

**MINUTES
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING
CALIFORNIA UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BOARD
Docket No. 5656**

Open Session

The Appeals Board meeting convened at 1:00 p.m., August 19, 2020, via Zoom conferencing with Chair Marty Block presiding.

1. Roll Call: <u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Marty Block, Chair	x	
Dan Reeves, Vice-Chair	x	
Mike Eng	x	
Michael Allen	x	
Laura Kent-Monning	x	

2. Approval of the Minutes:

The July 15, 2020, Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Chair's Report:

Chair Block reminded viewers that most of the Board's work is not done during the meetings, but in-between meetings. The Board resolved 1,340 appeals in the past month.

Chair Block informed the Board members that he and Interim Executive Director/Chief ALJ Michael Cutri are developing additional training materials on the various unemployment insurance programs.

Chair Block reported on Governor Newsom's recent executive order regarding the closure of State offices, September 17 through 19, 2020, from 3:00 PM -5:00 PM due to extreme heat

Chair Block reported that 152 employees, over 40% of CUIAB's workforce, are currently telecommuting.

As of July 31, the Board has received close to 6,000 claims involving Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. Chair Block thanked the Board Members for their work on the appeals.

4. Board Member Reports:

Vice Chair Reeves thanked Chair Block for offering additional training on PUA claims.

Member Eng offered his condolences to Interim Executive Director/Chief ALJ Michael Cutri and thanked him for his hard work during this difficult time. Member Eng also thanked him for his updates on the Appeals Modernization program.

Member Eng thanked Presiding Judge for Appellate Operations, Jodi Remke, for the materials provided on the PUA claims, and PALJ Hugh Harrison and ALJ Schissel for their work on this. Member Eng looks forward to the additional upcoming training and expressed appreciation working with the additional Appellate Operations ALJs.

Member Allen remarked that he is also grateful for the additional resource materials provided to the Board Members and the work of CUIAB's employees at all levels. Member Allen discussed working with the members of the newsletter team and offered his sympathy to the individuals who have been affected by the recent disasters.

Member Kent-Monning recognized the hard work of the entire agency in responding to increased caseloads, the work of individuals who have been training new ALJs, and those individuals who continue to report to their headquarters to ensure the continuity of CUIAB's service to the public. She offered her sympathy to the individuals recently affected by the current fires.

5. Public Comment

Ben Hermes offered comments regarding the federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program as applied to mixed-income workers.

Kelly Dukat offered comments regarding hybrid and mixed-income workers and challenges she has experienced with EDD.

Marcie offered comments regarding hybrid workers and her positive experience with EDD.

6. Interim Chief ALJ/Executive Director Report:

Interim Executive Director Michael Cutri reported that CUIAB's field operations met and exceeded all of the federal Department of Labor metrics in July. It closed 70.9% of appeals within 30 days and 89.4% within 45 days. The average case age is

currently 28.1 days.

Since the last week of May, CUIAB has received 5,733 appeals involving PUA claims. This constitutes 18% of new appeals to CUIAB, and the majority of these involve fundamental questions of eligibility. CUIAB is working on developing additional training material for the new PUA programs. CUIAB will continue to monitor the workload associated with PUA and PEUC.

CUIAB continues to utilize its workload management group, which meets weekly to distribute cases among field offices to maximize resources and efficiency.

CUIAB has been fortunate to not have closed offices due to positive employee COVID-19 cases. CUIAB occupies shared facilities with other tenants that have had affected employees and has coordinated with building managers to ensure prompt cleanings of common areas.

Interim Executive Director Michael Cutri reported that, in anticipation of the impacts of school resuming with distance learning on CUIAB staff, CUIAB is exploring additional telework options and other projects to streamline the appeals process.

CUIAB is working with EDD on implementation of the Loss Wage Assistance Program, created by Presidential Executive Order.

Interim Executive Director Michael Cutri reported a public security concern of an attempted entry of an unauthorized individual at the San Diego Field Office. CHP investigated and no further action will be taken.

Interim Executive Director Michael Cutri expressed his appreciation for the work of the Board Members, field offices and staff in serving the public while responding to multiple challenges. Members Allen and Kent-Monning thanked Interim Executive Director Cutri for his work.

7. Presiding ALJ of Appellate Operations, Jodi Remke Report:

Presiding Administrative Law Judge for Appellate Operations, Jodi Remke reported that AO has improved in meeting DOL's timeliness standards. Appellate Operations has currently resolved 44.5% of its cases within 45 days, up from 4.6% from the prior month. The improvement is due in large part to the work of retired annuitant ALJs. Appellate Operations has not yet seen a significant increase in numbers of appeals comparable to the increase in first level appeals to Field Operations.

PALJ/AO Remke thanked ALJ Angela Bullard for her work. She has been with

CUIAB since 2003, and will retire effective August 20, 2020.

Chair Block, Vice-Chair Reeves and the members of the board congratulated ALJ Angela Bullard on her retirement and thanked her for work over the years. Chair Block, Members Allen and Kent-Monning thanked PALJ Remke for her work and support.

8. Chief Information Officer, Jeff Willoughby Report:

CIO Willoughby reported that the appeals modernization project will have a “kick-off” meeting on Monday, August 24, 2020. CUIAB is now awaiting the purchase order from EDD. CIO Willoughby thanked the internal subject-matter experts for all their help.

CIO Willoughby reported that CUIAB has implemented a pilot program in three field offices to allow for the submission of documents via e-mail in particular types of cases. Additionally, CUIAB has piloted a webpage that appellants may use to “check-in” for their hearings. CUIAB will gather data and feedback from the field offices on these pilot projects to evaluate for wider use.

Member Eng thanked CIO Willoughby for the update on the technology projects. Chair Block, Members Allen and Kent-Monning also thanked CIO Willoughby and his team for their work and look forward to updates on the pilot programs.

9. Chief Administrative Services, Robert Silva Report:

Chief Silva reported that EDD is submitting a grant application for the Loss Wages Assistance Program, which will include CUIAB administrative implementation costs. CUIAB will track costs for this program separately from the unemployment insurance program and has established charge codes for this.

CUIAB has completed its planned hiring of ALJs and has 19 pending hires for support staff and information technology. EDD is hiring approximately 4,000 people in its UI branch, resulting in some delay for EDD to process CUIAB’s hiring.

The procurement process for State Fiscal Year 20/21 opened on July 29. Requests for cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment are being processed timely.

Chief Silva reported that CUIAB will be placing a purchase order for protective acrylic panels in the Oxnard and Inglewood Field Offices to ensure local social distancing requirements can be met.

CUIAB has completed its 2020 Language Survey, and Chief Silva thanked the staff who participated in the survey.

In response to Governor Newsom's State of Emergency Order due to wildfires throughout the State, Chief Silva reminded CUIAB managers that Administrative Time-Off may be available to employees if the criteria are met.

The Board thanked Chief Silva for his work and update.

10. Revision to Appeals Board Policy Statement No. 20

Chief Counsel Woo-Sam reported that CUIAB provided notice to the union of proposed changes to Board Policy Statement No. 20, consistent with the Board's vote at the July Board Meeting. SEIU requested to meet and confer on the impact of these changes and CUIAB will begin this process.

Closed Session:

No closed session took place.

Adjournment