

AN ACT relating to unemployment insurance.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. KRS 341.370 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) A worker shall be disqualified from receiving benefits for the duration of any period of unemployment with respect to which:
 - (a) He has failed without good cause either to apply for available, suitable work when so directed by the employment office or the secretary or to accept suitable work when offered him, or to return to his customary self-employment when so directed by the secretary; or
 - (b) He has been discharged for misconduct or dishonesty connected with his most recent work, or from any work which occurred after the first day of the worker's base period and which last preceded his most recent work, but legitimate activity in connection with labor organizations or failure to join a company union shall not be construed as misconduct; or
 - (c) He has left his most recent suitable work or any other suitable work which occurred after the first day of the worker's base period and which last preceded his most recent work voluntarily without good cause attributable to the employment. No otherwise eligible worker shall be disqualified from receiving benefits for:
 1. Leaving his next most recent suitable work which was concurrent with his most recent work;
 2. Leaving work which is one hundred (100) road miles or more, as measured on a one (1) way basis, from his home to accept work which is less than one hundred (100) road miles from his home;
 3. Accepting work which is a bona fide job offer with a reasonable expectation of continued employment; or
 4. ~~a.~~ Leaving work to accompany the worker's spouse to a different

state, *military base of assignment, or duty station that is one hundred (100) road miles or more, as measured on a one (1) way basis, from the worker's home* when the spouse is reassigned by the military.

~~[b. Subdivision a. of this subparagraph shall apply only if the state of relocation has adopted a statute substantially similar to that subdivision.]~~

- (2) A worker shall be disqualified from receiving benefits for any week with respect to which he knowingly made a false statement to establish his right to or the amount of his benefits, and, within the succeeding twenty-four (24) months, for the additional weeks immediately following the date of discovery, not to exceed a total of fifty-two (52), as may be determined by the secretary.
- (3) No worker shall be disqualified under paragraph (b) or (c) of subsection (1) of this section unless the employer, within a reasonable time as prescribed by regulations promulgated by the secretary, notifies the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet and the worker in writing of the alleged voluntary quitting or the discharge for misconduct. Nothing in this subsection shall restrict the right of the secretary to disqualify a worker whose employer has refused or failed to notify the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet of the alleged voluntary quitting or discharge for misconduct, if the alleged voluntary quitting or discharge for misconduct is known to the secretary prior to the time benefits are paid to the worker. The exercise of the right by the secretary, in the absence of timely notice from the employer, shall not relieve the employer's reserve account or reimbursing employer's account of benefit charges under the provisions of subsection (3) of KRS 341.530.
- (4) As used in this section and in subsection (3) of KRS 341.530, "most recent" work shall be construed as that work which occurred after the first day of the worker's

base period and which last preceded the week of unemployment with respect to which benefits are claimed; except that, if the work last preceding the week of unemployment was seasonal, intermittent, or temporary in nature, most recent work may be construed as that work last preceding the seasonal, intermittent, or temporary work.

- (5) No worker shall be disqualified or held ineligible under the provisions of this section or KRS 341.350, who is separated from employment pursuant to a labor management contract or agreement, or pursuant to an established employer plan, program, or policy, which permits the employer to close the plant or facility for purposes of vacation or maintenance.
- (6) (a) No worker shall be disqualified or held ineligible under the provisions of this section or KRS 341.350, who leaves work due to circumstances directly resulting from domestic violence and abuse as defined in KRS 403.720, and with respect to which:
1. The worker fears domestic violence and abuse at or en route to or from the worker's place of employment;
 2. The worker wishes to relocate to another geographic area in order to avoid future domestic violence and abuse against the worker, the worker's family, or co-workers; or
 3. The worker believes that leaving work is necessary for the future safety of the worker, the worker's family, or coworkers.
- (b) To assist in the determination as to whether a worker has experienced domestic violence and abuse for the purpose of benefit eligibility, the worker shall provide documentation of domestic violence and abuse as prescribed in administrative regulations promulgated by the secretary, including but not limited to police or court records or other documentation of domestic violence and abuse from a shelter worker, attorney, member of the clergy,

or medical or other professional from whom the worker has sought assistance.

(c) All documentation of evidence shall be kept confidential unless consent for disclosure is given by the worker.

(7) "Discharge for misconduct" as used in this section shall include but not be limited to, separation initiated by an employer for falsification of an employment application to obtain employment through subterfuge; knowing violation of a reasonable and uniformly enforced rule of an employer; unsatisfactory attendance if the worker cannot show good cause for absences or tardiness; damaging the employer's property through gross negligence; refusing to obey reasonable instructions; reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs or consuming alcohol or drugs on employer's premises during working hours; conduct endangering safety of self or co-workers; and incarceration in jail following conviction of a misdemeanor or felony by a court of competent jurisdiction, which results in missing at least five (5) days work.

(8)~~(7)~~ "Duration of any period of unemployment," as that term is used in this section, shall be the period of time beginning with the worker's discharge, voluntary quitting, or failure to apply for or accept suitable work and running until the worker has worked in each of ten (10) weeks, whether or not consecutive, and has earned ten (10) times his weekly benefit rate in employment covered under the provisions of this chapter or a similar law of another state or of the United States.

➔Section 2. KRS 341.530 is amended to read as follows:

(1) The Office of Employment and Training, Department of Workforce Investment, shall maintain a reserve account for each subject employer making contributions to the fund and a reimbursing employer account for each subject employer making payment in lieu of contributions, and shall, except as provided in KRS 341.590, credit to such account the total amount of all contributions or benefit reimbursement

paid by the employer on his own behalf. Nothing in this section or elsewhere in this chapter shall be construed to grant any employer or individual who is or was in his employ prior claims or rights to the amounts paid by him into the fund.

- (2) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, all regular benefits paid to an eligible worker in accordance with KRS 341.380 plus the extended benefits paid in accordance with KRS 341.700 to 341.740, subject to the provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection, shall be charged against the reserve account or reimbursing employer account of his most recent employer. No employer shall be deemed to be the most recent employer unless the eligible worker to whom benefits are payable shall have worked for such employer in each of ten (10) weeks whether or not consecutive back to the beginning of the worker's base period.
 - (a) Subject employers, which are not governmental entities as defined in KRS 341.069, shall be charged one-half (1/2) of the extended benefits paid in accordance with KRS 341.700 to 341.740; and
 - (b) Subject employers which are governmental entities, as defined in KRS 341.069, shall be charged for all extended benefits paid in accordance with KRS 341.700 to 341.740 for compensable weeks occurring on or after January 1, 1979, and for one-half (1/2) of the extended benefits paid for compensable weeks occurring prior to such date.
- (3) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (2) of this section, benefits paid to an eligible worker and chargeable to a contributing employer's reserve account under such subsection shall be charged against the pooled account if such worker was discharged by such employer for misconduct connected with his most recent work for such employer, voluntarily left his most recent work with such employer without good cause attributable to the employment, *voluntarily left the employer to protect himself or herself, his or her family, or coworkers from domestic violence and abuse*, or the employer has continued to provide part-time employment and wages,

without interruption, to the same extent that was provided from the date of hire, and the employer within a reasonable time, as prescribed by regulation of the secretary, notifies the office, in writing, of the alleged voluntary quitting, discharge for misconduct or continuing part-time employment; provided, however, that no employer making payments to the fund in lieu of contributions shall be relieved of charges by reason of this subsection.

- (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, no contributing employer's reserve account shall be relieved of any charges for benefits relating to an improper benefit payment to a worker established after October 21, 2013, if:
 - (a) The improper benefit payment was made because the employer, or an agent of the employer, was at fault for failing to respond timely or adequately to the request of the secretary for information relating to a claim for benefits; and
 - (b) The employer, or an agent of the employer, has a pattern of failing to respond timely or adequately to requests under paragraph (a) of this subsection. For purposes of this paragraph, a "pattern of failing" means at least six (6) failures occur in a calendar year or the failure to respond to two percent (2%) of such requests in a calendar year, whichever is greater.
- (5) Any determination under subsection (4) of this section shall be transmitted to the last known physical or electronic address provided by the employer and may be appealed in accordance with the provisions of KRS 341.420(2).
- (6) Each subject employer's reserve account or reimbursing account shall, unless terminated as of the computation date (as defined in subsection (5) of KRS 341.270), be charged with all benefits paid to eligible workers which are chargeable to such reserve account or reimbursing account under subsection (2) of this section. A subject employer's reserve account or reimbursing account shall be deemed to be terminated if he has ceased to be subject to this chapter, and his account has been closed and any balance remaining therein has been transferred to the fund's pooled

account or to a successor's account as provided in KRS 341.540 or has been refunded if the employer is a reimbursing employer.

- (7) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, two (2) or more nonprofit (Internal Revenue Code sec. 501(c)(3) organizations may jointly request the secretary to establish a group reserve account or reimbursing account for such nonprofit organizations. Two (2) or more governmental entities may jointly request the secretary to establish a group reserve account or reimbursing account, and once established, such account shall remain in effect at least two (2) calendar years and thereafter until either dissolved at the discretion of the secretary or upon filing application for dissolution by the group members. Each member of a group shall be jointly and severally liable for all payments due under this chapter from each or all of such group members. The secretary shall prescribe such procedures as he deems necessary for the establishment, maintenance, and dissolution of a group reserve account or reimbursing account.
- (8) Any subject contributing employer may at any time on or before December 31, 2011, make voluntary payments to the fund, additional to the contributions required under KRS 341.260 and 341.270. Effective January 1, 2012, any subject contributing employer with a negative reserve account balance may make voluntary payments to the fund every other calendar year, in addition to the contributions required under KRS 341.260 and 341.270. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, contributions paid on or before the computation date and voluntary payments made within twenty (20) days following the mailing of notices of new rates shall be credited to an employer's reserve account as of the computation date, provided no voluntary payments shall be used in computing an employer's rate unless the payment is made prior to the expiration of one hundred and twenty (120) days after the beginning of the year for which the rate is effective. Voluntary payments by any employer shall not exceed any negative balance they may have in

their reserve account as of the computation date. Any employer who is delinquent in the payment of contributions, penalties, or interest as of the computation date shall be entitled to make voluntary payments only after the amount of the delinquency is paid in full.

➔Section 3. KRS 341.360 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) No worker may be paid benefits for any week of unemployment:
 - (a) With respect to which a strike or other bona fide labor dispute which caused him to leave or lose his employment is in active progress in the establishment in which he is or was employed, except that benefits may be paid unless the employer notifies the Office of Employment and Training, Department of Workforce Investment, in writing within seven (7) days after the beginning of such alleged strike or labor dispute of the alleged existence of such strike or labor dispute. For the purpose of this subsection, a lockout shall not be deemed to be a strike or a bona fide labor dispute and no worker shall be denied benefits by reason of a lockout;
 - (b) For which he has received or is seeking unemployment compensation under an unemployment compensation law of another state or of the United States, except as otherwise provided by an arrangement between this state and such other state or the United States; but if the appropriate agency of such state or of the United States finally determines that he is not entitled to such unemployment compensation, this subsection shall not apply; or
 - (c) 1. Which, when based on service in an instructional, research, or principal administrative capacity in an institution of higher education as defined in KRS 341.067(2) or in an educational institution as defined in KRS 341.067(4), begins during the period between two (2) successive academic years, or during a similar period between two (2) regular terms, whether or not successive, or during a period of paid sabbatical

leave provided for in the individual's contract, if the worker performs such services in the first of such academic years or terms and if there is a contract or a reasonable assurance that the worker will perform such services in any such capacity for any institution or institutions of higher education or an educational institution in the second of such academic years or such terms; or

2. Which, when based on service other than as defined in subparagraph 1. of this paragraph, in an institution of higher education or an educational institution, as defined in KRS 341.067(2) or (4), begins during the period between two (2) successive academic years or terms, if the worker performs such services in the first of such academic years or terms and there is a reasonable assurance that the worker will perform such services in the second of such academic years or terms; except that if benefits are denied to any worker under this paragraph and such worker was not offered an opportunity to perform such services for such institution of higher education or such educational institution for the second of such academic years or terms, such worker shall be entitled to a retroactive payment of benefits for each week for which the worker filed a timely claim for benefits and for which benefits were denied solely by reason of this paragraph; or
3. Which, when based on service in any capacity defined in subparagraphs 1. and 2. of this paragraph, begins during an established and customary vacation period or holiday recess if the worker performs any such services in the period immediately before such vacation period or holiday recess, and there is a reasonable assurance that such worker will perform any such services in the period immediately following such vacation period or holiday recess; or

4. Based on service in any capacity defined in subparagraph 1. or 2. of this paragraph when such service is performed by the worker in an institution of higher education or an educational institution, as defined in KRS 341.067(2) or (4), while the worker is in the employ of an educational service agency, and such unemployment begins during the periods and pursuant to the conditions specified in subparagraphs 1., 2., and 3. of this paragraph. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "educational service agency" means a governmental agency or governmental entity which is established and operated exclusively for the purpose of providing such services to one (1) or more institutions of higher education or educational institutions;

except that any benefits paid to a worker based on service other than as defined in subsection (1)(c)1. of this section performed in an institution of higher education as defined in KRS 341.067(2) shall be deemed to have been paid as a result of Office of Employment and Training, Department of Workforce Investment, error and not recoverable by the cabinet or such institution if such payment is improper by virtue of the retroactive application to October 30, 1983, of subsection (1)(c)2. of this section.

- (2) Benefits shall not be paid to any individual on the basis of any services, substantially all of which consist of participating in sports or athletic events or training or preparing to so participate, for any week which commences during the period between two (2) successive sport seasons or similar periods and there is a reasonable assurance that such individual will perform such services in the later of such seasons or similar periods.
- (3) (a) Benefits shall not be paid on the basis of services performed by an alien unless such alien is an individual who was lawfully admitted for permanent residence at the time such services were performed, was lawfully present for purposes of

performing such services, or was residing in the United States under color of law at the time such services were performed, including an alien who was lawfully present in the United States as a result of the application of the provisions of Section 203(a)(7) or Section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

- (b) Any data or information required of individuals applying for benefits to determine whether benefits are not payable to them because of their alien status shall be uniformly required from all applicants for benefits.
 - (c) In the case of an individual whose application for benefits would otherwise be approved, no determination that benefits to such individual are not payable because of his alien status shall be made except upon a preponderance of the evidence.
- (4) With respect to which the worker is suspended from work for misconduct, as defined in KRS 341.370(7)~~(6)~~, connected with the work.