

Washington Reemployment Bonus Experiment - Data Summary

The Washington Reemployment Bonus Experiment public use data (1985-89) were compiled to study the optimal size for cash bonuses offered to unemployment insurance recipients to encourage more rapid return to work. UI claimants were enrolled in the experiment from March 1988 through November 1988 at 21 Job Service Centers in the state of Washington. Eligible participants were randomly assigned to one of six treatment groups or the control group.

Treatment groups differed in the amount of the bonus available and the length of time the claimant had to become reemployed. A specified bonus amount based on the claimant's unemployment insurance entitlement was available to the participant if all employment conditions were met.

Administrative data for each individual were obtained from the participant tracking system, with supplementary data provided by the Washington State Employment Security Department. These data provide demographic characteristics, unemployment date and benefit information, quarterly wages and hourly wage rate (first quarter 1985 through fourth quarter 1989), local labor market information (October 1987 through November 1989), and experiment variables. The file contains 17,554 observations and 236 variables.