Missouri Department of Labor Announces Additional Benefit for Businesses Participating in the Shared Work Program

June 17, 2020

Jefferson City, MO – To encourage participation in Missouri's Shared Work Unemployment Compensation program and to lessen the burden on businesses struggling to reopen, the Missouri Department of Labor's (DOLIR's) Division of Employment Security (DES) today announced that through December 26, 2020, the unemployment accounts for businesses participating in the Shared Work program will not be charged.

While Missouri has had a Shared Work program for more than 30 years, the program is well suited for businesses transitioning to full operations after COVID-19. The program can help transition employees safely back to work while observing social distancing and providing flexible scheduling. Beneficial to both large and small businesses, Shared Work allows employers to reduce labor and turnover costs while retaining skilled employees for when they anticipate return to full operations. Workers keep their jobs, receive prorated unemployment benefits to supplement lost earnings, and maintain their employee benefits. Additionally, through July 25, 2020, employees that are eligible for even $1 per week of unemployment benefits receive an additional $600 federal supplement each week they receive unemployment benefits.

The Shared Work program allows an employer the flexibility to reduce its workforce as a precautionary health measure but also to continue to operate on a reduced schedule. Shared Work can be particularly helpful in bringing employees back to work as businesses reopen at less than full capacity. Shared Work employers divide available work among a group of employees that continue to work a reduced schedule. Because a Shared Work employer retains its skilled employees, the business has the flexibility to ramp up and scale down its workforce based on business needs and health concerns.

The newly implemented provisions of the CARES Act incentivizes businesses to retain employees under the Shared Work program by allowing states the option to waive charges to employer accounts through December 2020.

As evidenced in the past, Shared Work protects jobs and minimizes economic harm in the state at large, but can have a particular economic impact in small local communities.

For more information on the Missouri Shared Work program, visit **sharedwork.mo.gov**.

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