



## Agency outlines its requirements for submitting alternative forms

By Judy Thompson  
Chief of Contributions

With the rapidly growing trend of employers and tax agents using purchased software packages to comply with requirements mandated by the government, the Arkansas Employment Security Department emphasizes its requirements for alternative forms.

Employers may submit their Employer's Quarterly Contribution and Wage Report (ESD-ARK-209B) on their own forms, provided each sheet is 8½" x 11" in size, contains all of the information required and is in the same format as AESD's report form.

The bar code specifications that were provided before Calendar Year 2005 have changed, and reporting entities should contact Jeanie Oberle at (501) 682-3282 for the revised bar code specifications. Oberle can also furnish employers and software companies with the requirements and the format. E-mail requests should be addressed to [Jeanie.Oberle@aesd.arkansas.gov](mailto:Jeanie.Oberle@aesd.arkansas.gov).

Reports received without the required information or in an unacceptable and/or unreadable format may be returned. Penalty and interest because of untimely reporting may be incurred.

AESD urges all employers to go to the Official State of Arkansas Tax Portal at [www.ar-tax.org](http://www.ar-tax.org) or visit the agency's Web site at

<https://www.ark.org/esd/unempins/>

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## AESD launches new Web portal

By Shirley Johnson  
OCI Research Project Analyst

The Arkansas Employment Security Department's Labor Market Information Section launched a new Web portal, Discover Arkansas, on Jan. 31. The interactive Web site provides labor market and economic information to assist employers, jobseekers, students, economic developers, researchers and analysts.

The site draws from a database containing employment statistics, business listings, occupational wage and salary information, economic and demographic data, and education and training information. The site will assist in answering questions such as:

- What are competitive wages in

the United States, Arkansas or a Metropolitan Statistical Area of Arkansas?

- How many anticipated job openings will there be in a particular occupation?

- What job openings are currently available in Arkansas or in an area of Arkansas?

- What skills or licenses are required to be employed in an occupation?

- What schools provide training for particular career pursuits?

There are additional features as well. Discover Arkansas' Home, Career Center, Labor Market Info and Data Analysis pages contain narrative, data summaries and articles for customers seeking other

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## Arkansas JobLink goes live recently

By Sharon Robinette  
Asst. Dir., LMI, Analysis & Reporting

Arkansas JobLink, a Web-based system that will allow employers access to more jobseekers, was implemented in two phases in December 2004 and January 2005.

AJL is used by the Arkansas Employment Security Department Employment Services staff and by staff at Arkansas Workforce Centers who operate adult, youth and dislocated worker job assistance programs under the Workforce Investment Act.

Clients seeking job and training services can receive assistance by completing only one application.

Employer job orders are matched against a larger group of applicants.

This spring a self-service component will be activated, providing employers who wish to enter and manage their own job listings direct access. Jobseekers also will have the option to enter and manage their own resumes. AESD and Workforce Center staff will still be able to manage accounts for them if they so choose.

"With both WIA and ESD using a common system, these two partners can move toward more involvement in helping carry out each other's mission," said Bert Pranter, with the Employment Services Technical Unit and the lead trainer.

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and file and pay quarterly unemployment taxes using this method, which is free to all employers.

Those with questions should call (501) 682-3100 or send an e-mail to **InternetTax@aesd.arkansas.gov**.

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Pranter said the self-service function will be very beneficial.

“We expect the Internet accessibility to increase our ability to attract more technical/professional job listings and resumes,” he said.

Margaret Dearmon, a technical liaison for the West Central Workforce Investment Area, said the system will allow people who are currently employed to access the system at a time most convenient for them.

“This will help eliminate the barriers of finding child care or transportation if they had to come to the Arkansas Workforce Center to look for employment,” Dearmon said.

AJL provides:

- One-stop case management, data collection and reporting.
  - a single job placement system that can be used by all partner agencies.
  - program management and reporting for WIA adult, dislocated worker and youth programs, and labor exchange programs.
  - a staff-assisted job match system for jobseekers and employers; self-service functionality will be added to the system in April 2005.
  - an eligibility determination process that assists staff to identify programs for which the individual might be eligible.
  - an operating cost of about one-third of what the agencies had been paying for the WIA reporting system and the ES operations and reporting system together.
- During the first year several capabilities should be added. The Financial Management and Reporting system for WIA will be one of the first. The agency also plans to interface and exchange information with Unemployment Insurance, Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education and Transitional Assistance for Needy Families.

## OES staff achieves high national ranking

**By Ron White**

OCI Program Operations Manager

In keeping with the Occupational Employment Statistics staff’s high standards, Arkansas achieved the sixth highest ranking among all states regarding the Arkansas Wage Survey.

Arkansas had 85.0 percent of employers responding, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ final analysis of the 2004 May panel. Responses covered 71.7 percent of people employed by all sampled companies. BLS expects states to achieve an employer response rate of 75 percent and a response covering 65 percent of employees in all sampled companies.

The Arkansas Wage Survey information originates from semiannual collection panels. It is released through the following Web site: **www.discover.arkansas.gov**. It’s also distributed yearly through publication form.

BLS provides the procedures, funds the survey, provides technical support, draws the sample and produces the survey materials, while the Labor Market Information Section collects the data and compiles the information into usable formats.

The survey produces Arkansas specific occupational wage estimates across all industries, utilizing three full years, or six panels, of data.

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knowledge or labor market information. Main categories such as Business, Education, Industry, Jobs and Occupations also can be used to access information. Touring options are available to help customers learn how to use the site.

Discover Arkansas includes tools for customers seeking a variety of data from the site. Here is a sample, by customer:

**Jobseekers**

- Occupation Explorer
- Occupational Wages
- Find Employers
- Title Search

**Students**

- Occupations by Skills
- Occupations Matching Your Current Occupation
- Find Training Providers
- Short-Term Occupational Employment Projections
- Parent Guides

**Employers**

- Local Area Profile
- Compare Areas
- Unemployment Rates and Labor Force Statistics
- Affirmative Action

**Researchers/Analysts**

- Covered Employment and Earnings
- Current Employment Statistics
- Income
- Population

Discover Arkansas allows customers to personalize their Web pages. Registration is free and confidential. Users who register can take advantage of the following features:

- Registered users will be able to save their data queries and use them again. Those queries will be automatically updated when new data is available.
- Customers also will be able to save their favorite publications and articles, and create a profile of interest allowing them to automatically receive articles based on their interest profile.
- The personal Web page also has a feedback option at the bottom of each page for suggestions.

Customers can access the Web portal at **www.discover.arkansas.gov**.

If you need assistance, contact the Arkansas Employment Security Department’s Labor Market Information Section at (501) 683-0035 or **discoverarkansas@aesd.arkansas.gov**.