

# VOLUME AND DISPOSITION OF NEW CLAIMS FOR BENEFITS IN 1939

CHARLES V. KIDD AND ENID B. FRANCIS\*

STATE EMPLOYMENT SECURITY AGENCIES reported to the Social Security Board at monthly intervals during 1939 statistics on first determinations of benefit rights when new claims for benefits were filed and also on the final disposition of reconsidered new claims. Although these figures are used primarily to appraise current administrative situations in the States, broader conclusions with respect to the effect of specific statutory provisions upon workers' benefit rights can be drawn from an analysis of disallowance statistics.

Certain limitations attaching to these data necessitate careful qualification of conclusions based upon them. Among these limiting factors are the wide differences in State administrative practices; revisions in administrative procedures during the year, especially in States which initiated benefit payments in January 1939; amendments of State unemployment compensation laws during the year, particularly those affecting wage qualifications for benefits; and the degree to which workers are familiar with provisions with respect to their benefit rights in the various States. For example, the practices in effect in local offices influence significantly the number of claims for which determinations of benefit rights are made subsequently at the central offices. In some States, workers who are apparently ineligible for benefits are discouraged from filing claims, a procedure which results in the filing of only a small number of claims which must subsequently be disallowed because no wage record exists or because earnings in covered employment are insufficient. Other States, however, may order local offices to accept all claims, and as a consequence a relatively higher proportion of claims will be disallowed for such reasons.

Similarly, the extent to which workers are familiar with the eligibility provisions will determine in the first instance the number of claims filed and will also affect the proportion of claims disallowed. Furthermore, a worker may have more than one claim for benefits disallowed in the course of a year if he files again after having

once been determined to be ineligible. The reported statistics therefore do not represent the number of individuals whose claims were disallowed in the year. All these factors indicate clearly that comparisons among States will frequently be invalid unless all the characteristics of State laws and administrative practice are taken into account.

A new claim represents a claim filed by a worker at the beginning of a period of total or partial unemployment, before the establishment of his benefit year. In the 30 States which paid benefits and reported data on disallowances throughout 1939, approximately 3.5 million new claims were handled during the year in the process of determining claimants' rights to receive benefits (table 1). Of this number, 594,065 or 16.9 percent were disallowed on the first determination. Some States reported significantly large proportions of disallowed new claims. In 9 States, for example, more than one-fourth of the new claims were disallowed on first determination, while in 8 other States between 20 and 25 percent were disallowed. In 12 jurisdictions, between 10 and 20 percent were disallowed; Pennsylvania was the only State in which the proportion fell below 10 percent.

## *Reasons for Disallowance*

A new claim may be disallowed because the worker filing the claim has not been in employment covered by the State unemployment compensation law, or because he has had insufficient covered employment or earnings in a specified base period to make him eligible for benefits. The reasons for disallowance and the proportion of claims disallowed for each reason must be closely examined if valid conclusions are to be drawn from the reported statistics. The data in table 1 are based on gross figures, since the State figures do not show how many initial disallowances, classified by reason for disallowance, were subsequently reversed. It will be noted that the chief cause of disallowance was insufficient wage credits, although a significant proportion of claims was disallowed in some States because the State agency

\*Bureau of Employment Security, Research and Statistics Division.

could find no wage record for the claimant or evidence that the claimant had had previous covered employment. With few exceptions, the proportion of disallowances made for other reasons was small.

*No wage record.*—For the 30 States as a whole, about 6 percent of all new claims were disallowed because the central agency could find no wage records for the claimants. Almost one-third of all disallowances resulted from absence of a wage record. Among individual States, however, the proportion of new claims disallowed for this reason varied from 0.5 to 13 percent. In only 7 of the 30 States was the proportion of new claims disallowed because of no wage records as much as 10 percent of all claims disallowed.

Many of those who filed claims may have been previously engaged in employment not covered by the unemployment compensation law. If this were the major factor determining the proportion of claimants who had no wage records, one would expect the number of disallowances for this reason to be highest in States where a relatively small proportion of gainful workers are covered by the unemployment compensation law. An examination of these data from the five States reporting the highest proportion of disallowances for no wage records—Arkansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and Oklahoma—indicates that the expected relationship existed. On the average, only 28 percent of the gainful workers are covered in these States, primarily because workers in excluded agricultural labor form an important part of the total gainfully occupied population. By and large, disallowances for no wage records were lowest in those States where a relatively large proportion of gainful workers is covered. In the five States with the lowest percentage of disallowances for no wage record, about half of all gainful workers are covered.

Failure to find a wage record for a claimant upon first determination usually results from the fact that the claimant was not engaged in covered employment, but in some instances the central agency may have misfiled the wage record, or the employer may have neglected to report to the agency. The extent to which administrative shortcomings affect these aspects of the disallowance figures cannot be isolated.

*Insufficient wage credits.*—More than half the disallowances made during the year were caused

by the inability of claimants to meet the eligibility provisions with respect to prior employment or earnings. Of the 3.5 million new claims disposed of, 353,500 or about 10 percent represented claims of workers who could not meet the statutory earnings or employment specifications when the claim was filed. About 20 percent of the new claims filed during the year in Idaho, Kentucky, and New Mexico were disallowed because of insufficient wage credits, but in a majority of the States disallowances for this reason ranged from 10 to 16 percent of all new claims.

If all unemployed covered workers reported at the local office and were encouraged to file claims, the proportion of new claims disallowed because of insufficient wage credits might be expected to vary in fairly direct proportion to the stringency of the earnings or employment standards established in the law as requirements for eligibility. As has been pointed out, determinations are not made for all unemployed workers, and therefore the figures for the entire year do not always show this expected relationship. Moreover, amended eligibility provisions became effective in 19 States during 1939. Hence, the annual figure on disallowances for insufficient wage credits represents the composite effect of two eligibility requirements.

In most States eligibility requirements were made more stringent because it was felt that the former provisions did not exclude individuals who had only a tenuous attachment to the labor market. Five States included in this analysis—Alabama, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, and North Dakota—changed their eligibility requirement from earnings equal to 16 times the weekly benefit amount in three out of four quarters preceding the benefit year to 30 times the weekly benefit amount in a four-quarter period preceding the benefit year.<sup>1</sup> In New Mexico, 21.3 percent of the new claims filed in the year were disallowed for insufficient wage credits; in North Dakota the figure was only 12.4 percent; and the three remaining States fell within these limits. The high percentage of disallowances in Idaho may be ascribed in part to the adoption of stringent

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<sup>1</sup> Through studies of the benefit amounts of workers whose claims were disallowed for insufficient wage credits in States where the eligibility requirement consists of earnings equal to a given multiple of the weekly benefit amount, it has been found that the minimum weekly benefit amount significantly affects the proportion of claims disallowed for this reason. The effect of this factor cannot, however, be ascertained from the reported statistics.

eligibility requirements ranging from 28 to 52 times the weekly benefit amount, depending upon the claimant's weekly benefit amount.

An analysis of disallowance statistics by month and by quarter showed that the adoption of a more stringent earnings requirement was not invariably followed by an increase in the proportion of new claims disallowed for insufficient wage credits. In South Carolina, the qualifying requirement was changed on July 1, 1939, from 13 weeks of employment in the 52 weeks preceding the claim to earnings ranging from 40 to 50 times the weekly benefit amount in the base period. Disallowances for insufficient wage credits in South Carolina increased from 9.9 percent of first determinations in the second quarter to 16.5 percent of first determinations in the third quarter and 27.1 percent in the fourth quarter. Statistics from other States where more stringent requirements were imposed during 1939 do not show such a clear relationship between the stringency of the earnings requirement and the proportion of deter-

minations disallowed for insufficient wage credits.

The effect of changes in the qualifying earnings requirements for the States taken as a group was obscured by changes in employment and earnings conditions in the qualifying periods applicable to claims filed in each quarter. The qualifying period for most new claims filed during the first quarter of the year ran from January through September 1938, and the widespread unemployment and underemployment existing during the first 6 months of this period undoubtedly affected the proportion of new determinations disallowed for insufficient wage credits. Most of the amendments which strengthened the eligibility provisions became effective in the second and third quarters of 1939, yet the percent of new claims disallowed for insufficient wage credits in the third quarter was not significantly higher than the percent disallowed in the first and second quarters. This apparent anomaly can be explained by the pattern of employment and earnings from April 1938 to March 1939, the qualifying

Table 1.—Number of new claims disposed of on first determination and number and percentage distribution of claims disallowed, by reason for disallowance, for selected States,<sup>1</sup> 1939

State	Total dispositions	Disallowed (gross)		Reason for disallowance					
		Number	Percent of total dispositions	No wage records		Insufficient wage credits		Other	
				Number	Percent of total dispositions	Number	Percent of total dispositions	Number	Percent of total dispositions
Total.....	3,510,950	594,065	16.9	190,951	5.6	353,609	10.1	43,605	1.2
Alabama.....	70,014	13,627	17.2	1,673	2.1	10,123	12.8	1,831	2.3
Alaska.....	6,720	3,127	46.5	629	9.4	1,031	15.3	1,467	21.8
Arizona.....	21,020	3,784	18.0	575	2.7	2,900	14.1	240	1.1
Arkansas.....	61,363	16,235	26.5	7,964	13.0	8,271	13.5	0	0
California.....	476,988	82,465	17.3	28,218	5.9	60,336	10.6	8,911	.8
Delaware.....	19,700	4,703	23.9	1,974	10.0	2,840	12.9	183	.9
Florida.....	66,115	26,619	27.6	9,726	10.1	15,698	18.3	1,095	1.1
Georgia.....	166,016	25,667	24.2	10,532	9.9	14,340	13.5	786	.7
Idaho.....	21,057	5,233	24.9	855	4.1	4,282	20.3	96	.5
Iowa.....	81,340	21,678	26.7	6,424	7.9	11,050	14.3	3,604	4.4
Kansas.....	62,258	13,291	21.3	3,990	6.4	9,058	14.5	243	.4
Kentucky.....	107,708	32,302	30.1	8,069	7.5	24,323	22.6	0	0
Maine.....	73,678	17,765	18.7	3,476	4.7	10,212	13.9	77	.1
Michigan.....	344,521	68,492	17.0	19,550	5.7	37,042	11.0	991	.3
Minnesota.....	104,876	16,006	15.3	574	.5	15,381	14.7	51	( <sup>2</sup> )
Mississippi.....	42,015	9,092	21.2	2,213	5.2	5,200	12.1	1,679	3.9
Missouri.....	150,285	23,430	15.6	20,108	13.4	2,599	1.7	723	.5
Nebraska.....	37,652	10,902	28.7	4,875	12.8	5,909	15.6	118	.3
Nevada.....	11,186	2,893	25.9	1,080	9.7	1,813	16.2	0	0
New Hampshire.....	33,662	8,419	16.1	1,143	3.4	4,255	12.7	21	.1
New Jersey.....	316,514	40,203	12.7	20,345	6.4	19,216	6.1	642	.2
New Mexico.....	21,783	6,692	30.7	2,040	9.4	4,049	21.3	3	( <sup>2</sup> )
North Dakota.....	10,983	2,807	25.6	1,278	11.6	1,357	12.4	172	1.6
Ohio.....	354,125	55,017	15.5	7,134	2.0	30,781	8.7	17,152	4.8
Oklahoma.....	95,187	22,010	24.1	11,601	12.2	8,314	8.7	3,001	3.2
Pennsylvania.....	638,681	51,288	8.0	16,487	2.6	20,763	3.2	5,038	.8
South Carolina.....	99,170	18,453	18.6	2,346	2.4	15,798	15.0	309	.3
South Dakota.....	8,323	1,954	23.5	659	6.7	1,355	16.0	10	.1
Vermont.....	10,498	1,826	17.4	570	5.4	1,254	11.9	2	( <sup>2</sup> )
Wyoming.....	17,506	4,189	23.9	954	5.4	3,076	17.6	160	.9

<sup>1</sup> States which paid benefits and reported throughout 1939.  
<sup>2</sup> Less than 0.1 percent.

period for most workers who filed claims in the second or third quarters of 1939.<sup>2</sup> During the last 6 months of this period there was a sharp recovery in employment and earnings. A relatively large proportion of claims based upon earnings in this period was therefore found to have fulfilled the earnings requirements.

In view of all the factors influencing disallowances for each month and quarter of the year, it is difficult to isolate the effect of eligibility requirements upon disallowances, on the basis of these data alone.

*Disallowances for other reasons.*—To receive benefits a worker must not only have earned the qualifying amount but he must also be unemployed and available for work as these terms are defined in the laws. Furthermore, the claims of seasonal

workers may be disallowed in some States if they do not meet the seasonal regulations in force. The claims of workers who cannot fulfill such requirements are lumped together and reported by the States as disallowed for "other" reasons. Self-employment, chronic illness, and odd-job or part-time earnings were the most common "other" reasons for disallowance. In Mississippi some claims were disallowed because seasonal workers claimed benefits in the off-season. Several States have notified the Social Security Board that WPA and CCC work has resulted in a significant number of disallowances for "other" reasons. Such disallowances represent only about 1 percent of the dispositions of new claims on first determination, and in only six States did the proportion of disallowances for other reasons exceed 2 percent (table 1). The 22-percent rate for Alaska reflects the effect of seasonality provisions; many workers who filed claims for benefits found that their employment in the placer-mining or fish-canning industries rendered them ineligible for benefits

<sup>2</sup> In 18 States where an amended eligibility provision became effective during 1939, the qualifying period was increased from 3 to 4 quarters; in Florida it was increased from 3 to 8 quarters. The effect of permitting claimants to accumulate qualifying earnings over a longer period, as well as the effect of requiring more qualifying earnings, must be taken into consideration in evaluating the net effect of the amended provisions.

**Table 2.—Reopened new claims: Number disposed of and number and percent of previous allowances and disallowances sustained and reversed by initial authority, for selected States, 1939**

State	Total dispositions of new claims and reopened claims	Percent dispositions of reopened new claims are of total dispositions	Previously allowed						Previously disallowed					
			Reopened allowed claims		Determination sustained		Determination reversed		Reopened disallowed claims		Determination sustained		Determination reversed	
			Number	Percent of total allowances	Number	Percent of total reopened allowances	Number	Percent of total reopened allowances	Number	Percent of total reopened disallowances	Number	Percent of total reopened disallowances	Number	Percent of total reopened disallowances
Total.....	4,032,630	12.0	378,008	12.0	363,638	96.0	15,270	4.0	141,518	23.8	43,901	31.1	97,527	68.9
Alabama.....	84,473	6.5	3,566	5.4	3,402	95.4	164	4.6	1,893	13.9	345	18.2	1,548	81.8
Alaska.....	6,975	3.7	13	.3	4	( <sup>1</sup> )	9	( <sup>1</sup> )	242	7.7	178	73.6	64	26.4
Arizona.....	22,025	4.6	378	2.1	200	55.3	169	44.7	627	16.0	223	35.6	404	64.4
Arkansas.....	67,244	8.7	1,980	4.4	1,586	80.1	394	19.9	3,001	24.0	1,692	43.4	2,209	66.6
California.....	512,320	6.9	19,306	4.9	19,119	99.0	187	1.0	16,026	19.4	3,471	21.7	12,555	78.3
Delaware.....	21,051	6.4	394	2.6	392	99.5	2	.5	954	20.2	279	29.3	672	70.7
Florida.....	107,646	10.7	4,907	7.0	4,707	95.9	200	4.1	6,624	25.0	2,850	43.0	3,774	57.0
Georgia.....	112,357	5.7	1,313	1.6	1,059	80.7	254	19.3	5,058	19.7	1,770	35.0	3,288	65.0
Idaho.....	23,241	9.4	786	4.9	771	98.1	15	1.9	1,398	26.7	551	39.4	847	60.6
Iowa.....	93,971	13.4	10,802	18.1	10,632	98.4	170	1.6	1,820	8.4	1,041	56.0	788	43.1
Kansas.....	68,090	9.0	3,573	7.3	3,445	96.4	128	3.6	2,578	19.7	1,332	51.7	1,246	48.3
Kentucky.....	113,697	5.5	1,490	2.0	1,371	91.5	128	8.5	4,709	14.5	1,776	37.7	2,933	62.3
Maine.....	76,428	3.0	1,466	2.4	1,445	98.6	21	1.4	1,293	9.4	772	59.7	521	40.3
Michigan.....	433,323	20.5	67,769	23.6	64,723	95.5	3,046	4.5	21,633	36.0	2,941	14.0	18,692	86.0
Minnesota.....	112,843	7.1	3,646	4.0	3,472	97.8	74	2.1	4,421	27.6	522	11.8	3,899	88.2
Mississippi.....	47,135	8.0	2,651	7.8	2,048	77.3	603	22.7	1,384	15.2	731	52.8	653	47.2
Missouri.....	171,318	12.3	12,753	10.0	10,651	83.5	2,102	16.5	8,285	35.4	1,903	23.0	6,382	77.0
Nebraska.....	43,130	12.0	3,391	12.5	3,076	90.7	315	9.3	1,787	16.4	1,088	60.9	699	39.1
Nevada.....	13,160	14.9	441	5.3	437	99.1	4	.9	1,517	52.4	615	40.5	902	60.6
New Hampshire.....	35,108	4.4	1,085	3.9	1,039	95.8	46	4.2	462	8.5	69	14.0	393	55.1
New Jersey.....	328,763	3.8	6,379	2.3	6,275	98.4	104	1.6	6,112	15.2	2,590	42.4	3,522	57.6
New Mexico.....	23,554	7.5	642	4.2	610	95.0	32	5.0	1,129	16.0	636	56.3	493	43.7
North Dakota.....	12,151	9.6	795	9.7	773	97.2	22	2.8	373	13.3	185	49.6	188	60.4
Ohio.....	390,223	9.3	24,852	8.3	23,433	94.3	1,419	5.7	11,246	20.4	3,039	27.0	8,207	73.0
Oklahoma.....	103,872	8.4	4,838	6.7	4,539	93.8	299	6.2	3,847	16.8	1,902	49.4	1,945	60.6
Pennsylvania.....	861,758	25.9	193,731	33.0	188,564	97.3	5,167	2.7	29,446	57.4	10,365	35.2	19,081	64.8
South Carolina.....	102,609	3.4	2,737	3.4	2,713	99.1	24	.9	704	3.8	169	24.0	535	76.0
South Dakota.....	9,539	12.7	668	8.9	530	93.3	38	6.7	648	33.2	210	32.4	438	67.6
Vermont.....	15,460	32.1	1,960	22.6	1,839	93.8	121	6.2	1,052	57.6	396	29.1	746	70.9
Wyoming.....	19,236	9.0	787	5.9	774	98.3	13	1.7	943	22.5	450	47.7	493	52.3

<sup>1</sup> Less than 0.5 percent.

except during the seasonal period of activity in these industries.

### Determinations of Reopened New Claims

Examination of the total volume of reopened new claims and of the final status of such claims is significant primarily as an indication of administrative practices and administrative efficiency in individual States.<sup>3</sup> Under most of the State laws any interested party may contest an initial determination.

In interpreting statistics on reopened new claims the same care must be exercised as in interpreting gross disallowance figures. It may be that few workers contest disallowances of new claims if they know that the agency checks wage records carefully before issuing determinations. On the other hand, workers may be ignorant of their right to contest the benefit determination. Some States permit first determinations to be reopened if the contesting party presents the slightest evidence that an incorrect determination may have been made. In other States, reopening of first determinations is discouraged.

In the States analyzed, about 13 percent of all first determinations were reopened, but there was a wide range in this figure from State to State. In Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Vermont, more than one-fifth of all first determinations were reopened, and in six additional States reopened claims were more than 10 percent of all first determinations in the State. In most States, however, this figure was below 10 percent.

Approximately 379,000 allowed claims, or 13 percent of the gross number of claims allowed, were reopened. Some of these determinations were undoubtedly reopened when employers, convinced that the wage records or computations of the agency were in error, protested the initial allowances. Claimants usually contest allowed claims in the belief that they are entitled to a higher weekly benefit amount or longer duration than was stated in the initial determination. In the 30 States as a whole, 96 percent of the reopened allowed claims continued to be allowed after reopening. The figures do not, however, reveal whether claimants were awarded the same, greater,

<sup>3</sup> These figures also serve to convert the gross disallowance figures in table 1 to the net disallowance figures in table 3. The figures in table 1 do not take account of changes in the status of claims resulting from reconsideration by State agencies.

Table 3.—Number of new claims disposed of on first determination, gross and net number <sup>1</sup> disallowed and ratio of such disallowances to total dispositions, for selected States, 1939

State	Total dispositions	Number disallowed		Percent disallowed	
		Gross	Net	Gross	Net
Total.....	3,510,950	594,065	511,579	16.9	14.6
Alabama.....	79,014	13,027	12,243	17.2	15.5
Alaska.....	6,720	3,127	3,072	46.5	45.7
Arizona.....	21,020	3,784	3,549	18.0	16.9
Arkansas.....	61,303	16,235	14,420	26.5	23.5
California.....	476,988	82,465	70,097	17.3	14.7
Delaware.....	19,706	4,703	4,033	23.9	20.5
Florida.....	96,115	26,519	22,945	27.6	23.9
Georgia.....	106,016	25,067	22,633	24.2	21.3
Idaho.....	21,057	5,233	4,401	24.9	20.9
Iowa.....	81,340	21,078	21,060	26.7	25.9
Kansas.....	62,258	13,291	11,944	21.3	19.6
Kentucky.....	107,708	32,392	29,587	30.1	27.5
Maine.....	73,678	13,765	13,265	18.7	18.0
Michigan.....	344,521	58,492	43,446	17.0	12.6
Minnesota.....	104,870	10,006	12,181	15.3	11.6
Mississippi.....	42,915	9,092	9,042	21.2	21.1
Missouri.....	150,285	23,430	19,150	15.6	12.7
Nebraska.....	37,952	10,902	10,518	28.7	27.7
Nevada.....	11,186	2,893	1,895	25.9	17.8
New Hampshire.....	33,562	5,419	5,072	16.1	15.1
New Jersey.....	316,514	40,203	36,785	12.7	11.6
New Mexico.....	21,783	6,092	6,231	30.7	28.6
North Dakota.....	10,983	2,807	2,641	25.6	24.0
Ohio.....	354,125	55,017	48,229	15.5	13.6
Oklahoma.....	95,187	22,910	21,270	24.1	22.3
Pennsylvania.....	638,581	51,288	37,364	8.0	5.9
South Carolina.....	99,170	18,453	17,942	18.6	18.1
South Dakota.....	8,323	1,954	1,554	23.5	18.7
Vermont.....	10,498	1,826	1,201	17.4	11.4
Wyoming.....	17,506	4,189	3,709	23.9	21.2

<sup>1</sup> Gross number represents number of new claims disallowed on first determination; net number represents gross number minus reopened disallowed claims that are later allowed plus reopened allowed claims that are later disallowed.

or smaller benefit rights when the allowed claim was sustained. In States such as Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, and Missouri, where a large proportion of the previously allowed claims was disallowed after reopening, determinations based on incomplete information may explain the large volume of reversals. The existence of the small absolute volume of reopened allowed claims suggests that determinations were usually correct or that claimants may not have been fully aware of the possibility of modifying determinations through contest.

The 141,500 disallowed claims which were contested represent almost one-fourth of the gross number of disallowances. Sixty-nine percent of these reopened claims were later allowed. Disallowed claims are reopened almost exclusively by dissatisfied workers who feel that the agency has erred in denying benefits. The fact that more than two-thirds of the reopened claims disallowed on first determination were allowed upon reconsideration by the agency suggests that complete

wage reports had not been received from employers, that the agencies had misfiled some wage records, or that additional wage credits became available to the claimant as the result of lag-quarter re-determinations while the claim was being reconsidered.

The same wide differences among the States with respect to the volume of disallowed new claims which were reopened existed also with respect to the proportion of disallowances reversed. More than half the claims disallowed on first determination in Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Vermont were contested, and from 60 to 70 percent of these contested disallowances were finally reversed. In each of six States—Florida, Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and South Dakota—between one-fourth and one-half of all disallowances were contested, and 57 percent or more of these contested disallowances were reversed. The proportion of disallowed claims that were contested fell below 10 percent in five States—Alaska, Iowa, Maine, New Hampshire, and South Carolina. In these States between 26 and 85 percent of the contested disallowances were reversed.

Since most reopened allowed claims were sustained and most disallowed claims were reversed after contest, the net proportion of all new claims disallowed for the 30 States as a whole was 14.6 percent, a reduction of 2.3 percent from the gross figure (table 3). In no State was the proportion of disallowed claims increased as the result of adjustments on contested claims. On the other

hand, the gross disallowance figure exceeded the net figure by 4 percent or more of total dispositions in only five States—Idaho, Michigan, Nevada, South Dakota, and Vermont.

### *In Conclusion*

Although the statistics analyzed in this article are of limited value in gauging the effect of coverage and qualifying earnings provisions of a State law upon unemployed workers and are even less satisfactory for comparisons among States, certain tentative conclusions with respect to administrative standards in individual States may be drawn. The large volume of new claims which were reopened indicate that the machinery for determining claims might well be reappraised in certain States; correct transcription and filing of wage records, increased care in computing benefit rights, and continued effort to obtain correct wage reports promptly from subject employers would seem to be desirable. Extensive use both by workers and by employers of the right to contest claims also makes it evident that a simple and direct procedure for reexamining contested claims should be incorporated in the administrative structure of every State agency. The major objectives of unemployment compensation can be satisfactorily attained only if the payment of adequate benefits is implemented by prompt, accurate, and equitable determination of benefit rights.