



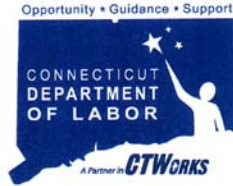
Unemployment Insurance Exhaustees:
*Connecting Services to Those Claimants
Affected by the Reduction of Extended Benefits*

A Report to Governor Dannel Malloy
submitted by:

Commissioner Glenn Marshall
Department of Labor

Commissioner Roderick Bremby
Department of Social Services

May 14, 2012



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The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy
Governor - State of Connecticut
State Capitol - 210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

As Connecticut continues to emerge from the national recession, a declining unemployment rate, while good news for the state, also means that more than 12,000 individuals in Connecticut are no longer eligible to receive Extended Benefits.

Unfortunately, these claimants have not yet found new employment and this abrupt reduction in Extended Benefits may have a serious impact on their financial stability. As a result, our immediate goal is to connect individuals affected by the loss of these benefit weeks to all available employment and social services.

Per your request, the departments of Labor and Social Services have collaborated to develop and submit to you a formal plan to assist affected families. Our plan brings together any and all relevant services provided through our agencies, the United Way 211, Connecticut's five Workforce Investments Boards and Connecticut's community action agencies.

While an emphasis has been placed on the 12,000 claimants affected by the trigger "off" of Extended Benefits, the plan also looks ahead to the needs of the estimated 75,000 claimants who we believe will not have found new employment when they exhaust all benefits at the end of 2012.

Should you or your staff have any questions, our agencies, as well as our partners, are available to clarify or respond to any portions of the plan.

Respectfully yours,

Glenn Marshall, Commissioner
Connecticut Department of Labor

Roderick Bremby, Commissioner
Connecticut Department Social Services

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Section 1: Overview

April 2012 marked the eighth straight month of decline in Connecticut's unemployment rate. Currently at 7.7%, the lowest rate in 3 ½ years, unemployment dropped 1.3% compared to April 2011 when the rate stood at 9%.

In February 2010, Connecticut unemployment peaked at 9.2%. While a declining unemployment rate is good news for Connecticut and is an indication of a recovering economy, the rate reduction triggers "off" certain Extended Benefits for a portion of UI claimants. The reduction in Extended Benefits occurs rather abruptly due to the Federal calculation and as a result individuals who may have expected 99 weeks of unemployment are now only eligible for 73 weeks—a change that can have serious impact on the claimant's financial stability.

Governor Malloy is concerned about the impact of benefit reductions on Connecticut residents and as a result has instructed Commissioner of Labor, Glenn Marshall and Department of Social Services Commissioner Roderick Bremby to collaborate on a formal plan to insure efforts are coordinated and redoubled to assist affected families.

Section 2: Benefit Reduction

Under the Emergency Unemployment Compensation 2008 Program (EUC08), unemployment claimants were eligible for 99 weeks of unemployment benefits. These 99 weeks included:

State UI:	26 weeks
Federal EUC08:	53 weeks
State/federal Extended Benefits:	20 weeks

In February 2012, as a result of the decrease in Connecticut's Total Unemployment Rate (TUR), Connecticut was one of two states to fall below the threshold to remain "on" in Tier 4 of the EUC08 program. As a result, the maximum potential entitlement in Connecticut for the EUC08 program was reduced from 53 weeks to 47 weeks. As of the week ending February 18, 2012, no additional claimants could establish eligibility for Tier 4 EUC08 although claimants in Connecticut with previously established eligibility could continue to receive any remaining Tier 4 benefits until exhausted. Following the February benefit reduction, unemployment claimants were eligible for 93 weeks of unemployment benefits.

In April and May 2012, Extended Benefits were reduced as a result of the decrease in Connecticut's TUR. Different from the February 2012 reduction, the April and May 2012 reductions affect both new and existing claimants for Extended Benefits.

As of April 21, 2012, the first reduction of Extended Benefits went into effect in Connecticut. Based on data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on March 30, 2012,

Connecticut's three month seasonally-adjusted TUR declined to 7.9%, which was below the 8.0 percent threshold to remain "on" for High Unemployment Period (HUP) benefits within the Extended Benefit program. As a result, Extended Benefits were reduced from 20 weeks to 13 weeks. Connecticut was instructed to re-determine claims and notify claimants of remaining entitlement for Extended Benefits. This change abruptly affected 3,308 claimants. Following the HUP Extended Benefit reduction, unemployment claimants in Connecticut were eligible for 86 weeks of unemployment benefits.

In late April, notification was received that as of May 12, 2012, Connecticut no longer meets the criteria to remain "on" for any Extended Benefits. Based on data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on April 20, 2012, Connecticut's current three month average seasonally adjusted TUR is no longer at least 110% of one of the rates from a comparable prior period in one of the three year periods. As a result, this triggers Connecticut "off" of Extended Benefits entirely. This change abruptly affects 9,625 claimants. After May 12, 2012, claimants in Connecticut were eligible for 73 weeks of unemployment benefits. These 73 weeks include:

State UI:	26 weeks
Federal EUC08:	47 weeks

Connecticut expects some potential for additional adjustments after September 9, 2012, however the degree of adjustment is uncertain at this time. It appears the EUC program may be reduced by an additional 10 weeks for newly eligible claimants. Further, unless renewed by Congress, the last day for all EUC payments is January 3, 2013. If no additional Congressional action is taken at that time, claimants will be eligible for a maximum of 26 weeks of unemployment benefits as of January 2013.

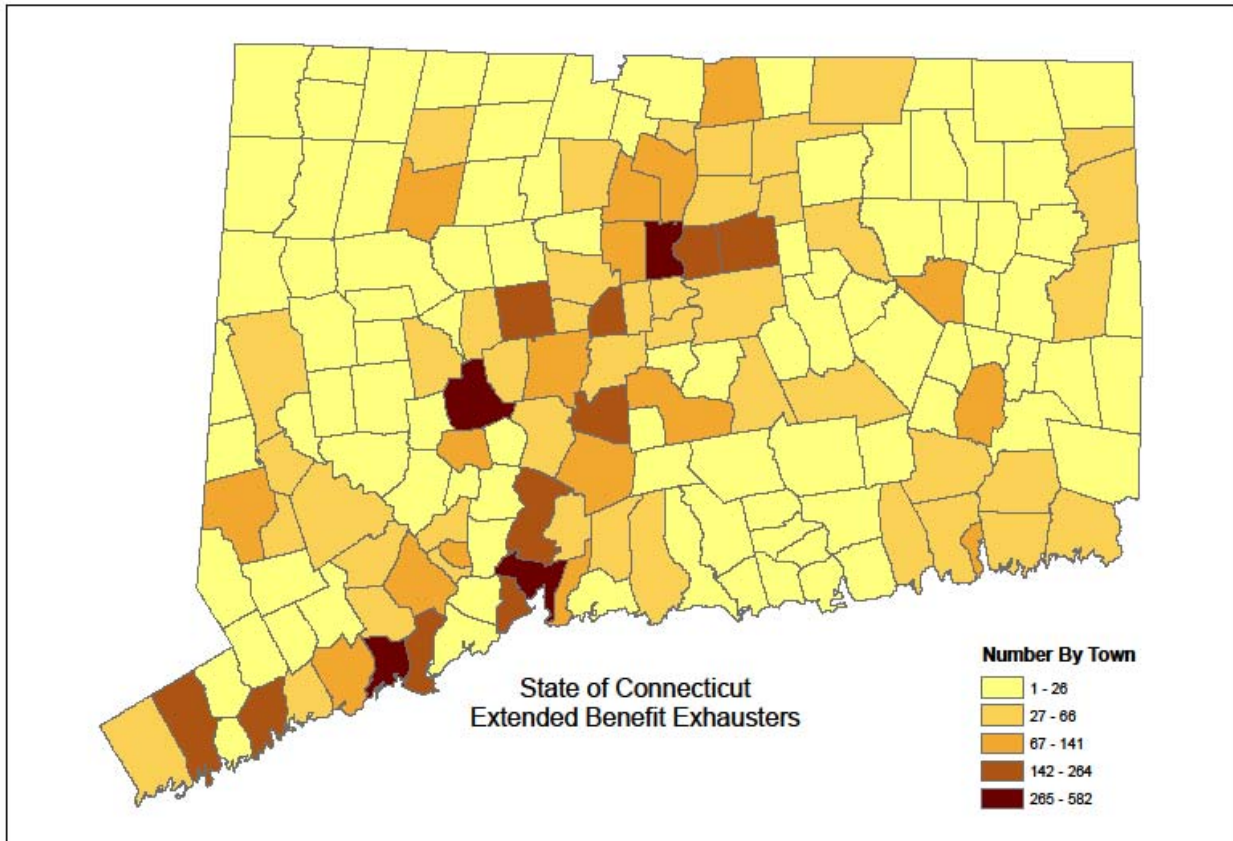
Section 3: Claimants Affected by Extended Benefit Reduction

To reiterate, the Extended Benefit reductions that affected Connecticut claimants in April and May 2012 represent a more abrupt transition than the February EUC benefit reduction. As a result, it is critical to prioritize this cohort of claimants for additional services and connection to safety net benefits.

The Connecticut Department of Labor has identified 12,933 claimants affected by the April and May Extended Benefit reductions. The planning team, comprised of DOL, DSS, United Way 211 and Workforce Investment Board staff, analyzed the geographic distribution of claimants, the number of claimants already connected to employment or support services, and the age ranges of claimants not connected to any service. The analysis informed service projections as well as the development of the service strategy. Important to note, of the 12,933 claimants, 784 live outside of Connecticut. These out-of-state claimants will not be offered additional services at this time. They will be referred to the appropriate agency in their home state.

*Unemployment Insurance Exhaustees:
Connecting Services to those Claimants Affected by the Reduction of Extended Benefits*

The map and tables below show the projected distribution by region of claimants affected by each Extended Benefit reduction. The map represents persons losing benefits in May.



*Unemployment Insurance Exhaustees:
Connecting Services to those Claimants Affected by the Reduction of Extended Benefits*

April 21, 2012 reduction of High Unemployment Period (HUP) benefits

<i>Area:</i>	<i>Number of Claimants Affected:</i>
Bridgeport	560
Danbury	124
Danielson	79
Hartford	491
Meriden	149
Middletown	112
New Britain	238
New Haven	538
New London	146
Norwich	110
Enfield	115
Torrington	68
Waterbury	253
Willimantic	121
Out of State	204
<i>Total:</i>	<i>3,308</i>

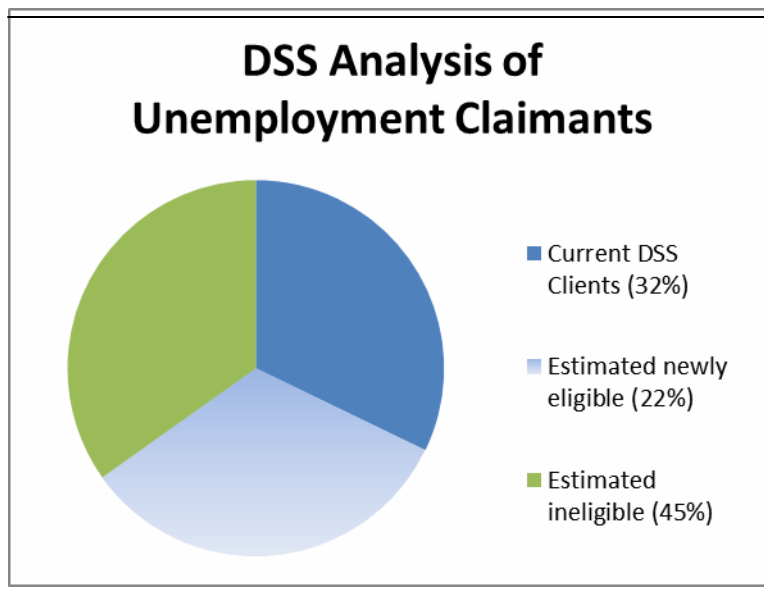
May 12, 2012 elimination of Extended Benefits (EB)

<i>Area:</i>	<i>Number of Claimants Affected:</i>
Bridgeport	1620
Danbury	342
Danielson	246
Hartford	1300
Meriden	442
Middletown	336
New Britain	736
New Haven	1591
New London	410
Norwich	339
Enfield	355
Torrington	220
Waterbury	790
Willimantic	318
Out of State	580
<i>Total:</i>	<i>9625</i>

When examining claimant case records to determine existing linkages to services, the analysis showed 38% of the 12,933 claimants were already connected to One-Stop Employment Services having received Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services, Workforce

Investment Act (WIA) funded workforce training, or Enhanced Reemployment Service (ERS) workshops focused for claimants who may be hardest to reemploy.

Similarly, the DSS analysis of data provided by DOL indicates that DSS is currently serving approximately a third of the individuals facing unexpected loss of unemployment, with a large portion of those receiving SNAP (food stamp) benefits. Of the persons not currently receiving benefits, DSS projects half may become eligible for DSS services due to loss of their unemployment income. The other half may continue to be ineligible due to family circumstances. The projection is consistent with anecdotal evidence from the State of Massachusetts.



Further, CTDOL looked at an age breakdown of claimants not connected to services, since this group is targeted as top priority for assistance. The age breakdown can provide some indication of potential service needs. The table below shows the age range distribution of claimants not connected to services:

Age Range:	Number of Claimants:	% of Total Not Receiving Services:
60 and over	1531	21.7%
50 - 59	1552	22 %
40 – 49	1490	21.1%
30 – 39	1420	20.1%
29 and under	1062	15.1%

While this plan is aimed primarily at the more than 12,000 UI claimants abruptly affected by the “trigger off” of the High Unemployment component of Extended Benefits and the “trigger “off” of the remainder of the Extended Benefit Program, it is important to discuss the broader unemployment exhaustee rate to provide context and illustrate the need for ongoing policy and strategy development to support exhaustees and the systems that serve them.

Section 4: Claimants Exhausting Maximum Benefits

Beginning May 15, 2010 claimants in Connecticut began to exhaust their state and federal unemployment benefits. Approximately 485 claimants have exhausted benefits each week since that time. Anticipating the high rate of benefit exhaustion, CTDOL and partners put in place an outreach and communications plan that remains in effect.

The CTDOL Office of Research projects by the end of December 2012 there will be a total of nearly 100,000 UI exhaustees as a result of the economic downturn. It is further estimated 25,000 of that total will have likely found work, leaving 75,000 without benefits, retired or self employed. The projection was developed utilizing an analysis of average rates of re-employment two quarters after exhaustion. The rate was established by examining pre-claim and post exhaustion wage records. CTDOL can not determine if an individual retired from the labor force or became self employed.

As of January 3, 2013, unless Congressional action is taken, the maximum unemployment benefit in Connecticut will be 26 weeks. The CTDOL Office of Research is working to develop UI exhaustee projections if this is the case.

Many of the plans in place and the strategies contained in this plan will need to be revisited and expanded to address the growing needs at that time. The planning team will meet in early September to assess the impact of the efforts in this plan on both claimants and the service delivery system.

Section 5: Service Strategy

The Department of Labor, Department of Social Services, United Way 211, Connecticut’s five Workforce Investments Boards and the Community Action Agencies have developed a coordinated approach to serving claimants exhausting benefits with a specific emphasis on the more than 12,000 claimants affected by the abrupt trigger “off” of Extended Benefits. Communications have been coordinated so a consistent message can go to the public. The direct service staff has been informed about the service and referral strategy to address the needs of exhaustees.

Exhaustees in need of additional Employment Services support will be directed to the *CTWorks* Career Centers as the point of entry. Exhaustees in need of information about benefits, community services, basic needs assistance and crisis intervention will be

directed to United Way 211 as the first point of contact. The planning team explored the opportunity to co-locate DSS eligibility staff within the *CTWorks* Career Centers, however due to the high volume of unemployed jobseekers and the recently-mandated Reemployment Assessment process for UI claimants collecting federal EUC benefits, the customer volume and space restrictions prohibit the co-location at this time. The planning team will revisit this option when it meets in September as a possible strategy, given the potential for large numbers of exhaustees in December if Congressional action is not taken.

Specific Employment and Social Service strategies follow.

Section 6: Employment Services Strategy (existing resources)

The CT DOL Employment and Training Division is a lead partner in the *CTWorks* One-Stop system. The Employment Services strategy for affected claimants will leverage the services of the CT DOL Employment and Training staff and our *CTWorks* partners led by the five Workforce Investment Boards. Our Workforce Invest Board partners include:

- The WorkPlace Inc. (Southwest)
- Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board
- Workforce Alliance (South Central)
- Capital Workforce Partners (North Central)
- Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board

The CT DOL Employment and Training staff will be prioritizing Extended Benefit exhaustees as they access the *CTWorks* system with an emphasis on engaging the 62% of affected claimants who have not received Employment and Training Services previously. The CT DOL Labor Exchange services provided in *CTWORKS* will be stressed.

These Labor Exchange services include:

Links to Job Opportunities - Office recruitments are scheduled throughout the state. Employers are onsite at *CTWorks* interviewing potential job candidates. Exhaustees with relevant skills will be encouraged to sign up for the recruitments.

Online Job Search and Assessment Tools - Exhaustees will receive assistance with creating and managing an account on *CT.jobs* (CT JobCentral). *CT.jobs* is a free talent bank where job seekers and businesses connect. CT DOL will work with the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to require companies receiving state investment to list job openings on *CT.jobs*—bringing job creation together with unemployed job seekers.

Career and Skill Exploration - Exhaustees can access *My Next Move* to learn more about career options. The tool allows individuals to explore tasks, job skills, salary information

and more. Another available tool is My **Skills My Future** which helps individuals identify occupations that require skills and knowledge similar to a current or previous job.

Free Workshops - Workshops include Résumé Writing, Interviewing Techniques and Job Search Strategies.

A **new** workshop will be offered for exhaustees and other long-term unemployed that teaches jobseekers about new incentives available to employers that may want to hire them. They will gain an understanding of the STEP UP wage reimbursement program, the STEP Up manufacturing training grant program, the Job Expansion Tax Credit and other incentives to hire Veterans and the unemployed. The goal of this workshop will be to determine which incentives job seekers may be eligible for, and how they can market the incentives to employers to get hired.

CTDOL working in collaboration with our Workforce Investment Board and CTWorks partners will link Exhaustees with the following opportunities:

STEP UP Wage Reimbursement and Manufacturing Training Grant Programs - STEP UP was established as part of Connecticut's sweeping JOBS Bill passed in the October 2011 Special Session. The program received funding on January 30, 2012 and was officially launched in mid February 2012. The program provides up to \$12,500 in wage subsidies or training grants to eligible small businesses for hiring unemployed workers. Exhaustees will be pre-qualified for STEP UP so they can inform eligible businesses of the extra benefit in hiring them. As of May 10th 160 unemployed job seekers have been hired by small businesses under the STEP UP programs. The majority of those hired so far have been unemployed for over one year.

State Seasonal Jobs - Governor Malloy has opened up nearly 1200 seasonal job opportunities to the public and encouraged out of work youth and adults to apply. CTDOL is facilitating the identification of candidates for State Departments.

Jobs Funnels - Exhaustees interested in working in the Trades, the Jobs Funnel program provides a pathway to employment and apprenticeships.

Mortgage Crisis Job Training Program - For those exhaustees who may be falling behind in their home mortgage, this innovative program is an opportunity to receive training and support services as an intervention to avoid foreclosure and bring financial stability to the family.

Job Training Opportunities - Our workforce partners offer a wide array of programs, scholarships and employment services for job seekers throughout the state. They have committed to prioritizing services for exhaustees as resources allow.

Platform 2 Employment (P2E) - The P2E program was developed by The WorkPlace, Inc. to address the needs of the long-term unemployed that have exhausted benefits. This

comprehensive program model has been evaluated to show exemplary results in helping the long-term unemployed, many of whom are older workers over 50 years of age, to reenter the job market. P2E was recently featured on 60 Minutes and is a national model.

The model recognizes the deep toll long-term unemployment takes on the finances, emotional well being and career of those out of work. A recent Pew Center study found that of those unemployed six month or more, 46% reported that joblessness has strained family relations, 39% indicate a loss of self respect and 43% stated long term unemployment had a “big impact” on their ability to achieve their long term career goals.

P2E focuses on re-engaging the long term unemployed by providing:

Career Edge - a five week intensive career readiness and confidence building program designed to bring the long term unemployed to a platform of readiness to re-enter the job market. The program uses a multi media interactive learning format.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) - access to behavioral and mental health support using licensed professionals. This program element offers up to 6 individual and family sessions and group sessions with cohort.

Subsidized Internships – an 8 week “try before you buy” period using a staffing agency model. Employers are not required to make the hire.

P2E currently operates in the southwest region of Connecticut exclusively; however, if resources were identified to expand the model to the five comprehensive CTWorks Centers, the Workforce Investment Boards are well positioned to ensure the delivery of the opportunity to this distinct population. The planning team favors an approach where the

Career Edge and **EAP** components of P2E could be leveraged with the STEP UP program allowing the expansion to occur in a more cost efficient manner and largely within existing resources. The identification of resources to pay for the **Career Edge** and **EAP** components is still underway but if feasible would position services for this group of exhaustees as well as those affected beyond January 2013.

Linkage to Support Services - All CTWorks staff will refer affected claimants to United Way 211 for support services as the needs are identified. In order to successfully reenter the workforce, job seekers need a level of effective functioning and stability. As previously stated, DOL and DSS explored the option of collocating DSS benefit eligibility specialists within CTWorks offices; however, due to space and traffic in the offices it was not feasible at this time. All CTWorks staff has been advised as to how to make referrals for support services in accordance with the DSS organized service strategy.

The Eastern and Northwest Workforce Investment Boards have Human Services Integration (HIS) representatives stationed in the CTWorks centers to help identify the

types of support services needed. They act as special liaisons in insuring the proper linkages occur. At this time, resources are not available to expand this strategy to all five workforce regions, however, if resources become available through existing or new Federal or State appropriations, CT DOL would prioritize the expansion of this model to all main *CTWorks Centers*.

Section 7: Social Services Strategy

DSS has developed a comprehensive social services strategy to meet the needs of affected claimants. DSS, United Way 2-1-1, and community action agencies across the state will act as partners to connect people with the help they need.

There are four major components to the DSS plan:

1. Partnership with United Way 2-1-1 as first point of contact for all persons;
2. DSS staff out-stationed at Community Action Agencies statewide;
3. A special “liaison” identified at each DSS office; and
4. Automatic update of the benefits of persons already receiving DSS services.

Plan Overview

The flow diagram following this section maps the process through which individuals will connect to social services and supports.

1. United Way 2-1-1 will be the first point of contact. They will screen callers for benefits for which they may be eligible, and will refer callers to the DSS pathway most appropriate to their needs and preferences, as well as to other community-based supports. 2-1-1 maintains a comprehensive database of 4,600 agencies providing over 48,000 programs and services.

DSS benefits may include:

- SNAP (food stamps)
- Health care coverage (Husky A or B, LIA, Charter Oak, or others)
- Child care assistance
- Other specialized benefits

Non-DSS services may include:

- Basic needs including food, housing, transportation
- Behavioral health services and supports
- Employment assistance
- Other individual and family services

2. The DSS goal is to serve many of the people losing unemployment benefits who choose to complete applications for assistance via our Community Action Agency (CAA) partners. The CAAs have longstanding experience mobilizing community resources for people in need. At locations around the state, the CAAs will have staff available to provide application assistance to persons applying for DSS benefits. DSS will outstation one to two DSS staff at each of these sites to complete the application process and ensure timely receipt of benefits for which a person is eligible.
3. For persons whose applications cannot be processed at the CAAs for technical reasons, we have developed a parallel process within each of our DSS offices around the state. A single "liaison" will receive all application materials and will manage workflow of eligibility staff processing these materials.
4. Lastly, DSS will deploy additional staff to update the records of persons already receiving services from DSS whose benefit amounts must be adjusted due to loss of unemployment income. DSS will communicate this process to clients so that they understand they do not need to schedule an appointment or complete paperwork for this adjustment to occur.

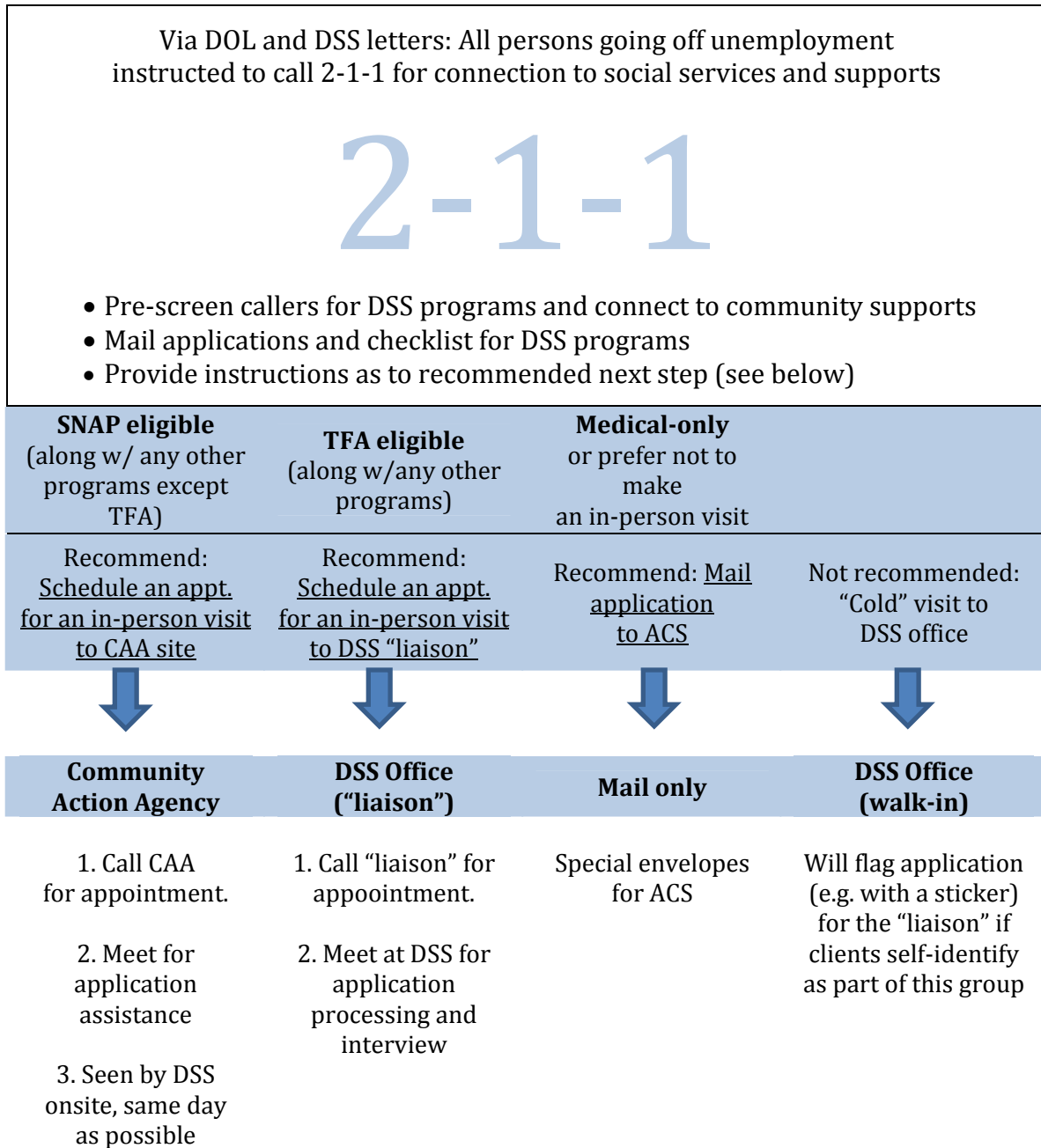
To augment the process identified above, the following additional measures will be in place to ensure smooth implementation and continued forward planning:

The DSS mobile office (computer equipped bus) will be deployed around the state as needed to address high volumes of need or underserved areas. There are workstations for four staff inside the bus and four additional computers that can be used outside weather permitting.

Data will be tracked by DSS and United Way 2-1-1 in order to provide summary statistics on the number of persons losing unemployment benefits who contact 2-1-1 or DSS and the disposition of their cases. DSS will also continue to analyze data that may assist in anticipating and responding to the needs of Connecticut residents.

The DSS plan maps a process to efficiently serve a large additional group of individuals within existing resources. As may be expected, this potentially represents a significant capacity issue to an agency already seriously strained by high caseloads. If additional resources become available, DSS welcomes the opportunity to propose solutions that would amplify our ability to meet the needs of Connecticut residents facing difficult circumstances.

Flow Diagram: Connection to DSS Benefits and Social Supports



Section 8: Communications Plans

On April 24, Governor Malloy issued a press release directing DOL and DSS to submit a plan to address claimants abruptly affected by the end of Extended Benefits. A number of newspapers have carried information about the loss of Extended Benefits including the Hartford Courant, CT Post, New Haven Register, and the New London Day. Website messages and direct mail to affected claimants is also ongoing. The following provides an overview of communication strategies being undertaken by CTDOL and DSS.

1. Identifying Audiences and Messages

Communications have been developed to inform the following audiences: affected claimants, CTDOL Employees, DSS Employees, United Way 2-1-1, the Workforce Investment Boards/other key partners, Legislators, Municipalities and the Media.

CTDOL believes the best strategy in helping claimants is to respond to inquiries with a consistent and compassionate message. In order for staff at both DOL and DSS to consistently and appropriately direct affected claimants to services, the following scripts for employees to assist callers were developed:

- Contact United Way's 2-1-1 infoline program. Please let them know that your Unemployment Extended Benefits have ended. This is a free referral service, with information about workforce programs, community services, basic needs assistance, crisis intervention and much more. 2-1-1 is toll-free from anywhere in Connecticut and it operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service offers multilingual operators and TTY access. You can reach this service by calling 2-1-1 or visit the United Way website at www.211ct.org.
- If you haven't been to one yet, visit a *CTWorks* Career Center. Please let them know your Unemployment Extended Benefits have ended. These Centers offer no-cost workshops, career counselors, resume assistance, computers with Internet access, recruitment events, job postings, referrals and more—all designed to help you with your job search. The Centers can also see if you may be eligible for special training programs, tax credits or employment services offered through community groups. The Centers offer on-site recruitment events—a list of scheduled events can be found at: <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/ctworks/pos-recruit.html>.
- Visit *CT JobCentral*, which provides a no-cost electronic job bank. You can post your resume, search for jobs, access career sites, research companies, and review interview tips. Access CT JobCentral at: <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/progsupt/jobsrvce/BackToWork.htm>.
- Information regarding the Subsidized Employment and Training Program (Step Up), summer and seasonal jobs at state agencies that are open to all jobseekers, and the

Veterans Manufacturing and Trades Job Match Program can be found on the main page of the Labor Department's web site at www.ct.gov/dol.

2. Specific Communications to Claimants

- April 8 - Message posted to internet and Integrated Voice Response System (IVR) continued claim applications advising all continued claim filers of the end of High Unemployment Benefits. The message remained in effect through April 29.
- April 13 - Letter sent to all 12,933 Extended Benefits claimants notifying them of the end of the High Unemployment Benefit. Letter included United Way 211 and CTWorks information.
- April 29 - Message posted to the internet and IVR continued claim applications advising filers of the end of all Extended Benefits with week ending May 12.
- April (ongoing) - Messages posted to DOL homepage.
- April 8 - Updates to Extended Benefits FAQ's

3. Specific Communications for CTDOL staff

- April 3 - Email correspondence was sent to DOL supervisory staff to disseminate to staff regarding the triggering "off" of High Unemployment Extended Benefits. Protocol on message and referral was distributed.
- April 25 - Email correspondence was sent to DOL staff to remind them of the High Unemployment end and to notify staff that all Extended Benefits will end effective weekending May 12
- May 11- Follow up email to staff reminding them of the end of Extended Benefits and the process for referring claimants in need of additional employment or support services.

4. Additional Strategies/Resources

- Ongoing CTDOL internal communications about situation and deployment of resources.
- Updated information on website.
- Mailings to claimants with updated information
- News releases/media outreach (TBD in coordination with Governor's Office, DSS)

DSS Communication Plan

1. Strategic points

Because it is critical to develop and deploy a consistent message to unemployed residents who were not expecting to exhaust their benefits, DSS intends to use DOL-developed content to complement DSS content in communication with affected individuals and with service partners. This DOL content may include:

- Letters to be sent by DOL to affected persons (incorporating DSS content);
- Other external communications about the continuing situation with individuals unexpectedly losing unemployment benefits;
- DOL materials so that the messages are consistent at 2-1-1, within DSS Interactive Voice Response system and offices, and other service partners; and
- FAQs

DSS content will assist the affected individuals by ***offering specific information and referral to the social service system and available programs***

- The linchpin of DSS communications will be referral of individuals to Connecticut's statewide information and referral service – 2-1-1 Infoline (United Way of Connecticut contractor/service partner) for ***service information and application instructions***, in conjunction with the Community Action Agency network.
- 2-1-1 staff will conduct initial screening for eligibility and refer individuals further, according to the application assistance and processing plan.

2. Tactical measures > linking individuals to social services

Overarching principle – information provided through following channels/measures will be fully coordinated across DSS, DOL and partners; in other words, approved core information is consistent, while adaptable in form to different channels/measures.

- **Direct contact:** Letters - Either with expanded DSS content in DOL's letters, or sent directly by DSS
 - Option 1 – expanded DSS/2-1-1 information/referral, combined with DOL content (next 'wave' of letters and ensuing letters *sent by DOL*);
 - Option 2 - DSS stand-alone letter, *either mailed by DSS from DOL file; or mailed by DOL* on behalf of DSS to the 11,000 claimants who received DOL letter during week of 4/30/12, and going forward as additional option for future 'waves' of individuals notified;

- Option 3 – Combination of above.
- **Internet resources and links**
 - Building and coordination of DSS/2-1-1 content with CTDOL web posting
 - Posting on DSS website as a dedicated section to advise individuals of available DSS programs and how to access them
 - easy access and streamlined URL address;
 - links to sites at DOL, 2-1-1 Infoline, CAAs, overall State of CT, etc.
- **Email blasts to key informants -- human services organizations/partners, municipal/legislative offices**
 - Sharing information and talking points with key informants to ensure common approach of assisting individuals
 - Coordinate with key-informant information from strategic partners DOL, 2-1-1 Infoline, CAAs/CAFCA.
- **DSS internal communications about situation and deployment of resources**
- **News releases/media outreach (TBD in coordination with Governor's Office, DOL)**

3. Key Messaging Components

- Acknowledge problem with empathy and positive information about available services;
- 'Help that feels like help';
- Referral to 2-1-1 for information about programs/services and how to access them;
- Referral to CAA system for application assistance;
- Referral to DOL CTWorks Career Centers for employment-related services (depending on DOL preference).