

## Unemployment Compensation Fund

Section 96.31 of the Code of Iowa permits the Extension District to levy a separate tax for the cost of unemployment benefits. This levy is in addition to the regular Education Operating Fund levy; however, **the Unemployment Compensation levy is only allowed when the regular Education Operating Fund levy is at its maximum limitation imposed by stature.** These limitations for the Extension Districts are noted in Extension Law, Section 176A.10 and also in the Iowa Department of Management (IDOM) Budget Instructions.

Once the maximum levy limitation is reached, the Extension District has the choice to:

- (1) levy for Unemployment Compensation in addition to the regular Education Operating Fund levy; or
- (2) record unemployment claims as an expense in the Education Operating Fund.

Before the maximum levy limitation is reached, the District should report unemployment claims in the Education Operating Fund.

Moneys received from separate additional levy must be used for the following purposes:

- (1) To pay unemployment premiums to become part of the state plan
- (2) To pay unemployment claims to Iowa Workforce Development.

Most Extension Districts are self-insured for unemployment compensation purposes. To be “self-insured” means that the District will reimburse Iowa Workforce Development for any claims against the District as they occur. If there is never a claim, no payment would ever be made.

The alternative is to be covered by the State unemployment compensation plan. The annual premium for the State’s unemployment compensation plan is partly based on the District's employment experience. Any unemployment claim filed against the Extension District would be paid from the account established for the District.

In either case, the Council may choose to levy a tax to pay the premium, pay a claim to Iowa Workforce Development or recover a past claim paid to Iowa Workforce Development. Any funds received from the levy can be used only for unemployment purposes. Therefore the receipting and disbursing of those funds are to be accounted for separate from the Education Operating Fund.

The following procedures are designed to help you insure that your county meets the requirements for establishing and operating a legal Unemployment Compensation Fund.

## **Unemployment Compensation Fund** (i.e. separate from the Education Operating Fund)

**Option 1: The Extension District levies a specific dollar amount through the regular budgeting process in anticipation of an unemployment benefits expense in the future fiscal year.**

Districts that have officially levied for the Unemployment Compensation Fund through the regular budget process will receive the specific dollar amount that was levied during the fiscal year. If the District receives an invoice to pay unemployment benefits before the tax dollars have been deposited, the invoice may be paid and recorded in the Unemployment Compensation expense account (#95000) in the OUU Fund. When the tax dollars for the Unemployment Compensation Fund are received, they should be deposited into the Extension Districts bank and recorded as a deposit in the Current Tax income account (#40010) in the OUU Fund. If the expense is incurred before receipt of the tax dollars, the net deficit is covered by the balance in the Education Operating Fund.

The Unemployment Compensation Fund is allowed to carry forward a negative balance into the next fiscal year and levy for that amount in the next fiscal year's budget.

A carryover balance in the Unemployment Compensation Fund may consist of a positive balance if expenses are less than the amount the District levied for the current year plus the previous year carryover *or* any negative amount created by advancing money from the Education Operating Fund.

Example: FYXX Unemployment Compensation Fund (OUU) has a carryover balance of \$200. The Extension District received and deposited the \$800 that was levied for in the current year. The Extension District receives and pays an invoice for \$1,500 in Unemployment Compensation expenses in the current fiscal year. The first \$1,000 would come from the Unemployment Compensation fund (OUU). The remaining \$500 would show as a negative in the Unemployment Compensation fund (OUU) and be considered an advanced from the Education Operating fund. The negative balance would carry forward into the next fiscal year. The Extension District can levy an appropriate amount in the next fiscal year to cover this carry forward liability as well as any additional Unemployment Compensation expenses that are anticipated in the next fiscal year.

The Extension Council minutes should reflect that the Council is aware at the time they approve the expense payment that it is being covered partially by Education Operating Fund monies, which will later be "reimbursed or offset" by Unemployment Compensation Fund tax income and/or a future levy.

**Option 2: In the present fiscal year, the Extension District pays an unemployment benefits charge received for a past employee by advancing the money from the Education Operating Fund.**

The District did not levy for the Unemployment Compensation Fund for the current fiscal year. An unemployment benefits charge for a past employee was received and the Extension District wants to levy for this expense in the next fiscal budgeting cycle. The invoice should be paid and recorded in the Unemployment Compensation expense account (#95000) in the Unemployment Compensation fund (OUU). This will establish a negative balance and will carry over as a negative Unemployment Compensation Fund balance into the next fiscal year. During the next regular budgeting process the District levies an adequate amount to cover the anticipated expense for both years. Any deficit in the Unemployment Compensation fund (OUU) is covered by the Education Operating Fund.

The Unemployment Compensation Fund (OUU) is allowed to carry forward a negative balance into the next fiscal year and levy for that amount in the next fiscal year's budget.

The Unemployment Compensation Fund (OUU) is the net of the Unemployment Compensation income (#40010 OUU) and the Unemployment Compensation expense (#95000 OUU). The Unemployment Compensation Fund (OUU) will be in a deficit in the short term.

For example -- You are billed for \$1,500 in Unemployment Compensation expenses in the current fiscal year. When you pay the expense you would, in essence, advance the money from the Education Operating Fund as you pay the bill. This will establish a deficit in your Unemployment Compensation fund (OUU), which can carry forward into the next fiscal year. Then you can levy an appropriate amount in the next fiscal year to cover this carry forward deficit as well as any additional Unemployment Compensation expenses you anticipate in the next fiscal year.

The Extension Council minutes should reflect that the Council is aware at the time they approve the first bill that it is being paid by money advanced from the Education Operating Fund with the expectation that it will later be "reimbursed or offset" by the Unemployment Compensation Fund tax income.

## **Budgeting for the Unemployment Compensation Fund**

The Extension District may officially levy for the Unemployment Compensation through the regular budgeting process. Use IDOM Forms 674, 674-A (Attachment 2) and 678. The appropriate figures appear on line "2" on both 674 and 678. **Begin with the CB-1 section for Unemployment Compensation.** If you have made this levy in past years, you need to show the beginning balance (if any) and previous year's receipts and expenditures.

If there is an advance from the Education Operating Fund during the unbudgeted year, the Extension District will carry over a negative Unemployment Compensation Fund (OUU) into the next fiscal year. Then during the regular budgeting process the Extension District levies an adequate amount to cover the anticipated expense for both years including interest.

The total amount to be budgeted is the sum of the amount of the advance plus any anticipated expenses for the fiscal year being budgeted. The Extension District may have a positive Unemployment Compensation Fund (OUU) carry forward amount for any year.

## **Amending for Unanticipated Unemployment Compensation expenses**

No amendments are required for Unemployment Compensation Funds. The Extension District must follow the budgeting procedures for levying for Unemployment Compensation.

For instance, the current year budget for Unemployment Compensation Fund is \$0; the District has actual expenses of \$1400 this year and expects a claim for \$1400 next fiscal year. There is no amending for the current year since they had no approved budget. The current year expense of \$1400 can be levied for in the next fiscal year. No amendment is required in the current year to pay the expenses they incur. The Extension District may have a positive or a negative Unemployment Compensation Fund (OUU) carry forward amount for any year.

**Special Note:** It is possible that a District could be in the situation where they would be budgeting for expenses covering three fiscal years, i.e., two prior fiscal years in which the expense happened and the year which is being budgeted. This would happen if an Extension District had to pay an unanticipated expense which occurred after the March budgeting deadline and before June 30th of year one and continued as an unbudgeted expense during year two. The Extension District would levy for the total amount which would be collected during year three.