



Senate Bill No. 1312

Public Act No. 25-117

***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
LABOR DEPARTMENT.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Subdivision (3) of subsection (h) of section 31-225a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(3) The statement of charges provided for in subdivision (2) of this subsection shall constitute notice to the employer that it has been determined that the benefits reported in such statement were properly payable under this chapter to the claimants for the weeks and in the amounts shown in such statements. If the employer contends that benefits have been improperly charged due to fraud or error, a written protest setting forth reasons therefor shall be filed with the administrator [within sixty] not later than forty days of the date the quarterly statement was provided. An eligibility issue shall not be reopened on the basis of such quarterly statement if notification of such eligibility issue had previously been given to the employer under the provisions of section 31-241, and he or she failed to file a timely appeal therefrom or had the issue finally resolved against him or her.

Sec. 2. Subsection (c) of section 31-2e of the general statutes is

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repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(c) Not later than October 1, 2021, the Labor Commissioner shall designate an Unemployed Workers' Advocate, who shall [serve at the pleasure of the commissioner,] be in the classified service and shall devote full-time to manage the daily activities and duties of the Office of the Unemployed Workers' Advocate. The Unemployed Workers' Advocate shall have the necessary qualifications to perform the duties of said office, including, but not limited to, having expertise and experience in the fields of unemployment compensation benefits and advocacy for the rights of unemployed individuals. Within available appropriations, the Unemployed Workers' Advocate shall appoint and employ such assistants, employees and personnel as deemed necessary for the efficient and effective administration of the activities of the office.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Each physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse having knowledge of any person whom such physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse suspects is suffering from an illness related to the exposure of lead, phosphorus, arsenic, brass, wood alcohol or mercury or their compounds, anthrax or compressed air, or any other disease contracted as a result of the nature of the occupation of such person, shall, not later than forty-eight hours of discovery of such suspected occupational disease, provide the Labor Department, in a form and manner prescribed by the department, a report stating (1) the name, address and occupation of such person, (2) the name, address and business of such person's employer, (3) the nature of the disease, and (4) any other information required by the department. Any physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse who fails to provide the report required pursuant to this section or who fails to send such report within the time period prescribed by this section may be assessed a civil penalty of not more than ten dollars by the Labor

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Commissioner. No report made pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be admissible as evidence in any civil action or for a workers' compensation claim under chapter 568 of the general statutes.

(b) The Labor Commissioner may investigate and make recommendations regarding the elimination or prevention of occupational diseases reported by a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse pursuant to this section, provided no information obtained by the commissioner upon investigation shall be admissible as evidence in any civil action or for a workers' compensation claim under chapter 568 of the general statutes.

(c) The Labor Commissioner may share information contained in any report submitted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section with the Department of Public Health for purposes of any disease surveillance, prevention or control conducted by the department.

Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 31-53a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) The State Comptroller or the contracting authority acting pursuant to section 31-53 is hereby authorized and directed to pay to mechanics, laborers and workers from any accrued payments withheld under the terms of a contract terminated pursuant to subsection (b) of section 31-53 any wages found to be due such mechanics, laborers and workers pursuant to section 31-53. The Labor Commissioner is further authorized and directed to distribute a list to all departments of the state and political subdivisions of the state giving the names of persons or firms whom the Labor Commissioner has found to have (1) disregarded their obligations under section 31-53 and section 31-76c to employees and subcontractors on public works projects, (2) been barred from federal government contracts in accordance with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act, 49 Stat. 1011 (1931), 40 USC 276a-2, or (3) submitted

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false, misleading or materially inaccurate information under subsection (d) of section [21-53d] 31-53d.

Sec. 5. Subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of section 31-225a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(c) (1) (A) Any week for which the employer has compensated the claimant in the form of wages in lieu of notice, dismissal payments or any similar payment for loss of wages shall be considered a week of employment for the purpose of determining employer chargeability.

(B) No benefits shall be charged to any employer who paid wages of five hundred dollars or less to the claimant in his or her base period.

(C) No dependency allowance paid to a claimant shall be charged to any employer.

(D) In the event of a natural disaster declared by the President of the United States, no benefits paid on the basis of total or partial unemployment that is the result of physical damage to a place of employment caused by severe weather conditions including, but not limited to, hurricanes, snow storms, ice storms or flooding, or fire except where caused by the employer, shall be charged to any employer.

(E) If the administrator finds that (i) an individual's most recent separation from a base period employer occurred under conditions that would result in disqualification by reason of subdivision (2), (6) or (9) of subsection (a) of section 31-236, or (ii) an individual was discharged for violating an employer's drug testing policy, provided the policy has been adopted and applied consistent with sections 31-51t to 31-51aa, inclusive, section 14-261b and any applicable federal law, no benefits paid thereafter to such individual with respect to any week of unemployment that is based upon wages paid by such employer with respect to employment prior to such separation shall be charged to such

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employer's account, provided such employer shall have filed a notice with the administrator within the time allowed for appeal in section 31-241.

(F) No base period employer's account shall be charged with respect to benefits paid to a claimant if such employer continues to employ such claimant at the time the employer's account would otherwise have been charged to the same extent that he or she employed him or her during the individual's base period, provided the employer shall notify the administrator within the time allowed for appeal in section 31-241.

(G) If a claimant has failed to accept suitable employment under the provisions of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 31-236 and the disqualification has been imposed, the account of the employer who makes an offer of employment to a claimant who was a former employee shall not be charged with any benefit payments made to such claimant after such initial offer of reemployment until such time as such claimant resumes employment with such employer, provided such employer shall make application therefor in a form acceptable to the administrator. The administrator shall notify such employer whether or not his or her application is granted. Any decision of the administrator denying suspension of charges as herein provided may be appealed within the time allowed for appeal in section 31-241.

(H) Fifty per cent of benefits paid to a claimant under the federal-state extended duration unemployment benefits program established by the federal Employment Security Act shall be charged to the experience accounts of the claimant's base period employers in the same manner as the regular benefits paid for such benefit year.

(I) No base period employer's account shall be charged with respect to benefits paid to a claimant who voluntarily left suitable work with such employer (i) to care for a seriously ill spouse, parent or child, or (ii) due to the discontinuance of the transportation used by the claimant to

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get to and from work, as provided in subparagraphs (A)(ii) and (A)(iii) of subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 31-236.

(J) No base period employer's account shall be charged with respect to benefits paid to a claimant who has been discharged or suspended because the claimant has been disqualified from performing the work for which he or she was hired due to the loss of such claimant's operator license as a result of a drug or alcohol test or testing program conducted in accordance with section 14-44k, 14-227a or 14-227b while the claimant was off duty.

(K) No base period employer's account shall be charged with respect to benefits paid to a claimant whose separation from employment is attributable to the return of an individual who was absent from work due to a bona fide leave taken pursuant to sections 31-49f to 31-49t, inclusive, or 31-51kk to 31-51qq, inclusive.

[(L) On and after January 1, 2024, (i) no base period employer's account shall be charged with respect to benefits paid to a claimant through the voluntary shared work unemployment compensation program established pursuant to section 31-274j, if a claim for benefits is filed in a week in which the average rate of total unemployment in the state equals or exceeds six and one-half per cent based on the most recent three months of data published by the Labor Commissioner, and (ii) the Labor Commissioner may determine that no base period employer's account shall be charged with respect to benefits paid to a claimant through the voluntary shared work unemployment compensation program established pursuant to section 31-274j, if a claim for benefits is filed in a week in which the average rate of total unemployment in the state equals or exceeds eight per cent in the most recent one month of data published by the Labor Commissioner.]

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Governor's Action:
Approved July 1, 2025