

***Many thanks to Paul Banuski, HR One Consulting, for sharing all the details regarding the new
“Unemployment Going Digital” at today’s meeting!***

The New York State Department of Labor is rolling out a new unemployment insurance system that will change how employers receive and respond to unemployment-related notices. For most employers, unemployment has historically been a mail-driven process—forms arrive, you review them, and respond within the required timeframe. That is shifting to a faster, fully electronic model. While the change is intended to improve efficiency, it also means employers will need to adjust how they monitor and respond to claims.

Here is how this change breaks down by:

Details:

The state is moving away from sending key unemployment documents—including claim notices, experience rating charges and benefit reimbursement notices—by mail. Instead, these communications will be delivered through an electronic system called SIDES (State Information Data Exchange System), also referred to as E-Response.

This system allows employers to receive notices electronically and respond directly through an online portal. The goal is to speed up communication, reduce delays, and improve fraud detection. To participate, employers will need to have an [online account with the New York State Department of Labor and enroll in SIDES](#).

How This Impacts People:

For anyone involved in HR, payroll, or handling unemployment claims, this changes the day-to-day workflow. You will no longer be waiting on the mail. Notices will arrive electronically—and often faster than expected. That means responsibility for monitoring these notices becomes more immediate. Delays caused by mail are removed, which puts more emphasis on internal staff follow-through.

How This Impacts Systems and Practices:

Instead of reacting to incoming mail, employers will receive email notifications from SIDES when claims or other correspondence are available. It is critical that this email address is actively monitored. Employers should take care not to unsubscribe from these notifications and may want to consider using a shared or “generic” mailbox that can be accessed by multiple people. That helps ensure notices are not missed if someone is out of the office or leaves the organization. This may also require adjustments to internal responsibilities, including who is checking for notices, how often they are reviewed, and how responses are handled.

Employers will also need to ensure their accounts are properly set up and that any third-party administrators—such as HR One—have the appropriate access. If those pieces are not in place, there is a real risk of missed deadlines, which can directly impact unemployment costs.

Bottom Line:

This change is coming, and it will affect how unemployment claims are managed going forward. Make sure you have a NYS Department of Labor online account, enroll in SIDES, and confirm that the right people have access. Faster communication can work in your favor—but only if your processes keep up with it.