

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SERVICES  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
FY 2020-2023 (JULY 1, 2019, THROUGH JUNE 30, 2022)**

**Quality of Life Result**

Wyoming enjoys a skilled and self-sufficient workforce that acts to empower both employers and employees to pursue an improved quality of life for Wyoming citizens.

**Contributions to Wyoming Quality of Life**

The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS, Agency, or Department) contributes to Wyoming's quality of life through the following methods:

- It responds to the needs of its Wyoming constituency
- It is a responsible steward of state assets and taxpayer funds
- It helps in developing a diverse Wyoming economy to ensure liveable incomes and equal opportunity for the Wyoming workforce
- It provides education and information in support of Wyoming citizens, businesses, and communities to help ensure long-term success
- It supports a safe and healthy environment for Wyoming families

**Primary Functions**

The Department has 557 authorized positions in 20 full-time field offices, with seven part-time outreach locations throughout the State. These offices represent 30 Wyoming communities. The executive leadership of the Agency is comprised of the Director, Deputy Director (currently vacant), Chief Financial Officer, and three Administrators from the Agency's primary divisions: 1) Workforce Standards; 2) Policy, Research, & Communications; and 3) Workforce Programs. The Office of the Mine Inspector, Human Resources Division, Fiscal Division, and Strategic Planning Program fall under the Office of the Director.

The Department will undergo substantial office location changes over the next two to three years. Four Cheyenne offices will combine to one central location by October 2019. Over the next two to three years, four DWS locations in Casper will also merge to a single office location. These mergers will offer a valuable opportunity to reduce agency silos, encourage collaboration, and improve customer service to the citizens of Wyoming.

The Department operates with a combined 2019-2020 Biennium Budget of \$162,961,832 of which \$20,926,850 (12.84%) are general funds, \$74,026,212 (45.43%) are federal funds and \$68,008,770 (41.73%) are other funds.

**Programs:**

Department programs place emphasis on the following core functions:

1. **Benefit payments:** Financial and social stabilization of injured and/or unemployed and/or disabled individuals to ensure continued quality of life, and medical and indemnity benefits for injured and disabled workers.
2. **Revenue collections:** Initiating employer registration and collection of payroll information to ensure proper remittance of workers' compensation and unemployment insurance premiums, and data capture to provide accurate labor market information.
3. **Employee Career Guidance and Training:** Assistance in assessing skills, interests, and aptitudes to establish solid career pathways for all of Wyoming's workforce. Create and implement programs focused on skills development for placement, retention, and wage progression/career advancement.
4. **Employer Employment and Recruitment:** Assistance in job placement, retention, advertisement, and recruitment. Connect individual job seekers with employers who have identified specific skills and qualifications.
5. **Rehabilitation:** Assist clients with disabilities to acquire and retain employment through specialized assessment, vocational counseling and guidance, physical and mental restoration, training, job placement and professional development.
6. **Regulatory and Compliance Enforcement:** Investigation of wage claims and fair employment assurance; inspection of all mines and quarries; and monitoring of workplace-related fatalities, injuries, and illnesses through inspection, consultation, training, and compliance.
7. **Communication and Education:** Collect data to provide accurate labor market information and monitor labor trends to assist with economic and workforce development. Collect and report information on work-related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities.
8. **Collaboration:** Administer and collaborate with numerous other agencies, councils, and teams to carry out Governor-promoted initiatives and state and federal legislative mandates.

### **Agency Performance:**

The Department hired a Strategic Planning Manager in July 2017, to implement a strategic planning initiative. This position was recently refilled due to a retirement, and those strategic planning efforts are ongoing.

Department leadership (Director and Administrators) will meet this Fall (2019) to establish the vision, mission, and values that will guide the Agency into the future. This process will be

guided by public input and through Agency employees, who will be prompted to provide feedback to leadership through the goal-setting process. The Department recently began work to conduct a stakeholder and employee survey across the state. This survey will elicit information on customer satisfaction among employers, individuals, job seekers, and claimants served by the Department in the last two years. All Agency employees will also receive a survey to assess job satisfaction. Tentatively, the surveys will be completed by November 2019. The results will assist the Agency to create a Strategic Plan supported by both constituent and employee feedback. These efforts represent a comprehensive approach to ensure the strategic direction of the Agency addresses internal and external efforts.

After the vision, mission, and values are established, the Agency plans to create a Strategic Planning Task Force (Task Force) comprised of program managers across the Agency. This group, in consultation with Department leadership, will establish Agency goals to be executed over the next three to five years. After goal establishment, the Task Force will consult with Agency supervisors to gather feedback from employees in the field on strategies to meet the established goals. This ensures a well-rounded approach to strategy establishment based on the individual job duties and expertise of employees. All strategies provided will be considered by the Task Force to create a list of achievable initiatives. After strategies are finalized with Agency leadership, Task Force members will begin work with their respective programs to create a program specific implementation plan. Implementation plans will include projects to achieve Agency strategies, ultimately guided by the established vision, mission, values, and goals. Reasonable timelines and measurables will be established in the various implementation plans. It is the desired goal that initiatives at the project level will be directly connected to employee PMI goals.

The Department will submit a report outlining the goals and strategies to the Governor's Office by August 2020. Implementation plans will be submitted for leadership review by late Fall 2020. Task Force members will be instructed to ensure implementation plans are on track on a quarterly basis. The approach to the Strategic Plan is a fluid one, allowing flexibility if a project needs to be adjusted. The Task Force will meet annually in the Fall through the duration of the plan to discuss progress, and begin pre-work for the next Strategic Plan.

### **Performance Measures:**

The following outlines what each division intends to carry out for this strategic time frame and demonstrates accountability and commitment to the citizens of Wyoming to comply with Wyo. Stat. Ann. §§ 28-1-115 through 116.

As aforementioned, each program will be responsible for defining and executing specific strategies, projects, and measurables related to their area that align with the organizational goals

established in the Strategic Plan. Implementing strategies and measuring results will help each division:

1. Improve customer service
2. Develop and care for employees
3. Show good stewardship of resources
4. Refine internal processes

Upon plan establishment, program level implementation plans will help hold Division Administrators accountable as they carry out their responsibilities. The Department will create a public facing document that outlines the established vision, mission, values, and goals to the constituency. This document will also include several sample strategies to support each goal. The intention of this outward facing document is to share the Department's direction in the established timeframe of the plan. This document will be posted to the Agency website, and will also be available in print at DWS locations across the state. Although program-specific implementation plans will not be publicly posted, they will be available upon request through the public records request process. Upon plan completion, DWS will provide a comprehensive snapshot of the Strategic Plan to the budget division and Governor's Office.

## **ESTABLISHING A TRAINED WORKFORCE AND CONNECTING JOB SEEKERS WITH JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Story Behind the Last Year of Performance:**

Workforce Centers located throughout the state assist in carrying out the various components of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) including helping employers and employees with employment opportunities. The Department has a number of programs and services available for individuals looking for employment throughout the state, including those individuals who have been laid off, disabled, unemployed or simply want to change career paths.

Various training and employment search programs are offered through the Department. The WIOA, which became effective July 1, 2015, was adopted to meet the needs of employment seekers and businesses in the 21st Century. Some of the services provided under WIOA include: assessing skill levels and abilities; developing individual employment plans; training in occupational skills including on-the-job; and training in high demand, high growth occupations. Pre-hire training grants from the Workforce Development Training Fund have provided for an expanded skill set among Wyoming's workforce, leading to further opportunity. In addition, the Wyoming Quality Counts Program provides scholarships, grants, and training to Wyoming's early childhood industry, increasing skills, certification acquisition, and degree attainment for the early childhood workforce.

Heightened awareness of Veterans and persons with disabilities coupled with outreach campaigns extolling their value as workers has also driven the Department's success in job placement. Collaborative efforts between Workers' Compensation Division and Vocational Rehabilitation Division have continued to increase. Workers' Compensation claimants receiving

permanent or temporary disability benefits are referred to the Vocational Rehabilitation Division to assist workers with acquired disabilities in regaining employment.

### **What Do You Propose To Do To Improve Performance in FY 2020-2023?**

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each state must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the U.S. Secretary of Labor that outlines a four-year workforce development strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly funded workforce system is a national network of federal, state, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services. These efforts support jobseekers to secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

#### **A. Unified State Plan.**

The State of Wyoming has elected to develop and submit a four-year Unified State Plan to foster better alignment of federal investments in job training, integrate service delivery across programs, improve efficiency in service delivery to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. The Unified State Plan will help promote a shared understanding of the workforce needs of the State of Wyoming and foster the development of a comprehensive and integrated approach, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers.

The Unified State Plan includes six core programs including the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education, Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Programs. The following identifies programs under WIOA.

1. One-Stop Workforce Center system. In the next few years, the One-Stop system will continue to align the core programs mentioned above. The One-Stop system will integrate services to truly be a one-stop for youth and adults, with and without barriers, to ensure all Wyomingites are provided with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to achieve gainful, meaningful employment. Wyoming's partners within workforce development, education, and employment will provide integrated and comprehensive services to include access to basic literacy, postsecondary education, career and technical education, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities.
2. Wyoming Grown/Sector Strategies. Data from Wyoming employers will be used to identify skill gaps for training purposes, recruit and retain Wyoming's home-grown talent both currently in and out of state, and develop sector strategies through various industry partnerships to ensure employer needs are met while helping to diversify Wyoming's economy.
3. Apprenticeship Development. To address employer needs, registered apprenticeship programs will be used for businesses and sponsors to recruit and train highly-skilled

workers. The apprenticeship model allows businesses to customize worker training, resulting in a workforce that is fully proficient and trained to the employer's specifications.

Benefits of using the Registered Apprenticeship program include:

- Reducing worker turnover
- Increasing productivity
- Improving the bottom line

Additionally, Registered Apprenticeship Programs provide a nationally recognized document of completion for the individual participants.

1. Career pathways programs. Career pathways programs offer a clear sequence of education coursework and/or training credentials aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies. As a state-wide system, this approach develops a skilled workforce by increasing the number of workers gaining industry-recognized and academic credentials to work in high demand occupations.
2. Employee Training. The Workforce Development Training Fund will continue to assist employers by offering three different types of grants that address workforce training needs. These grants are: 1) Business Training Grants; 2) Pre-Hiring Economic Development Grants; and 3) Pre-Obligation Grants. Business Training Grants fund skill upgrades for existing employees. Pre-Hiring Economic Development Grants are designed to train workers in a particular business or industry. Pre-Obligation Grants help fund large relocation or expansion projects allowing economic developers to develop or expand businesses in Wyoming. These grants will continue to be offered to employers. In addition to the above noted grant programs, the Wyoming Development Training Fund Program has developed and implemented a rule set to promote Registered Apprenticeships utilizing state funding.
3. Veterans Program. The Veteran Program offers employment and training services to veterans from all branches of the military on a Priority of Service basis (the right of eligible covered individuals takes precedence over eligible non-covered individuals). Outreach and assistance to veterans will continue to be a priority.
4. Workers' Compensation/Vocational Rehabilitation. The Workers' Compensation and Vocational Rehabilitation Divisions will continue to increase their collaborations to assist employers injured on the job with training needs. Vocational Rehabilitation helps individuals with disabilities establish and reach vocational goals that help them become productive, working citizens.

DWS will continue to implement all the components of WIOA mentioned above while supporting the following:

- Wyoming Workforce Development Council (WWDC) efforts
- Regional Next Generation Sector Partnerships (statewide initiative of the WWDC)
- ENDOW
- Educational Attainment Council

As a result, the implementation of WIOA promises to provide increased awareness of and accessibility to the services provided by DWS. Partnerships with community-based vocational training and job skills services, such as Job Corps, and collaborative efforts with the state Department of Corrections aimed at pre-release offenders will further expand the knowledge base and skill set of the State's workforce. The continued expansion of the Wyoming Grown program as a means to recruit highly-skilled workers to further-diversify the state's economy and workforce is also a key strategy in DWS' future to further increase overall job placement, as well as the state's larger economic development and diversification efforts.

#### Rapid Response to Mine Closures in Wyoming's Northeast Region

In recent months, major layoffs caused by the closure of several mines near Gillette, Wyoming resulted in a significant rise in unemployment in the area. To date, 580 workers lost their jobs as a result of the closures. Of the 580, the Department has been in contact with 460 displaced workers. To assist in rapid response efforts, the Department assembled a team to create a strategic plan specific to addressing the complex needs of the workforce in this area. In August 2019, the team established the framework for this plan, including a vision, mission, goals, and strategies to meet the short and long-term needs of the impacted population. By the end of September 2019, the team will establish measurable projects to connect with each strategy for immediate implementation. A general outline of the plan is as follows:

##### **VISION:**

Wyoming (Northeast Region) will have a skilled and diverse workforce, creating opportunities for employers and employees, maintaining a high quality of life sustainable over changing economic conditions.

##### **MISSION:**

We provide Wyoming's workers with the information they need to get the assistance they require in a crisis, plan for a better future, and transition to a stable career.

##### **GOALS:**

Goal #1: Develop and strengthen internal and external training strategies

Goal #2: Develop and strengthen internal and external partnerships to optimize synchronization

Goal #3: Develop a communications plan that addresses both internal and external audiences and needs with various mechanisms

Goal #4: Develop strategies to streamline collection of relevant data

Through this strategic effort, the Department plans to prepare the impacted workforce to achieve a sustainable career path in light of changing industry and a rapidly evolving Wyoming economy. Keeping those affected in the State by providing long-term employment and skill training solutions is a significant motivator of the strategic plan.

## **IMPROVING WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR WYOMING WORKERS**

### **Story Behind the Last Year of Performance:**

The Department's Workers' Compensation Safety and Risk (WCSR) Program, Wyoming Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Mine Inspection and Safety Office, and the State Occupational Epidemiologist all advocate for a healthy and safe workplace. The following explains the high-level roles of each.

#### Workers' Compensation Safety and Risk

The WCSR Program was created in April 2016, after reorganizing positions in the Department into two sections: 1) Safety Division; and 2) Risk Management. In the Safety Division, Safety Specialists provide health and safety consultation, hazard identification, and hazard reduction plans to Wyoming's employers. The Risk Management Team assists employers by presenting them with valuable information including:

- Business injury trends
- Workers' compensation premiums across industries
- Return-to-work strategies for employees
- Methods to reduce premiums.

The WCSR Program fosters open communication and positive relationships with employers by providing online and classroom training, safety and workplace discount programs, and workplace safety contracts.

Safety Specialists within WCSR conduct comprehensive on-site visits to employers throughout the State. These visits are limited to employers who are in good standing with Wyoming Workers' Compensation. WCSR identifies and abates hazards, provides training on health and



safety topics, provides Industrial Hygiene Services, promotes all discounts and services provided by Workers' Compensation, and applies the Health and Safety Consultation Discount to DWS customers.

WCSR reaches out monthly to new employers who enter the Workers' Compensation system. WCSR is also involved with various health and safety coalitions throughout the State.

### Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Wyoming OSHA adopts and incorporates Federal OSHA statutes, rules, and regulations, and has the authority to enact additional worksite protections that are effective or necessary for employers in Wyoming. In addition, the Program has the ability to work with employers on penalties. Money from penalties remain in the State, where they are allocated to the school districts.

Wyoming OSHA is comprised of two sections: 1) Compliance and Consultation; and 2) Compliance Assistance. The Enforcement program enforces safety and health standards in private and public industry workplaces, investigates complaints, fatalities and catastrophes, safety and health whistleblower discrimination complaints for private, state, and local government, and provides public sector outreach services. The Consultation program provides free, confidential consultation services and empowers private sector employers to improve safety and health in their workplaces. Through the development of strong working relationships, Consultation provides employers with services designed to help them implement and maintain effective safety and health management systems, and ultimately become self-sufficient in managing those systems.

In addition, Wyoming OSHA has three prestige programs to celebrate safety and health excellence within the State, which are managed by either Consultation or Compliance Assistance. The three prestige programs are SHARP-Safety & Health Achievement Recognition Program, VPP--Voluntary Protection Program, and EVTAP-Employer Voluntary Technical Assistance Program. The programs are available to those who achieve high safety standards--low EMR, low TRC/DART rates, etc. To be in these programs, the employer has to demonstrate its commitment to safety over a period of time. These employers are often recognized at the Federal level for their safety culture.

### State Mine Inspector's Office

The State Mine Inspector's Office is led by the State Mine Inspector. The responsibility of this office is to administer state statutes pertaining to the health and safety of miners. Pursuant to these Statutes, each mining operation in the State is inspected for compliance several times each year. All fatal or serious accidents are investigated, as are complaints by employees related to unsafe working conditions. State Statute also created the Mining Council, composed of ten members and the State Mine Inspector. The membership consists of five management and five hourly representatives from various types of mining operations. The members of the Council act

in conjunction with the State Mine Inspector to improve the health and safety in Wyoming's mines. The State Mining Council is also responsible for the certification of underground and surface mine foreman and mine examiners as required by statute.

### State Occupational Epidemiologist

The State Occupational Epidemiologist continues to work toward the mission of reducing work-related injury and illness in Wyoming. This office complements the federally-required occupational injury reporting done by the DWS Research and Planning Unit. Epidemiology data and conclusions are widely disseminated through online reports and presentations.

Fatal occupational injury tracking requires collection and synthesis of data from multiple state and federal agencies and systems, including Workers' Compensation, OSHA, vital statistics, county coroners, and the Wyoming Department of Transportation. The most recent epidemiology report, *Work-Related Fatal Injuries in Wyoming 2012-2017*, was published in December 2018, and highlighted several key opportunities to reduce occupational fatalities in Wyoming. These include:

- Seeking improvements in driver safety and increasing seat belt use for all industries, especially trucking and the oil and gas extraction industries. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among oil and gas extraction and production workers, accounting for 46% of workplace deaths in those industries (excluding commuting crashes). Regarding all work-related motor vehicle crashes among all industries, 37% of victims were not using a seatbelt at the time of crash
- Developing all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and utility-task vehicle (UTV) safety in Wyoming, especially in ranching. Between 2012-2017, seven of eight fatal work-related ATV/UTV crashes occurred on ranches and ATV/UTV crashes were a leading cause of death among agricultural industry workers
- Expanding employer uptake of health and safety programs in the workplace, with an emphasis on obtaining and implementing proper training for employees. Nearly every occupational fatality investigated by OSHA cites lack of training as a significant contributing factor.

### Wyoming Medical Commission

The Wyoming Medical Commission is a statutorily mandated hearing unit comprised of Governor-appointed medical professionals who conduct hearings to decide medically complex workers' compensation issues. The Commission is staffed by an Executive Secretary a paralegal and a secretary who are Workers' Compensation Division employees. The Commission contracts with attorneys to serve as Hearing Examiners and provide legal guidance to the Commission members in carrying out their duties. Commission members are not employees of the Division; however, they are reimbursed for their services and related travel expenses from the Workers' Compensation Industrial Accident Fund.

## **What Do You Propose To Do To Improve Performance in FY 2020-2023?**

### Workers' Compensation Safety and Risk

WCSR will continue to reach out to employers, both in person and via video chat, to assist them in enrolling in the safety and drug-free workplace discount programs. They also continue to offer workplace safety contracts and issue employer grants.

### Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Wyoming OSHA's Compliance Officers inspect employer workplaces and investigate all jurisdictional workplace fatalities. They will continue to document rule violations, issue initial penalties, and collect penalty fines. OSHA's Consultation/Compliance Assistance will continue to provide formal and informal training related to safety topics. They will conduct on-site employer visits for the purpose of identifying and abating workplace hazards, as well as administer the premium discount program.

### The State Mine Inspector

The State Mine Inspector will continue to work to improve the health and safety of mines in the state. An annual report (calendar year) is prepared and posted on the DWS website.

### State Occupational Epidemiologist

The State Occupational Epidemiologist continues to develop and expand state capacity for occupational health surveillance and research, which efforts include:

- In collaboration with the WDH and DEQ, publish a bulletin describing risk factors for occupational ozone exposure in the Upper Green River Basin.
- Host a graduate-level intern to collect and report the national Occupational Health Indicator (OHI) data for Wyoming. This OHI data has not been compiled for Wyoming since 2009 and can be used as a benchmark against national estimates.
- Contribute to a national, multi-state initiative to examine workers' compensation claims for oil and gas extraction workers. This effort is being led by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and will result in a white paper describing claims by state, severity, cost and other factors for eight states (AK, CO, LA, MT, NM, TX, OH, WY).
- Contribute to a multi-state initiative to describe western region occupational fatalities. This effort is also being led by NIOSH and will result in a peer-reviewed publication describing regional trends and contributing factors of occupational fatalities for every state in the West.

The State Occupational Epidemiologist will continue to fill gaps in the scope of existing programs and resources within the state. The office will continue to serve as a collaborative

partner and advisor to internal DWS safety programs and external industry safety alliances and injury prevention groups throughout Wyoming. The office will also provide tailored presentations on various occupational risks and emerging issues, respond to requests for data or information, and help partners connect with relevant resources or strategic initiatives throughout the State. This office will also continue to represent the interests of state agencies and Wyoming interests on the advisory board for the Western Region Center for Total Worker Health at the University of Colorado, the NIOSH National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Sector Council for Oil and Gas Extraction, and the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Occupational Health Leadership Committee.

### Wyoming Medical Commission

Currently, it takes an average of 18 to 24 months for case completion, which acts to the detriment of injured workers due to delays in obtaining their benefits. To that end, recent changes in scheduling and docketing procedures, as well as the addition of two additional contract hearing examiners (4 total), should increase the rate of hearing closures and the level of customer service provided.

## **SUPPORTING WYOMING EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS**

### **Story Behind the Last Year of Performance:**

#### Labor Standards

The Department's Labor Standards Division is mandated to enforce all federal laws and those state laws enacted by the Legislature relating to labor for the protection of Wyoming employers and employees. There are four major programs within Labor Standards including: 1) Fair Employment (workplace discrimination); 2) Wage and Hour; Resident Labor and Contractor Preference; 3) State Prevailing Wage Rate; and 4) Child Labor.

#### Unemployment Insurance

The Unemployment Insurance Division collects unemployment tax from employers to provide unemployment insurance to individuals who qualify for benefits. The Unemployment Insurance Division is responsible for: 1) processing employer registrations and quarterly reporting; 2) paying benefits to employees; 3) conducting audits of employers to assure compliance with laws; and 4) handling lower level appeals. Higher level appeals are heard by a three-member appointed commission which meets monthly. Unemployment Insurance also provides the Unemployment Insurance Benefits and Contributions Computer Program System, which employers use to register their businesses, file quarterly reports, and receive certificates of good standing. Laid off employees or claimants can file their initial claim, certify weekly claims, and check the status of claims, including payments received on this system. Both claimants and employers have the right to appeal decisions regarding unemployment insurance claims.

### Workers' Compensation

The Workers' Compensation Program assists employers and employees in Wyoming. Most employers engaging in work in Wyoming are required to register with Workers' Compensation and pay premiums for their employees per guidelines established by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The Workers' Compensation Program also helps employees who suffer a work-related injury with monetary assistance including payment of medical bills and other injury-related expenses. The goal of the program is to help the employee recover from their injuries and assist them in returning to work. Medical providers, injured workers, and employers can access their workers' compensation information online through the Provider, Injured Worker, Employer Resource System (PIERS) Portal. In addition, the program assists employers as mentioned under the previous section in "Improving Workplace Health and Safety for Workers."

### Disability Determination Services

Wyoming Disability Determination Services (DDS) is responsible for determining the eligibility of Wyoming disability applicants (claimants) to receive monetary disability benefits in a timely and accurate manner. DDS makes medical determinations for social security disability insurance claims (SSDI) and/or supplemental security income (SSI) disability claims. The Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) at 20 CFR 404.1503 requires state agencies to make disability and blindness determinations for people living in the State.

## **What Do You Propose To Do To Improve Performance in FY 2020-2023?**

### Labor Standards

The Department's Labor Standards continues to enforce all laws enacted by the Legislature relating to labor for the protection of Wyoming employers and workers. Labor Standards will continue to serve employees, employers, and the general public of the State of Wyoming through its five major programs.

The Fair Employment and Wage and Hour Programs will continue to work on enforcing laws enacted by the Legislature. The Resident Labor and Contractor Preference Program will continue to certify resident contractors and conduct on-site inspections to determine contractors' Wyoming residency status. The State Prevailing Wage Rate Program will continue to contract and conduct the annual State Prevailing Wage study and educate employers from the building and highway construction industries on the legal obligations.

### Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment Insurance (UI) continues to collect unemployment tax from employers in order to provide unemployment insurance to individuals who qualify for benefits. UI will continue to process employer registrations and quarterly reports, pay benefits to employees, conduct audits of employers to assure compliance with laws, and handle lower level appeals. Higher level

appeals will continue to be heard by a three-member appointed commission which will meet monthly.

UI will continue to make prompt payments to laid-off clients or claimants, monitor key performance measures mandated by federal oversight, and prepare the State Quality Service Plan, a federally required annual report. UI also provides the Unemployment Insurance Benefits and Contributions Computer Program System which employers use to register their businesses, file quarterly reports and receive certificates of good standing. Laid off employees or claimants can file their initial claim, certify weekly claims, and check the status of claims, including payments received. Both claimants and employers can appeal decisions regarding unemployment insurance claims.

In May 2019, UI completed a modernized system (WYUI) that replaced the decades-old UI computer infrastructure. This project was funded with federal grants. WYUI is hosted in Microsoft's Azure cloud, is compatible with current technology, and provides self-service options to unemployed citizens and businesses that pay UI premiums. WYUI is under warranty with the build vendor until May 2020 to address problems and issues with the system, and to perform maintenance.

#### Workers' Compensation

Workers' Compensation (WC) will continue to assist both employers and employees by continuing to register all employers and collect premiums to pay claims by employees hurt on the job. These claim payments provide monetary assistance to help with medical bills and other injury related costs.

The Safety Discount Program within WC offers escalating discounts of up to 10% on premiums paid by employers for the implementation of documented health and safety programs/committees in their workplaces. The result of the Discount Program will decrease premiums paid by employers, and continue to save millions in claims costs.

#### Disability Determination Services

Wyoming Disability Determination Services (DDS) determines the eligibility of disability applicants (claimants) of Wyoming to receive monetary disability benefits in a timely and accurate manner. The DDS makes medical determinations for social security disability insurance claims (SSDI) and/or supplemental security income (SSI) disability claims. 20 CFR 404.1503 requires state agencies make disability and blindness determinations for people living in the State. The DDS will continue to report key metrics set at the federal level for both SSDI and SSI claims including; processing time, accuracy, and production per work-year (PPWY) – the number of claims disposed of and the resources used to obtain the dispositions. DDS will also continue to report on the amount of benefits paid, monthly and annually.