



SIDES

Fact Sheet

Developed through a strategic partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor and state Unemployment Insurance agencies, SIDES is an integrated computer-to-computer interface designed for employers and third-party administrators (TPAs) that typically deal with a large volume of Unemployment Insurance information requests. SIDES is especially helpful to those employers and TPAs that operate in multiple states.

SIDES provides a nationally standardized format in which employers and TPAs can receive and easily respond to Unemployment Insurance information requests, attach documentation when needed and receive a date-stamped confirmation of receipt. Employers and TPAs that use SIDES are able to better anticipate and supply the data needed for Unemployment Insurance information requests. In return, using SIDES reduces follow-up phone calls, helps prevent payments to those who don't meet eligibility requirements, eliminates unnecessary appeals, and streamlines Unemployment Insurance response processes, which reduces paperwork while saving time and money. Given the sensitive data exchanged, SIDES has multiple layers of security that require authentication certificates and encrypted records and files.

SIDES is available *free of charge*, although there will be internal IT system development costs to integrate with SIDES.

How It Works

SIDES is an automated computer-to-computer interface for employers and TPAs to receive and respond electronically to Unemployment Insurance information requests.

Unemployment Insurance information requests from participating states are in the same standard format, and responses from employers and TPAs are in a standard format.

Business rules, edit checks and data validations of both requests and responses ensure that complete and properly formatted information is exchanged.

SIDES produces performance metrics and provides audit controls.

What It Requires

Employers and TPAs need to develop software to connect their internal IT systems to the SIDES Central Broker, which routes requests and responses to the appropriate recipient.

SIDES was developed using the World Wide Web open design and following industry standards. However, each employer and/or TPA system is unique, and integrating SIDES will entail changes to current IT systems and processes. The SIDES team provides written technical implementation guidance and in-person training for developing the SIDES connection.

Best Suited For

SIDES is best suited for employers and TPAs that typically deal with a large volume of Unemployment Insurance information requests. While SIDES requires more up-front integration resources, it has the potential to streamline the Unemployment Insurance response process, reducing paperwork while saving time and money.

Using SIDES

Once fully integrated, SIDES allows for a secure electronic information exchange between employers and TPAs and a state Unemployment Insurance agency. SIDES uses business rules, edit checks and validations that will reduce follow-up calls and paperwork, saving both the employer and the state valuable time and effort. The SIDES team provides written implementation and developers' guides, model software for connecting to the Central Broker and in-person training to integrate SIDES.

SIDES Unemployment Insurance Information Flow



Resources and Support

The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) provides support and guidance to employers and TPAs interested in SIDES. Several times a year, NASWA offers in-person SIDES training in Washington, D.C. In addition, NASWA provides resources, such as the Concept of Operations and Implementation Guide, Developers' Guide and model software for connecting to the Central Broker. Technical staff is also available to answer questions during the integration development process.

In Their Own Words

ADP's Unemployment Compensation Services was the first TPA to partner with multiple states and implement SIDES in February 2010. Here's what they have to say about using SIDES:

"The process is much more efficient using a standard set of questions for every state and every unemployment claim. Because the information is sent in a secure, electronic fashion, it ensures the protection of sensitive employer and claimant data. In addition, receiving the request for information on day one rather than waiting for it to arrive in the mail provides additional time for TPAs to gather the appropriate separation details." – ADP, Inc.