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Iowa Workforce
Development

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Before Congress, IWD Director Townsend Highlights Success of Reemployment Case Management Program

Iowa's success in rapid reemployment of unemployment claimants was subject of testimony before U.S. House Ways and Means' Subcommittee on Work and Welfare.

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa Workforce Development Executive Director Beth Townsend [testified yesterday](#) in front of the U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Work and Welfare, focusing on Iowa's innovative approach to reemployment which has emerged as a leading model for returning individuals to the workforce.

The topic of Director Townsend's testimony was Iowa's Reemployment Case Management (RCM) program, which Governor Kim Reynolds directed IWD to create in response to a severe worker shortage that was intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since its implementation in early 2022, RCM has injected new urgency and resources that have transformed the state's unemployment process and further expanded its workforce.

The program has provided consistent value to both the state's workforce and its employers, who still urgently need workers. RCM was built on concepts found in the federal RESEA (Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment) program. By taking RESEA's concept of one-on-one career assistance and providing it earlier in the unemployment process, Iowa has been able to drastically shorten the length of an unemployment claim by helping claimants find new careers more quickly.

Director Townsend's testimony served as an important example of state leadership in successfully implementing a modernized reemployment program. Roughly 2½ years after implementation, RCM already has resulted in better outcomes for Iowans and money saved for the state's unemployment trust fund.

- The average duration of an unemployment claim in Iowa has dropped from 13 weeks at the start of RCM to 9.0 weeks in April 2024, **the lowest figure in the 64 years that Iowa has been measuring the statistic.**
- The total amount of unemployment benefits paid in 2022 and 2023 (\$253 million and \$260 million, respectively) **represent the lowest levels for benefits paid since 2000.**
- Research and analysis on the program **showed a notable increase in individuals receiving one-on-one assistance and a higher participation in reemployment activities**, helping Iowans become that much more prepared—and therefore, more effective—in their work search.

Excerpt: Director Townsend's Congressional Testimony

RCM was launched at the beginning of 2022 as part of a fundamental reset in Iowa's relationship with unemployment. Before the pandemic, our agency's focus revolved around being an efficient and

effective provider of unemployment assistance benefits. Assistance with reemployment was left to the individuals to seek and request it, especially early in the process.

In contrast, launching the Reemployment Case Management program has helped us become a true reemployment center. Through this program, Iowa Workforce Development has shortened the average time Iowans spend on unemployment by more than 30%, boosted Iowa's available workforce, and saved employers unemployment taxes in the form of lower unemployment tax rates. We believe our RCM program is a national model for helping put people back to work after unemployment sooner rather than later and helps those individuals find the best possible careers and job opportunities that they may not have otherwise even considered.

[Visit this link](#) to view Director Townsend's testimony in its entirety.

For more information on RCM and IWD's reemployment programs, [visit this link](#).

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