STATE OF KANSAS

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 241 SOUTH
TOPEKA, KS 66612

PHONE: (785) 296-3232
GOVERNOR.KANSAS.GOV

GOVERNOR LAURA KELLY

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 20-50

Temporary relief from certain unemployment insurance requirements
during state of disaster emergency

WHEREAS, securing the health, safety, and economic well-being of residents of the State of Kansas is this Administration's top priority;

WHEREAS, the global COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the infection of millions and more than 500,000 deaths, and recent spikes in cases and deaths in Kansas pose continued challenges for those seeking employment;

WHEREAS, Kansas is facing a crisis of economic insecurity resulting from a rapid increase in unemployment and lost wages;

WHEREAS, economic insecurity due to unemployment is a serious menace to the health, morals, and welfare of the people of Kansas, as expressed in K.S.A 44-702 of the Kansas Employment Security Law;

WHEREAS, the economic recovery of Kansas is imperiled by the imminent threat of surges in COVID-19 infections in the State of Kansas as statewide restrictions on businesses and individual movement and gatherings are lifted—since May 15, 2020, fifteen counties in the State have for the first time issued an emergency declaration resulting from the pandemic, indicating a further threat to the State's economic recovery;

WHEREAS, on June 9, 2020, the United States Department of Labor notified the Kansas Department of Labor that the state of Kansas met the criteria necessary to trigger "on" an extended benefits period, effective June 7, 2020, and extended benefits are triggered when a state is experiencing high unemployment;

WHEREAS, provisions under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (Pub. L. 116-127) authorize states to modify or suspend the work search requirement for extended benefits on an emergency temporary basis in response to the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, involuntary unemployment of the type occurring because of the COVID-19 pandemic places a serious burden upon not only the unemployed individual but also his or her family and their ongoing wellbeing;

WHEREAS, Kansas is committed to maintaining and strengthening access to unemployment insurance during the COVID-19 pandemic in particular because during this time any financial

insecurity for those experiencing unemployment can easily and quickly lead to problems maintaining shelter, buying medicine and food, or caring for vulnerable family members, and such problems present additional public health threats to the health care system and to the state's ability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, emergency administrative funding for unemployment insurance, authorized under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (Pub. L. 116-127) signed into law by the President on March 18, 2020, requires the State to, among other things, mandate that employers provide notice to employees of the potential availability of unemployment insurance benefits and requires Kansas to ease current eligibility restrictions on unemployment benefits, including waiving the one-week waiting period and modifying or suspending work search requirements for those impacted by COVID-19 as a condition of receiving the additional administrative funds;

WHEREAS, strict compliance with certain Kansas employment security laws would prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, flexibility with the eligibility and certain other requirements of the employment security law would promote and secure the safety and protection of Kansans during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, in these challenging times this Administration will do whatever it can to avoid immediate dangers to the health, safety, and welfare of Kansans, including providing greater access to unemployment benefits.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Kansas, including but not limited to the authority granted me by K.S.A 48-924 and K.S.A 48-925(b), (c)(1), and (c)(11), in order to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 I hereby direct and order the following:

1. The requirement that claimants for unemployment benefits actively seek work each week, provided for in K.S.A. 44-705(c), is temporarily waived for all claimants.

2. The requirement that claimants for unemployment benefits actively seek work each week, provided for in K.S.A. 44-704b(b), is temporarily waived for all claimants.

3. All other laws, regulations, or rules relating to unemployment benefits remain in effect.

4. This order supersedes any contrary order by any local health department regarding unemployment benefits and should be read in conjunction with previous executive orders responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Any contrary provision in previous orders is superseded by this order.

This document shall be filed with the Secretary of State as Executive Order No. 20-50. It shall become effective immediately and remain in force until rescinded, until September 15, 2020, or until the statewide State of Disaster Emergency extended by House Bill 2016 enacted during the June 2020 special session relating to COVID-19 expires, whichever is earlier.

THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE BY THE GOVERNOR Laura Kelly

DATED 6.30.2020

FILED
JUN 30 2020
SCOTT SCHWAB
SECRETARY OF STATE

Scott Schwab
Secretary of State

Sandy Tompkins
Assistant Secretary of State