

In Partnership with CalNonprofits

# What Every Nonprofit Should Know About Unemployment Insurance





# What Do 1-in-4 Nonprofits Have in Common?

They don't know their unemployment tax alternative could be saving them money.



Source: April 2012 survey conducted by the Unemployment Services Trust



# **Tax Paying Employers**

On average, employers pay \$2.00 in unemployment taxes for every \$1.00 paid out in unemployment benefits to their former employees. Where does that



Claims from <u>your former</u> employees
Claims of <u>for-profit</u> companies
Claims for <u>failed</u> companies
Administration costs for the <u>state</u>

And now...toward paying down the <u>debt & interest</u> owed to the Federal government for Title XII loans



# **But Wait...**

Unlike your for-profit counterparts, you don't actually have to keep paying state unemployment insurance taxes.

The Federal Unemployment Act Chapter 23, Section 3301 through 3311 of Title 26 says that 501(c)(3) organizations can "elect whether (a) to contribute to the State program in accordance with State law or (b) to pay into the State program annually an amount equal to the actual unemployment benefits paid out by the State program..."



So what does this mean for all of us who aren't lawyers?

# You can "pay as you go" AKA Reimburse the state only for your Unemployment Claims



• It's been 40 years since this law was put into place. Let's look at what's happened since then....

2010

Unemployment

at highest rate

since 1980s

# **A History of Unemployment**

### 1935

Unemployment Insurance created – Part of FDR's Public Works Program

### 1972

Most nonprofits now required to pay UI. *But* can pay tax or reimburse

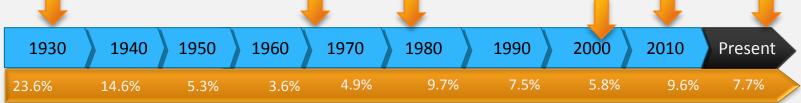
### 1983

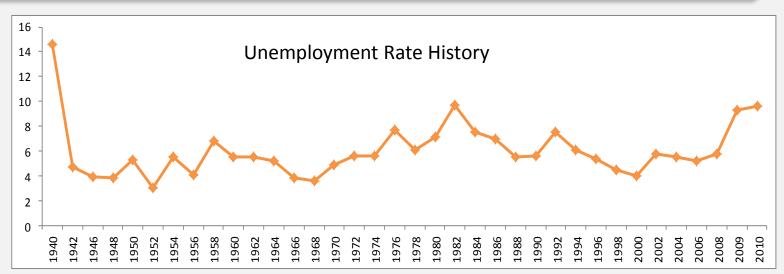
Human Services Unemployment Trust founded by group of United Way agencies – later UST

2008
Fed Extends
Emergency UI
Benefits – up to 99
weeks

### Present

Unemployment remains high.
States owe \$30b to Fed. UI Integrity Act is Enforced.







# Why Should You Care?

A Cowboy Walks Into a Nonprofit

Meet Bob.

He used to work for your organization, and he's a really great guy. But his horse, Whiskey, always lagged in the morning, so Bob was always late, which violated your attendance policy.



Then, when he filed for unemployment benefits, you didn't have the heart to deny his claim, so you didn't respond to the state's Request for Information.

Something's wrong with this picture though...



# It's Not Only About Bob...

2012: \$10B (11%) of unemployment benefits paid in error

Fed says: Employers who are failing to respond are driving many of these errors

Trade Adjustment Assistance Extension Act (TAAEA): Added UI Integrity Act – affecting all employers by October 21<sup>st</sup>

- Requires employers to respond to state's <u>first</u> request for claim information
- Penalties include losing your right to protest claims and monetary penalties





# 4 Ways To Keep Your UI Costs Low (and avoid penalties)

- 1) Be prepared for claims before they ever happen
- 2) Make sure that all UI claims requests are timely and correctly completed to avoid penalties
- 3) Appeal all undeserved benefit determinations
- 4) Attend unemployment hearings, if needed, and provide proper documentation early



As cute as he may be, are you **sure** he should be collecting unemployment benefits?



# **And...Consider Your Options Carefully**

### 501(c)(3)s have three options:

### **Tax Payers**

Tax-rated Employers that pay a rate determined by the state

### Pay As You Go

Employers that have opted out of state UI taxes and reimburse as claims occur

### **Supported Reimbursing**

Employers that have opted out & joined a program to manage their claims experience









# **Paying State Taxes**

### **Benefits**

- State pays all claims
- Rate cap means that you can be subsidized by other employers in the tax system

Best for:



Small Agencies



Agencies with Regular Layoffs



Agencies with Many Seasonal Workers

### **Challenges**

- You can be subsidizing other employers with higher claims
- You help cover the state's high rate of error on benefits paid out
- There are no refunds on overpayments into the state tax system
- Tax rates may rise



# Reimbursing for Unemployment

### **Benefits**

- Pay only for your own claims, dollar-for-dollar
- Can significantly lower costs by managing claims properly

Best for:



Agencies with 10+ Employees



Agencies Overpaying State UI Taxes



Agencies with Few Seasonal Workers

### **Challenges**

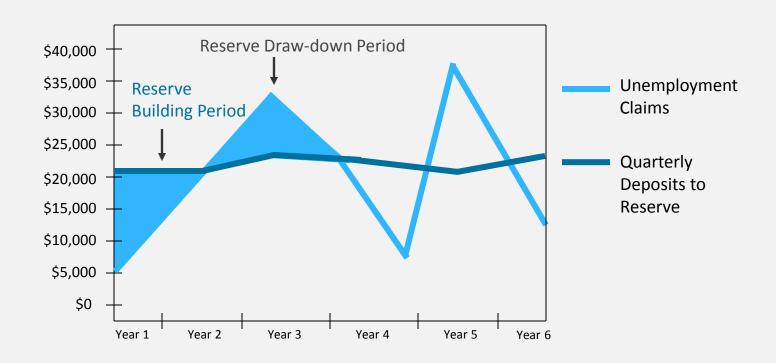
- The ups and downs of claims can put cash flow at risk
- Sudden unanticipated losses could mean you exceed the state rate cap
- Managing and protesting improper claims is timeconsuming



# So How Do Reimbursing Employers Address these Challenges?



# Working with UST Can Help Even Out Volatility



# **Your Claims Rep Helps Manage Claims**

- Expert claim administrators help you decide when to protest improper claims
- A hearing representative advocates for you if you should go to court and helps prepare documentation



### Little known fact:

On average, employers who use a claim administrator reduce their unemployment claim costs by 15%

# A Claims Rep helps you Follow These Best Practices Vays To Keep Your UI Costs Low

### A UST Claims Rep Helps You:

- 1) Be prepared for claims before they ever happen
- 2) Make sure that all UI claims requests are timely and correctly completed to avoid penalties
- 3) Appeal all undeserved benefit determinations
- 4) Attend unemployment hearings, if needed, and provide proper documentation early

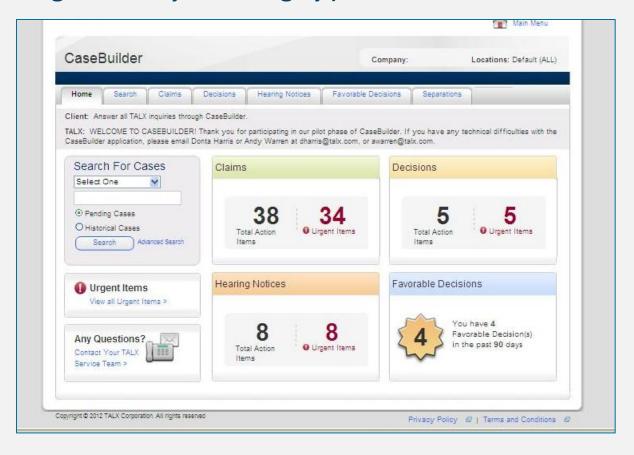


As cute as he may be, are you sure he should be collecting unemployment benefits?



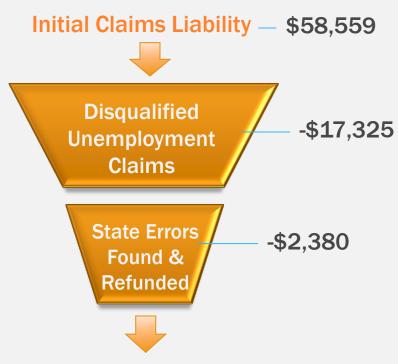
# You Can View Claims Activity Online

A simplified online claims dashboard helps you stay on top of claims, minimizing the liability of UI Integrity penalties



# **Working with UST Preserves Assets**

- Conservative investment helps offset admin costs
- Your trust account = Asset you own



You can also receive refunds if you keep claims low over time



Remaining Claims Liability — \$38,854 (\$19,705 saved)

### **You Have Protection**

- UST protects your cash flow when claims exceed your account balance (Be careful though! Not all programs will allow you to exceed it)
- Stop-loss protection provides extra security



Going it alone can be "ruff." Don't worry - I've got your back!



## Here's Where We Tell You About Us

- Lowest administrative costs
- Largest unemployment trust in the nation
- Founded in 1983 by a group of nonprofits
- Work with 80+ Associations to educate NPOs
- 93% of members would recommend us to another agency





# Benchmark Your UI Costs for Maximum Savings



Benchmarking your unemployment costs is easy. Simply ask yourself:

- How many part-time & full-time employees do I have?
- How often do former employees collect benefits?
- Is there any planned staff growth or reduction?
- Where are we on the state tax rate scale?
- Would we benefit from having dedicated support for claims to reduce HR burden?



# **Need Help Benchmarking UI Costs?**

UST offers complimentary Savings Evaluations to agencies with 10+ employees.

Request one today at www.ChooseUST.org.

**State Deadline: Quarterly** 

Start lowering your claims immediately with a Free Preview of claims services when you enroll with UST now.



# **Questions?**







Type your questions in the chat box or contact us at:

info@ChooseUST.org

888-249-4788

Facebook.com/ChooseUST | Twitter.com/USTtrust | LinkedIn.com/ChooseUST