



# SIDES and SIDES E-Response Frequently Asked Questions

## *What are SIDES and SIDES E-Response?*

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Developed through a strategic partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) and state unemployment insurance (UI) agencies, the State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES) and SIDES E-Response offer employers and third-party administrators (TPAs) a **secure, electronic and nationally-**

**standardized format** to better anticipate and supply the data needed for **responding to UI information requests. FREE OF CHARGE!**

## *What are the differences between SIDES and SIDES E-Response?*

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**SIDES E-Response** is a website that provides an easy and efficient way to respond to UI information requests from state UI agencies.

**SIDES** is a more automated data-exchange interface between employers' IT systems and SIDES. It is designed for employers and TPAs who typically deal with more than 30 UI information requests per week or those operating in multiple states.

## *What kind of information is exchanged through SIDES and SIDES E-Response?*

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UI information related to job separation, earnings verification as well as monetary and potential UI benefit charges.

## *What are the benefits of using SIDES or SIDES E-Response?*

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SIDES and SIDES E-Response give employers and TPAs an electronic way to simplify and streamline responses to UI information requests, saving time, staff time, and money by:

- Eliminating delays related to paper mail delivery
- Allowing more time to gather information and respond timely
- Ensuring more complete information is provided through standard edits, validations and business rules,
- Reducing paper handling and postage costs
- Reducing follow-up phone calls
- Streamlining UI response processes

As a result, improper payments are prevented, and employer **UI tax rates are kept as low as possible.**

## *Who administers SIDES and SIDES E-Response?*

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SIDES and SIDES E-Response are administered by participating state UI agencies.

## *What are the requirements to use SIDES and SIDES E-Response?*

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SIDES E-Response requires only a working internet connection and an employee who will enter the needed information.

SIDES requires programming to connect an employer's or TPA's internal IT system to the SIDES central broker.

# SIDES and SIDES E-Response Frequently Asked Questions

## *How much does it cost to integrate an employer's or TPA's IT system with SIDES?*

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Employers and TPAs will need to assess the cost of integrating their IT system with SIDES. The cost will depend on an employer's or TPA's existing system design. SIDES was developed using open source design and follows industry standards.

## *How much does it cost to use SIDES and SIDES E-Response?*

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Both systems are offered **free of charge** to employers and TPAs, although there will be internal IT system development costs to integrate SIDES.

## *How secure are SIDES and SIDES E-Response?*

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Both SIDES and SIDES E-Response have multiple layers of security. SIDES E-Response uses secure communication protocols, and SIDES requires authentication certificates and uses encrypted records and files. The highest standard of security is important given the sensitive data exchanged between state UI agencies and employers and TPAs.

## *Which states have adopted SIDES and SIDES E-Response?*

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As of June 30, 2015, 46 states are using SIDES and SIDES E-Response. By March 2016 Alaska, Connecticut, Indiana, and Virginia will be live. To find out if your state is participating, please visit <http://info.uisides.org>.

## *What UI system was in place before SIDES and SIDES E-Response?*

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Before SIDES and SIDES E-Response, state UI agencies requested information from employers and TPAs via a slow, manual, paper-based mail process or fax machine.

## *What are the main causes of UI overpayments?*

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The two largest causes of UI overpayments are **incorrect initial eligibility decisions** (job separation issues) and **working while receiving UI benefits**. Many UI overpayments, which could be prevented by receiving timely and accurate information, negatively impact employers' bottom lines. In fiscal year 2013, the UI system paid \$54.5 billion in federal and state UI benefits to 13.7 million beneficiaries. The USDOL estimates that 12 percent of these benefits were paid improperly.

## *Are SIDES and SIDES E-Response expected to reduce UI overpayments?*

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Yes. Both options have the potential to reduce UI overpayments while improving the UI information exchange process.

## *How does an employer or TPA determine which option is best suited for its business?*

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SIDES E-Response is best suited for employers or TPAs with a limited number of annual UI claims. It requires only a working internet connection and an employee who will enter the needed information. SIDES is best suited for larger employers facing many potential UI claims throughout the year. It provides a more automated data exchange interface between employers' and TPAs' IT systems and state agency networks.

**UI SIDES**

State Information  
Data Exchange System

Additional information is available at <http://info.uisides.org>  
To enroll in or register for SIDES, please contact your UI agency.

**SIDES**  
E-Response

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# SIDES and SIDES E-Response Fact Sheet

## The Problem

Responding to paper-based unemployment insurance (UI) information requests fully and within tight state deadlines creates a significant and costly administrative burden on companies, putting a strain on the bottom line.

This problem is compounded for employers and third-party administrators (TPAs) with operations in multiple states, since – until recently – no single national standard existed to help states and employers easily and electronically exchange key information about UI claims.

## The Solution

Developed through a strategic partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) and state UI agencies, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies' (NASWA) **State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES)** and **SIDES E-Response** offer employers and TPAs – *free of charge* – a secure, electronic and nationally-standardized format in which they can easily respond to UI information requests, attach documentation when needed and receive a date-stamped confirmation of receipt.

Now, employers and TPAs in states implementing the SIDES and SIDES E-Response systems can:

- adopt an electronic standardized format to better anticipate,
- supply the data needed for UI information requests,
- reduce follow-up phone calls,
- streamline their UI response processes,
- reduce paperwork while saving time and money.

**SIDES is especially helpful to employers and TPAs who operate in multiple states.**

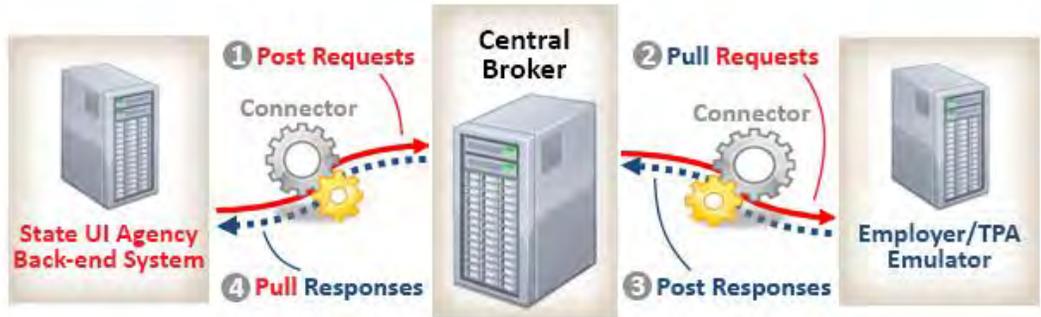
## The Options

For employers with a limited number of UI claims throughout the year, the **SIDES E-Response** website provides an easy and efficient portal for electronically posting responses to information requests from state agencies. SIDES E-Response is available in participating states to any employer or TPA with internet access.

**SIDES** provides an integrated, automated data-sharing and file-tracking interface between employers' IT systems and state agency networks. SIDES is designed to handle high volume UI information requests.

The screenshot displays the SIDES E-Response website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the SIDES E-Response logo and the UI SIDES State Information Data Exchange System logo. Below the navigation bar, there are links for 'Users Guide' and 'Help with E-Response'. A note indicates that asterisks indicate required fields. The main content area is titled 'Separation Information Application Response Entry' and contains instructions for logging in. The form includes a dropdown menu for 'State' and three text input fields for 'Federal Employer Identification Number', 'State Employer Identification Number', and 'Identification Number/Access Code (PIN)'. There are 'Cancel' and 'Login' buttons at the bottom of the form, and a link to 'Return to the Main E-Response Selection Page'. The footer contains the copyright information: 'Copyright © 2008 - 2014, National Association of State Workforce Agencies. All Rights Reserved.'

# SIDES and SIDES E-Response Fact Sheet



Both SIDES and SIDES E-Response are completely *free of charge* for employers and TPAs, although there will be internal IT system integration costs for SIDES. To protect the highly sensitive data being exchanged, both options have multiple layers of security implemented to the highest standards.

## *The Benefits*

As of June 30, 2015, 46 states are using SIDES and SIDES E-Response. By March 2016, Alaska, Connecticut, Indiana, and Virginia will be live.

In addition to offering significant administrative cost savings, both SIDES and SIDES E-Response address two of the largest causes of UI overpayments: incorrect initial eligibility decisions (job separation issues) and working while receiving UI benefits. For fiscal year 2013, the USDOL estimates that 12 percent of the \$54.5 billion in UI benefits were paid improperly.

## **SIDES and SIDES E-Response**

- Save time and money
- Provided for FREE
- Reduce staff time
- Reduce paperwork
- Reduce overpayments
- Help keep UI tax rates as low as possible
- Provide an electronic, nationally standardized data format
- Include data checks
- Provide tools for a healthier bottom line
- Reduce follow-up requests and phone calls

UI overpayments negatively impact employers' bottom lines. **Many overpayments can be prevented by receiving timely and accurate information using SIDES or SIDES E-Response.**

## UI SIDES

State Information  
Data Exchange System

Additional information is available at <http://info.uisides.org> or contact:

[insert state contact information]

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**SIDES**  
E-Response



## SIDES and SIDES E-Response Comparison Table

**SIDES and SIDES E-Response** have the potential to significantly improve the unemployment insurance (UI) information exchange process. While the best option depends on the specific needs of an employer, both options offer an impressive array of benefits.

As of June 30, 2015, 46 states are using SIDES and SIDES E-Response. By March 2016, Alaska, Connecticut, Indiana, and Virginia will be live.

### Benefits of SIDES and SIDES E-Response

- Available for FREE
- Saves time and money
- Reduces staff time
- Reduces paperwork
- Helps keep UI tax rates as low as possible
- Helps reduce overpayments
- Provides an electronic, nationally standardized data format
- Includes data checks to ensure the exchange of complete and valid information
- Reduces follow-up requests and phone calls

	SIDES E-Response	SIDES
<b>How it Works</b>	<p><b>A secure website</b> through which employers and third party administrators (TPAs) submit electronic responses to UI information requests.</p> <p>Employers and TPAs receive a request for UI information from the participating state UI agency by mail or <b>secure email</b> that includes a PIN to log on to SIDES E-Response and enter the requested information in a <b>standard format</b>.</p>	<p>An automated <b>computer-to-computer interface</b> for employers and TPAs to receive and respond electronically to UI information requests.</p> <p>Information requests from the state and responses from employers are all in the same <b>standard format</b>.</p> <p>SIDES produces performance metrics and provides audit controls.</p>
<b>What it Requires</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A working internet connection</li> <li>• An employee who will enter the requested UI information</li> <li>• NO programming is required to implement</li> <li>• NO charge for its use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal IT system integration <i>technical support is available</i></li> <li>• NO other costs for using SIDES</li> </ul>
<b>Best Suited For</b>	Employers and TPAs with a limited number of annual UI claims.	Employers and TPAs who typically handle a <b>large volume</b> of UI information requests or <b>multi-state</b> employers and TPAs.

# UI SIDES

State Information  
Data Exchange System

To enroll in or register for SIDES, please contact your Unemployment Insurance agency.

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