State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-fourth Legislature
Second Regular Session
2020

CHAPTER 48

SENATE BILL 1694

AN ACT

AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY TO IMPLEMENT ALTERNATIVE BENEFIT ELIGIBILITY AND EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FEDERAL-STATE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

Section 1. Unemployment compensation; coronavirus disease 2019; alternative requirements; rulemaking exemption

A. Notwithstanding title 23, chapter 4, Arizona Revised Statutes, the department of economic security may implement alternative benefit eligibility and employer contribution requirements for the federal-state unemployment insurance program established pursuant to title 23, chapter 4, Arizona Revised Statutes, consistent with federal guidance issued by the United States department of labor, including the unemployment insurance program letter number 10-20, for individuals and employers who are affected by a federal declaration of emergency related to the coronavirus disease 2019. In fixing employer contribution rates for the unemployment compensation fund established by section 23-701, Arizona Revised Statutes, the department may not consider increased benefits charged against an employer's account that resulted from alternative benefit eligibility for individuals affected by coronavirus disease 2019. The department may adopt rules necessary to administer this section.

B. For employers and employees who opt to participate in the shared work plan established pursuant to title 23, chapter 4, article 5.1, Arizona Revised Statutes, the department of economic security may adjust eligibility requirements during the federal emergency declaration period related to coronavirus disease 2019, except that the department may not approve shared work benefits for an individual who has the individual's normal weekly hours reduced by more than eighty percent.

C. For the purposes of this section, the department of economic security is exempt from the requirements of title 41, chapter 6, Arizona Revised Statutes, during the federal emergency declaration period.

Sec. 2. Intent

In response to the federal declaration of emergency and guidance issued by the United States department of labor in unemployment insurance program letter number 10-20, the legislature intends that the authority granted to the department of economic security in section 1 of this act provide additional resources and flexibility for the unemployment insurance program for individuals and businesses affected by coronavirus disease 2019. **For affected individuals and businesses during the federal declaration of emergency, the legislature further intends that this state ease eligibility requirements and strengthen access to the unemployment insurance program, including waiving work search requirements and the waiting week and not charging employers that are directly impacted by coronavirus disease 2019 due to an illness in the workplace or direction from a public health official to isolate or quarantine workers.**

Sec. 3. Retroactivity

This act applies retroactively to from and after March 10, 2020.

Sec. 4. Emergency

This act is an emergency measure that is necessary to preserve the public peace, health or safety and is operative immediately as provided by law.

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR MARCH 27, 2020.

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE MARCH 27, 2020.