic development and vitality, and delivering critically important solutions to workers and businesses in transition.

The purpose of Rapid Response is to promote economic recovery and vitality by<sup>1</sup>:

- developing an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, responding to layoffs and dislocations; and
- preventing or minimizing the impact of layoffs and dislocations on workers, businesses, and communities.

A successful Rapid Response system includes<sup>2</sup>:

- informational and direct reemployment services for workers, including information and support for filing unemployment insurance claims, information on the impacts of layoff on health coverage or other benefits, information on and referral to career services, reemployment-focused workshops and services, and training;
- delivery of solutions to address the needs of businesses in transition, provided across the business lifecycle (expansion and contraction), including comprehensive business engagement and layoff aversion strategies and activities designed to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment;
- convening, brokering, and facilitating the connections, networks, and partners to ensure the ability to assist dislocated workers and their families, such as home heating assistance, legal aid, and financial advice; and
- strategic planning, data gathering and analysis designed to anticipate, prepare for, and manage economic change.

Rapid Response services must be delivered when one or more of the following circumstances occur <sup>3</sup>:

- announcement or notification of a permanent closure, regardless of the number of workers affected;
- announcement or notification of a *mass layoff*;
  - A *mass layoff* occurs when at least one of the following conditions has been met: when a layoff affects 50 or more workers; or when a Worker

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<sup>1</sup> <https://dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/Training/WIOA/Policies>

<sup>2</sup> 20 CFR § 682.300(b)(1)-(4); TEGL 19-16

<sup>3</sup> 20 CFR § 682.305(b)-(c); TEGL 19-16

Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act notice has been filed, regardless of the number of workers affected by the layoff.

- a mass job dislocation resulting from a natural or other disaster; or
- the filing of a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition.

Rapid Response services must include<sup>4</sup>:

- layoff aversion activities, as applicable;
- immediate and on-site contact with the employer, representatives of the affected workers, and the local community, including an assessment of and plans to address the:
  - layoff plans and schedule of the employer;
  - background and probable assistance needs of the affected workers;
  - reemployment prospects for workers; and
- available resources to meet the short and long-term assistance needs of the affected workers;
- provision of information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs, such as short-time compensation, comprehensive one-stop delivery system services, and employment and training activities, including information on the TAA program, Pell Grants, the GI Bill, and other resources;
- delivery of other necessary services and resources including workshops and classes, use of worker transition centers, and job fairs, to support reemployment efforts for affected workers;
- partnership with local workforce development boards (local boards) and local area chief elected officials (CEOs) to ensure a coordinated response to the dislocation event and, as needed, obtain access to state or local economic development assistance, which may include the development of an application for a National Dislocated Worker Grant;
- provision of emergency assistance adapted to the particular layoff or disaster; as appropriate, development of systems and processes for:
  - identifying and gathering information for early warning of potential layoffs or opportunities for layoff aversion;
  - analyzing, and acting upon, data and information on dislocations and other economic activity in the state, region, or local area; and
  - tracking outcome and performance data and information related to the activities of the rapid response program;

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<sup>4</sup> 20 CFR §§ 682.300(b)(1)-(4); TEGL 19-16

- developing and maintaining partnerships with other appropriate Federal, state and local agencies and officials, employer associations, technical councils, other industry business councils, labor organizations, and other public and private organizations, as applicable, in order to:
  - conduct strategic planning activities to develop strategies for addressing dislocation events and ensuring timely access to a broad range of necessary assistance; and
  - develop mechanisms for gathering and exchanging information and data relating to potential dislocations, resources available, and the customization of layoff aversion or rapid response activities, to ensure the ability to provide rapid response services as early as possible;
- delivery of services to worker groups for which a petition for TAA has been filed;
- provision of additional assistance to local areas that experience disasters, mass layoffs, or other dislocation events for the provision of direct career services to participants if there are not adequate local funds available to assist the dislocated workers;
- provision of guidance and financial assistance as appropriate, in establishing a labor management committee (if voluntarily agreed to by the employee's bargaining representative and management), which may devise and oversee an implementation strategy that responds to the reemployment needs of the workers, such as:
  - provision of training and technical assistance to members of the committee; and
  - funding the operating costs of a committee to enable it to provide advice and assistance in carrying out rapid response activities and the design and delivery of WIOA-authorized services to affected workers.

## **Service Delivery Model**

### **Step One: Notice of Layoff**

All notices of layoffs in Nebraska should be immediately submitted to the State Rapid Response Coordinator: [NDOL.RapidResponse@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOL.RapidResponse@nebraska.gov)

Upon receipt of notice, the State Rapid Response Coordinator will notify the Nebraska Department of Labor's (NDOL) Division of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Administrator,

and, as applicable, the Nebraska Department of Labor's Division of Reemployment Services Regional Manager and the local workforce area administrator:

- Greater Nebraska: Bobbi Jo Howard, [BobbiJo.Howard@nebraska.gov](mailto:BobbiJo.Howard@nebraska.gov)
- Lincoln Metro Area: Dylan Wren, [Dwren@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:Dwren@lincoln.ne.gov)
- Omaha Metro Area: Erin Porterfield, [Eporterfield@hws-ne.org](mailto:Eporterfield@hws-ne.org)

## **Step Two: Local Area Outreach**

Immediately upon receipt of the notice of layoff correspondence, the local area workforce office's Business Services Consultant will conduct outreach to the affected employer via phone and email to schedule an employer consultation (in-person or virtual) to adequately assess the needs and to coordinate Rapid Response services.

In order to effectively determine the effectiveness of the State's Rapid Response program, the Business Services Consultant will obtain the following information from the affected employer:

Type of layoff (complete closure, temporary, TAA):

Number of affected employees:

Occupation(s) affected:

Full-time or Part-time:

Union:

Veterans:

Date of layoff:

Date of notice to employees:

Is the layoff confidential:

Was a WARN notice received:

List benefits, if provided after layoff:

Special accommodations needed:

List the employer's virtual capabilities for Rapid Response services:

Services offered to affected employer/employees:

Next Steps:

The Business Services Consultant will coordinate Rapid Response services according to the affected employer and employee's needs. The Business Services Consultant will serve as the point of contact for the employer to ensure efficiency and reduce duplication.

## Step Three: Rapid Response Events

The Business Services Consultant will ensure the Rapid Response event is added to the NEworks Events Calendar and will coordinate on behalf of the employer to ensure multiple workforce partners and therefore programs are notified of the Rapid Response event to ensure on-site program information and enrollments are available for affected employees during the Rapid Response event.

During the Rapid Response event, provision of information should be provided by the associated workforce partner(s) in the following categories and the local area workforce partners must appoint one point of contact for each Rapid Response event to ensure affected employees have direct access for needs or questions that arise after the Rapid Response event, to include the following:

### 1. Overview of the Programs and Services, to include:

- Unemployment Insurance Benefits;<sup>5</sup>
- Comprehensive One-Stop delivery system services;
  - Workshops
  - Job Fairs and Hiring Events
- Employment activities;
  - [NEworks.Nebraska.gov](http://NEworks.Nebraska.gov)
- Training activities;
  - TAA program
  - Pell Grants
  - GI Bill
  - WIOA
- Dislocated Worker Grants;
  - TET program
- Disaster Recovery Information, if applicable.

### 2. Labor Market Information, to include:

- In-demand occupations and corresponding wages;<sup>6</sup>
  - Number of jobs available in NEworks<sup>7</sup>;
  - Candidates available per job postings;
- Top three (3) employers with most job openings in NEworks;

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<sup>5</sup> <https://dol.nebraska.gov/UIBenefits>

<sup>6</sup> <http://h3.ne.gov/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://neworks.nebraska.gov/vosnet/lmi/faq.aspx?session=faq>

- Top three (3) employers with similar job occupations to the affected occupations, as available in NEworks;

3. Provision of USDOL's Retirement and Health Care Coverage booklet<sup>8</sup>.

### **Requests for Technical Assistance**

Please send questions, comments, requests for training, and suggestions to the Rapid Response State Coordinator: [NDOL.RapidResponse@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOL.RapidResponse@nebraska.gov)

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<sup>8</sup> <https://dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/LayoffServices/LayoffAversionandResponse>