Administrative Uses of Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)
Ashley Leach, Economist

What Is LAUS?
The Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program is a federal-state cooperative effort in which monthly estimates of total employment and unemployment are prepared for approximately 7,500 areas. LAUS produces estimates of the monthly labor force, total employment, unemployment, and unemployment rate for statewide New Mexico and its metropolitan statistical areas, micropolitan and combined areas, counties, Workforce Regions, and cities with populations of 25,000 or more.

What Are Common Uses of LAUS Data?
The unemployment rate is probably the most watched piece of LAUS data each month because it provides an idea of the health of an area’s labor market and economy overall. LAUS data are analyzed over time to understand movement and changes in the economy and measure labor market developments. LAUS data are also used by numerous federal agencies in administering programs.

What Does “Administrative Use” Mean?
Administrative use means that LAUS data are being used to administer, monitor, or regulate programs, operations, and activities of public-sector (i.e., government) entities. In most cases, administrative uses are tied to specific government programs.

What’s Included in This Article?
The following sections provide a listing of specific federal programs and activities that utilize LAUS data in the process of administration. The list is not exhaustive, but provides information on some of the more commonly known federal programs.

Where Can I Find More Information on LAUS?
The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has extensive information on the LAUS program. You can access that information at www.bls.gov/lau. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions’ Economic Research and Analysis Bureau has also prepared a Labor Market Information Data Program Guide and a Cheat Sheet that include information on the program. You can access those resources at www.dws.state.nm.us/Labor-Market-Information/Publications/Economic-Research-Publication.

Note: Information on each program was gathered from individual websites as well as the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

01 Workforce Investment
- Funding allocations
- Eligibility determinations for funding and additional resources

02 Poverty
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04 Health Care
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## Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

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<td>The Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Grants allocate funding to states so that they can provide training programs for adults, youth, and dislocated workers, including low-income individuals and public assistance recipients.</td>
<td>Funding Allocations&lt;br&gt;LAUS unemployment estimates are used to determine the amount of grant funding each state receives to provide services based on an Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASUs) designation.</td>
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Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration

## Employment Services Grants

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<td>Employment Services Grants allocate funding to states so that they can provide a variety of employment-related labor exchange services, including job search assistance, job referrals, and job placement assistance to job seekers and recruitment services to employers.</td>
<td>Funding Allocations&lt;br&gt;LAUS labor force and unemployment estimates are used to determine the amount of grant funding each state receives to provide services.</td>
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Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration

## Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

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<td>The SCSEP is a community service and work-based job training program for older Americans. The program provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors and access to employment assistance through American Job Centers.</td>
<td>Funding Allocations&lt;br&gt;The SCSEP provides enrollment priority to seniors that meet certain criteria, including living in an area with persistent unemployment. The SCSEP uses LAUS unemployment data to determine areas of persistent unemployment.</td>
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Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration

## YouthBuild Program

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<td>The YouthBuild program provides low-income young people with opportunities to learn construction skills while building affordable housing and other community assets for homeless and low-income people in their neighborhoods.</td>
<td>Eligibility Requirements for Geographies&lt;br&gt;The YouthBuild program uses LAUS unemployment data to determine which geographies are eligible to receive YouthBuild funding.</td>
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Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration
# Poverty

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)

## The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

**What is it?**

TEFAP helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. It provides food and administrative funds to states to supplement the diets of these groups.

**How are LAUS data used?**

**Funding Allocations**

TEFAP uses LAUS unemployment estimates data to determine how funds are allocated to states, with funding increasing for states with larger proportions of the population living in poverty or unemployed.

Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture

## Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program

**What is it?**

The TANF program, known in New Mexico as NMWorks, is a program that provides a monthly cash benefit to eligible families to be used to meet basic needs such as housing, utilities, and clothing costs.

**How are LAUS data used?**

**Adjustments to Assistance Eligibility Requirements**

TANF requires that participants work, receive training, seek work, or get job readiness assistance in order to receive benefits. TANF places limits on how much job search and readiness assistance can be applied to eligibility requirements. TANF uses LAUS unemployment rate data to identify geographic areas with struggling economies where those limits could be reduced (i.e., more of those activities could be applied to meet eligibility requirements).

Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

**What is it?**

SNAP offers nutrition assistance to eligible, low-income individuals and families. It provides financial assistance as well as nutrition education. SNAP was formerly known as the Food Stamp Program.

**How are LAUS data used?**

**Waivers for Assistance Eligibility Requirements**

SNAP imposes limits on how long people can receive assistance based on how much the recipient is working and/or whether he/she is attending school or participating in other eligible programs. SNAP uses LAUS data to identify geographic areas with struggling economies where special time limits imposed on able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), or persons between 18 and 49 who are not disabled and have no dependents, can be waived.

Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture

## Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)

**What is it?**

EFSP helps organizations provide shelter, food, and supportive services to individuals and families who have economic emergencies.

**How are LAUS data used?**

**Eligibility Requirements for Geographies**

EFSP uses LAUS unemployment data, along with poverty data, to determine which geographies are eligible to receive program funding.

## Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHBG) Program and Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse Block Grants (SABG) Program

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<td>The MHBG program provides funds to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and select territories to provide comprehensive community mental health services.</td>
<td><strong>Waivers for Local Jurisdiction Program Requirements</strong>&lt;br&gt;The MHBG and SABG programs require states/areas to meet Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements for federal grants, meaning that state funding must be maintained, even with federal funds being received. MHBG uses LAUS unemployment rate data to identify states facing extraordinary economic conditions that are eligible for MOE requirements to be waived.</td>
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<td>The SABG program provides funding to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and select territories to prevent and treat substance abuse.</td>
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Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
### Procurement Technical Assistance (PTA) Program

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| The PTA Program provides matching funds through cooperative agreements with state and local governments and non-profit organizations for the establishment of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) to provide procurement assistance to businesses. | Determining Eligibility for Additional Benefits  
The PTA Program provides additional assistance to geographies determined to be in need and uses LAUS unemployment rate data to determine if a particular geography is eligible under that designation. |


### Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUBZones) Program

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| The HUBZones Program helps small businesses in urban and rural communities gain preferential access to federal procurement opportunities. | Eligibility Requirements for Geographies  
The HUBZones Program uses LAUS unemployment rate data to determine which geographies are eligible for benefits under the program. |

Federal Agency: U.S. Small Business Administration

### Employment Creation Visa (EB-5) Program

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| The EB-5 Program provides permanent resident status (green cards) to qualifying foreign nationals (and their families) who are entrepreneurs. | Determining Participant Eligibility  
The EB-5 Program requires applicants to commit to a specified level of investment in their enterprise in order to receive a visa. EB-5 uses LAUS unemployment rate data to determine whether an applicant is eligible for a reduced investment commitment if he/she is establishing a business in a rural and/or high-unemployment area. |

**Public Works Program and Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) Program**

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<td>The Public Works Program helps distressed communities revitalize, expand, and upgrade their physical infrastructure through the acquisition or development of land and infrastructure improvements. The EAA Program provides a wide range of technical, planning, and public works and infrastructure assistance in regions experiencing adverse economic changes that may occur suddenly or over time.</td>
<td><strong>Eligibility Requirements for Geographies</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Public Works and EAA Programs uses LAUS unemployment data to determine which geographies are eligible to receive grant funding and revolving loan funds.</td>
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Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA)

<p>| Community Adjustment and Investment Program (CAIP) | |</p>
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<td>The CAIP provides credits and loans to businesses in order to assist in the creation and/or preservation of private-sector jobs in communities struggling with employment and job opportunities.</td>
<td><strong>Eligibility Requirements for Geographies</strong>&lt;br&gt;The CAIP uses LAUS employment and unemployment rate data to determine if a geography’s employment situation makes it eligible to receive CAIP funds.</td>
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Federal Agency: Several, with capital provided by the North American Development Bank (NADBank)

<p>| Bank Enterprise Awards Program | |</p>
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<tr>
<td>The Bank Enterprise Awards Program provides monetary awards to Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) insured banks for increasing their investment in low-income communities and/or in Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs).</td>
<td><strong>Waivers for Assistance Eligibility Requirements</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Bank Enterprise Awards Program uses LAUS unemployment rate data to determine if institutions are eligible to receive awards based on the economic situation of the area they are serving.</td>
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Federal Agency: U.S. Department of the Treasury