

# Retooling Washington Work Group #1: Coordinated Outreach to UI Exhaustees Charter

November 5, 2010

## Background

Washington State is facing the most severe recession since the Great Depression. At the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board's Retooling Washington's Future meeting on October 5, 2010, participants discussed ideas about how Washington's workforce system can make a difference in the near term. While many agencies are already providing services to this specific population, it became evident that coordinating outreach efforts would be beneficial and provide valuable information to exhaustees.

## Directive

The specific directive for Work Group #1 is "coordinated outreach to UI exhaustees, including demographic breakdown of who is in the pool, some market analysis of skills available and work history, development of service tool chest and identification of service points for referral. Also includes development of the actual outreach strategy (collateral materials, single website, etc.)."

## Deliverables

The key deliverables are:

- 1) **Data** - regular exhaustee data reports to inform outreach efforts and service provision
- 2) **Exhaustee Outreach Plan** - provides the coordinating framework for agency and partner outreach activities. The outreach plan will contain: problem identification, a statement of need; identification of agencies and partners; outreach goals; strategies for achieving those goals; outreach activities and products; an implementation timeline; and measures.
- 3) **Resource referrals for exhaustees.**
- 4) **Resource referral toolkits for service providers.**

## Members

Members of this work group are comprised of staff from multiple state agencies that provide a diverse collection of services to exhaustees. Agencies below are listed in alphabetical order:

Agency	Staff
Department of Commerce (COM)	Daniel Malarkey
Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)	Rebecca Henrie, DSHS; Troy Hutson, DSHS; Adolfo Capestany, DCS; Don Kay, DVR.
Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)	Heidi Audette, Colleen Gilbert
Employment Security Department (ESD)	Joel Sacks, Amy Leneker, Tim Gugerty, Alison Grazzini Smith, Neil Gorrell, Jill Will, Tony Wright, Hilary Young, Greg Weeks, Sharon Williams, Anne Goranson.

Agency	Staff
Employment Security Department (ESD)	Jennie Weber, Eastern WDA, Kris Cook, North Central WDA, CJ Seitz, Northwest WDA, Julie Lord, Seattle-King County WDA, Nicole Ferrer, Seattle-King County WDA.
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)	Dixie Simmons
WorkForce Central	Jawana Cain
Workforce Development Council of Snohomish County (WDCSC)	Amy Persell, Sam Samano, Heather Villars
Workforce Development Council of Spokane	Mark Mattke
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB)	Martin McCallum

## Milestones

Milestone	Date
Retooling WA Work Group #1 – 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting	October 27
Statewide Exhaustee Demographics and Monthly Exhaustions by County	October 27
Provide regular exhaustee data updates and reports to Retooling WA	Monthly
Retooling WA Work Group #1 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting	November 1
WTECB IC – update on progress	November 4
Final list of statewide resource referrals	November 8
Outreach Plan to WTECB	November 8
WTECB Meeting - review report for discussion and adoption	November 18
Current UI claimants receive list of statewide resource referrals in mailer	Early December
Resource toolkits for local service providers	Beginning early December
Evaluate outreach efforts to date, identify gaps and opportunities, make course corrections (if necessary) and update & expand the Outreach Plan through July 2011.	Mid-December

## Contact

Amy Leneker, Employment Security Department, 360-902-9314, [alenecker@esd.wa.gov](mailto:alenecker@esd.wa.gov).



# Retooling Washington Work Group #1: Coordinated Outreach to UI Exhaustees Outreach Plan Overview

*November 4, 2010*

## Problem Identification

Due to high unemployment in Washington for an extended period, Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants are running out of benefits. As of September 2010, more than 22,000 claimants in Washington have received all the benefits to which they were entitled. This includes federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) and extended benefits. The number of people exhausting their benefits is expected to get worse when EUC begins phasing out and the triggers for extended benefits are no longer met. Every week, the number of exhaustees will increase as benefits run out.

Assuming existing claimants do not find jobs and continue to draw their full benefit amounts each week until their entitlements run out, more than 47,000 people could potentially run out of benefits by the end of December 2010. This figure includes the 22,000 who already have exhausted.

## Overview of Outreach Goals and Strategies

**Goal #1:** Prior to exhaustion, provide UI Claimants (currently on EUC or EB) service referral information

**Strategy:** Identify statewide service referral resources and send to current UI claimants

**Lead:** Amy Leneker, ESD

**Product:** One-page list of statewide referrals

**Delivery:** Claimants on EUC or EB receive the one-page list of statewide referrals in ESD's early December mailer (we estimate 230,000).

**Goal #2:** Identify service tool chest and service points for referral to ensure service providers throughout the state can quickly identify and share resources with exhaustees.

**Strategy:** Work with service providers at the local level to identify regional and local resources

**Lead:** Hilary Young, ESD

**Product:** Online resource toolkits

**Delivery:** Easily accessible resource toolkits available to service providers beginning December 2010

**Goal #3:** Provide robust data about the exhaustee population to inform outreach and service provision, including demographic breakdown of who is in the pool and market analysis of skills available and work history.

**Strategy:** ESD has formed an agency-wide internal workgroup including representatives from our Labor, Market and Economic Analysis (LMEA) branch, dedicated to providing and analyzing data regarding exhaustees. This workgroup provides data to Retooling WA and service partners ongoing.

**Lead:** Tim Gugerty, ESD

**Products:** Regular exhaustee data reports

**Delivery:** Statewide exhaustee demographic data and monthly exhaustions to Retooling workgroup, October 27; Snohomish County pilot of county level demographic data to Snohomish County and Retooling Workgroup, November 15; county level demographic data to all counties, date TBD; additional identification of data needs and production of data reports to Retooling WA and partners, ongoing.

## Measures

To ensure the success of the workgroup's outreach efforts, both quantitative and qualitative measures will be used. Quantitative measures include timely delivery of outreach products and the number of outreach activities. Qualitative measures include agency and partner satisfaction with outreach efforts, feedback from service providers and the ability to provide the growing exhaustee population with a set of quality services now and in the future.

## Contact

Amy Leneker, Employment Security Department, 360-902-9314, [aleneker@esd.wa.gov](mailto:aleneker@esd.wa.gov).



# Serving the Long-term Unemployed

October 30, 2010

## Service-delivery model

To better meet customer needs and ensure that people receive the services they need to return to work as quickly as possible, ECDD has implemented a new service-delivery model in WorkSource offices across the state. Under this model, WorkSource customers receive an assessment to identify each individual's skills and determine his or her best options for finding meaningful employment, job-search preparation, job referrals, referral to training, connection to other employment and training resources, and information about other community resources.

WorkSource staff also use technology to cross-match claimants' skills with available job openings. This helps people find jobs in their local areas and can be used statewide if a person is interested in relocating.

## Statewide investments

Over the past two years, the agency has invested in additional staff and new services to help unemployment insurance claimants return to work faster and reduce their likelihood of exhausting benefits. Staff investments include:

- 77 positions dedicated to providing re-employment services to UI claimants (funding for 41 of these positions expires June 2011)
- 35 business services staff specifically focused on pursuing job openings that match the skills of unemployed workers in their respective areas
- 33 career broker positions to provide long-term support for job seekers who do not qualify for special programs

The department also has invested \$350,000 to offer unlimited access to Microsoft's e-Learning library so that unemployed workers can build their computer skills and become more competitive in the job market.

By January 2011, the department will launch 12 Certiport sites so that people can take free exams to earn credentials in Microsoft's Office and Technology Associate programs. The certification will confirm to employers that they've achieved a high proficiency in the specified program, and that they're ready to apply those new skills.

## Local response

Recognizing that each area faces unique needs and the availability of local resources vary, the department has elected to provide flexibility for local offices to meet the needs of their customers. Based on those needs, local areas have already adopted the following strategies to serve the long-term unemployed:

- Increased and improved orientations to WorkSource services
- Targeted workshops that specifically address the needs of claimants who are receiving Extended Unemployment Compensation and Extended Benefits
- New workshops that focus on the realities of today's economy and employment options

- Working with claimants to identify transferrable skills, and developing tools that demonstrate how those skills can be applied to other occupations and industries
- Reaching out directly to people who are approaching exhaustion to ensure that they are aware of the services available through WorkSource (includes mail, email and phone contacts)
- Extended office hours in some offices
- Referring people to community resources to mitigate their financial needs
- Working closely with LMEA's Regional Labor Economists to ensure strategies are responsive to changing economic status and impacts, and that those factors help shape the services provided
- Partnering with local economic development organizations to address business retention, workforce stabilization and to attract new businesses

ECDD has established a SharePoint site to document local efforts and share information across areas.

As members of local workforce development councils, ESD's area directors are focused on educating local boards on the number of claimants and potential exhaustees in local areas so that they can devise strategies to best meet local needs.

Many areas have already organized community response systems to provide access to resources that are available to address various needs. Examples include United Way-sponsored websites in Snohomish County ([http://www.uwsc.org/get\\_help\\_resources.php](http://www.uwsc.org/get_help_resources.php)) and Whatcom County ([http://www.unitedwaywhatcom.org/index.php?pr=Help\\_for\\_Hard\\_Times](http://www.unitedwaywhatcom.org/index.php?pr=Help_for_Hard_Times)).

These sites provide direct links to 211 services, local crisis centers, employment programs, job training, financial help, rental assistance, utility assistance, food assistance, medical and dental services, emergency shelters, mental health and counseling support, veteran services, and child care assistance. ESD services are featured prominently on both of these sites.

### **Other ideas**

Local areas continue to explore options to increase their effectiveness in serving the long-term unemployed. Examples include:

- Purchasing job-profiling software to improve the quality of job matches
- Adding staff to increase workshop capacity and focus on helping EUC and EB claimants overcome barriers and develop practical and achievable employment goals
- Using AmeriCorps members to act as community resource liaisons, providing up-to-date information about local resources to staff and customers, and organizing community events to connect customers with local service providers
- Piloting new strategies to validate job readiness of UI claimants early in their claims and provide targeted employment services so that they are less likely to exhaust benefits

Implementation of these options is dependent on further analysis and available funding.

### **Needs**

- A better understanding of the full universe of people who needs services – recognizing that social services are facing drastic cuts and needs are not limited to UI exhaustees – and the capacity of

existing resources, both statewide and locally

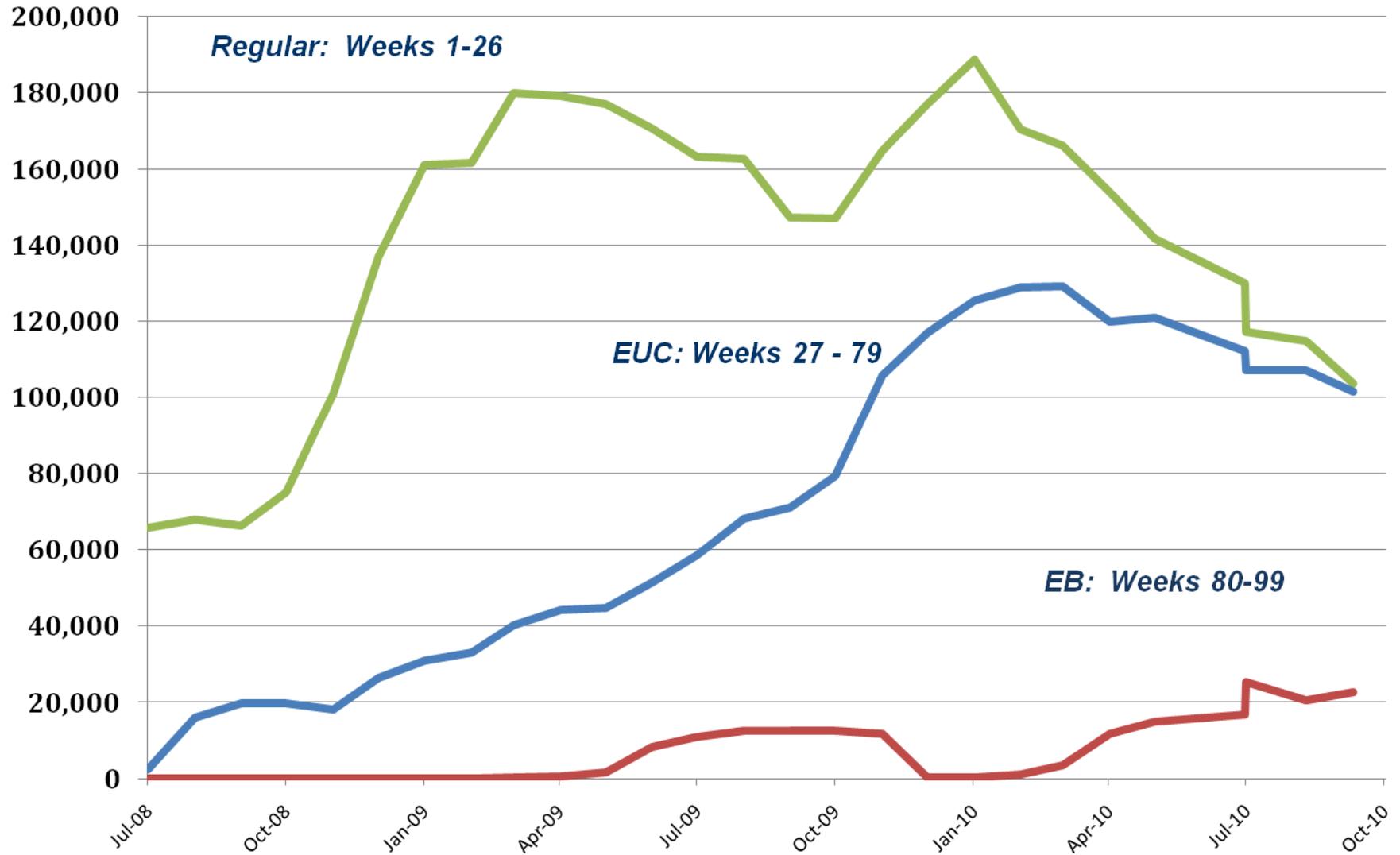
- A portal that links to existing resources (such as the websites referenced above) that are available statewide and by area, including a more comprehensive list of the services available through government programs, non-profits and faith-based organizations
- Explore opportunities for additional partnerships, including statewide economic development organization, business organizations and local libraries
- Develop strategies that specifically target the needs of rural areas, where job opportunities are more limited and there are fewer community resources
- Research and evaluate best practices in other states to determine whether they can be applied in Washington

### **Contact**

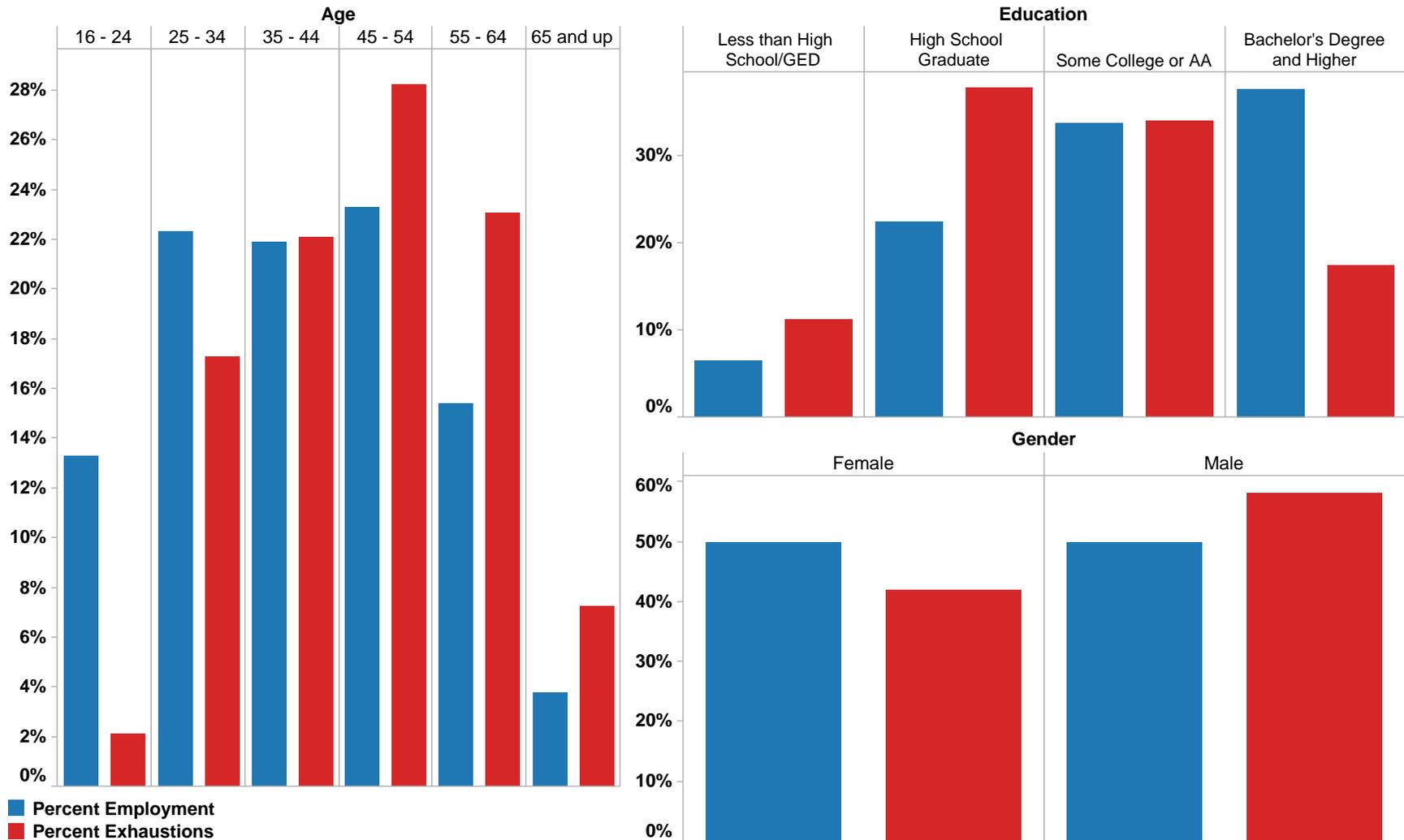
Hilary Young, ECDD policy manager, 360-438-4871

## Claimants by type of benefit

Weeks available assumes maximum entitlement

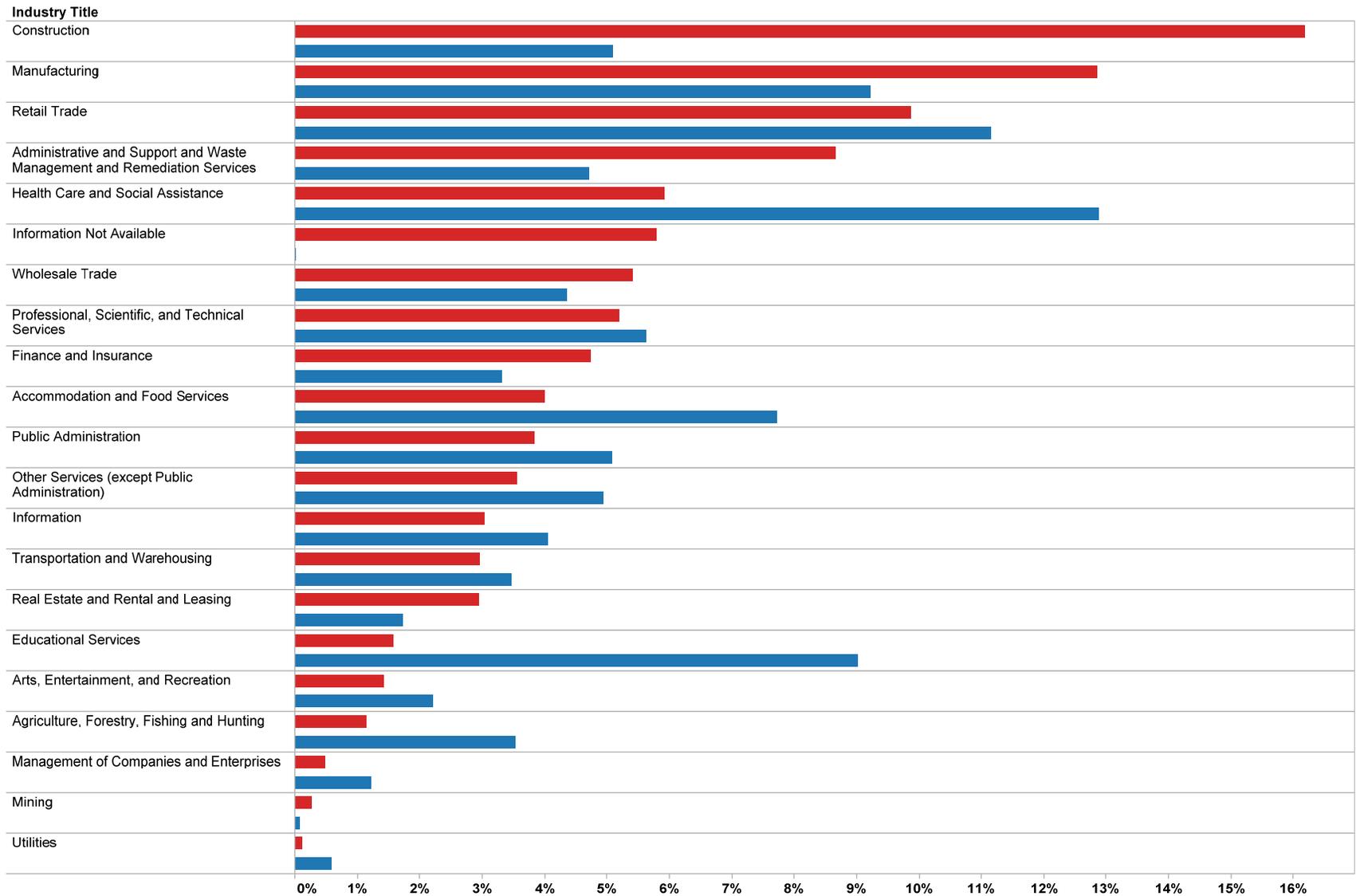


## Demographics of Washington Labor Force Compared to Claimants Who Have Exhausted All UI Benefits as of October 23, 2010



Sources: Age and gender labor force information from Local Employment Household Dynamics Survey, 2009, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Education labor force information from Current Population Survey – Geographical Profile of Employed and Unemployed, 2009, Bureau of Labor Statistics. UI exhaustee demographic information from LMEA, October 26, 2010. UI exhaustion information cumulative through October 23, 2010 since Congress authorized EUC in July, 2008.

## Washington Employment by Industry Percentage Compared to UI Exhaustions by Industry



**Measure Names**

■ Percent Exhaustions

■ Percent Total Employment

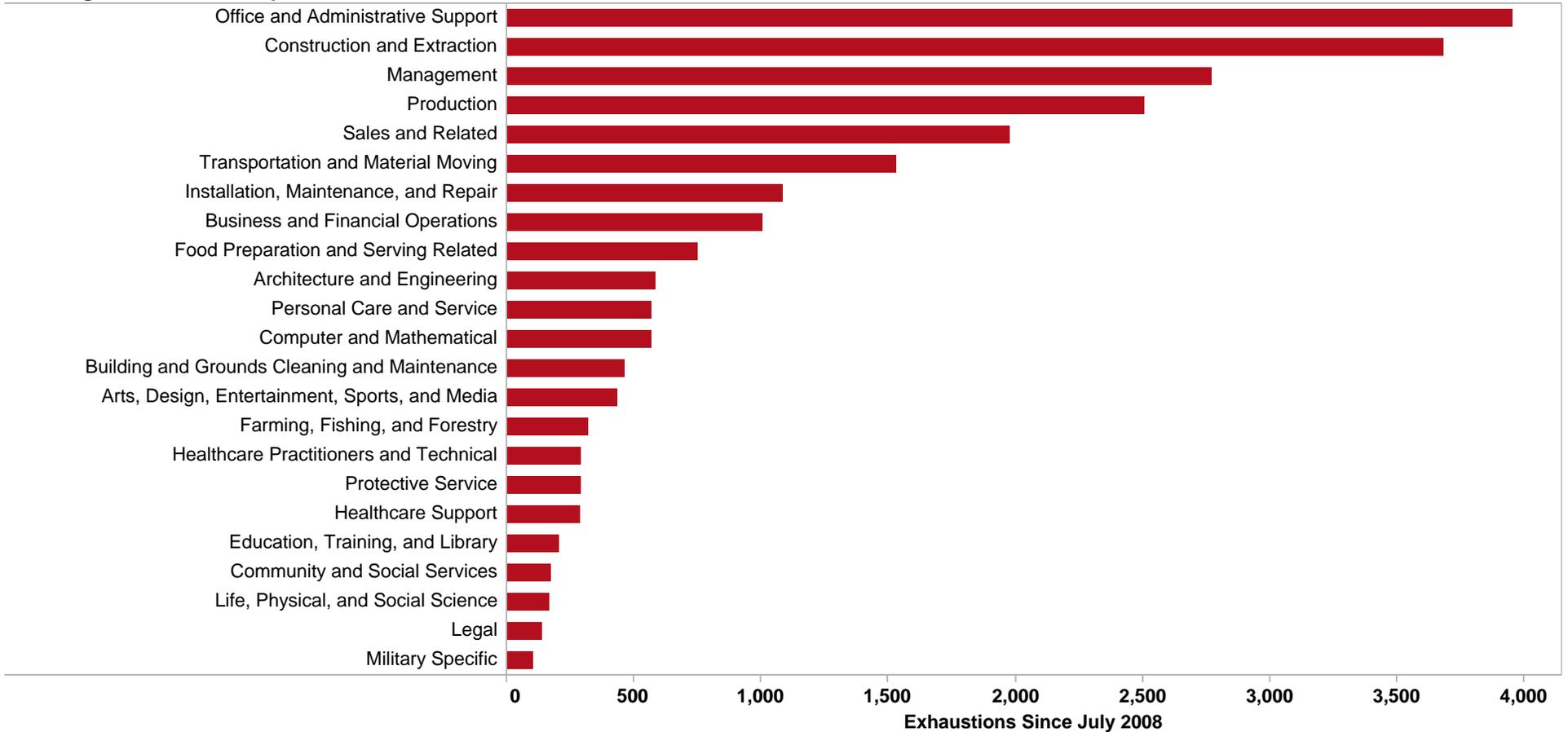
**Percentage**

Sources: Washington industry employment information from Local Employment Household Dynamics Survey, 2009, Bureau of Labor Statistics. UI exhaustion information cumulative through October 23, 2010 since Congress authorized EUC in July, 2008. Exhaustion information from LMEA, October 26, 2010.



## UI Claimants Exhausting all UI Benefits By Occupation

### 2 Digit Standard Occupational Classification



Sources: UI exhaustion information cumulative through October 23, 2010 since Congress authorized EUC in July, 2008. Exhaustion information from LMEA, October 26, 2010.