

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 176 Session of 2025

INTRODUCED BY ROBINSON, KANE, SAVAL, HAYWOOD, HUGHES, BARTOLOTTA AND TARTAGLIONE, JANUARY 24, 2025

REFERRED TO LABOR AND INDUSTRY, JANUARY 24, 2025

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of December 5, 1936 (2nd Sp.Sess., 1937
 2 P.L.2897, No.1), entitled "An act establishing a system of
 3 unemployment compensation to be administered by the
 4 Department of Labor and Industry and its existing and newly
 5 created agencies with personnel (with certain exceptions)
 6 selected on a civil service basis; requiring employers to
 7 keep records and make reports, and certain employers to pay
 8 contributions based on payrolls to provide moneys for the
 9 payment of compensation to certain unemployed persons;
 10 providing procedure and administrative details for the
 11 determination, payment and collection of such contributions
 12 and the payment of such compensation; providing for
 13 cooperation with the Federal Government and its agencies;
 14 creating certain special funds in the custody of the State
 15 Treasurer; and prescribing penalties," in compensation,
 16 providing for eligibility related to domestic violence.

17 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
 18 hereby enacts as follows:

19 Section 1. The act of December 5, 1936 (2nd Sp.Sess., 1937
 20 P.L.2897, No.1), known as the Unemployment Compensation Law, is
 21 amended by adding a section to read:

22 Section 402.7. Eligibility Related to Domestic Violence.--

23 (a) An employe shall not be deemed to be ineligible under
 24 section 402(b) for voluntarily leaving employment or section
 25 402(e) for failure to attend work if, due to a domestic violence

1 situation, the individual's continued employment would
2 jeopardize the safety of the individual or a member of the
3 individual's family or household.

4 (b) Verification of a domestic violence situation may be
5 provided on the initial application for benefits through any one
6 of the following which documents recent domestic violence:

7 (1) An active or recently issued protective order or other
8 order, court records, a police record, medical treatment
9 records, social services records or child protective services
10 records.

11 (2) A statement supporting the existence of recent domestic
12 violence from a qualified professional from whom the individual
13 has sought assistance, such as a counselor, shelter worker,
14 member of the clergy, attorney or health care worker, or a
15 similar statement from a friend or relative from whom the
16 individual has sought assistance.

17 (3) A self-affirmation that the individual's continued
18 employment would jeopardize the safety of the individual or a
19 member of the individual's family or household due to the
20 domestic violence situation.

21 (4) Any other type of evidence that reasonably proves
22 domestic violence.

23 (c) The documentation of domestic violence shall remain
24 confidential, and the department may not disclose the existence
25 of a domestic violence situation in any notice provided to an
26 employer regarding the claim for compensation.

27 (d) If an individual who submits documentation under
28 subsection (b) in a form acceptable to the department is
29 otherwise eligible under section 401, the individual shall be
30 considered eligible, and the department shall expedite a

1 determination of eligibility under section 501. An individual
2 who submits a self-affirmation under subsection (b) (3) shall
3 submit documentation of the domestic violence situation under
4 subsection (b) (1), (2) or (4) to the department within one
5 hundred twenty (120) days of the date of application. This
6 subsection shall not be construed to prohibit redetermination of
7 eligibility within eighteen (18) months of the application for
8 benefits if the department receives information within eighteen
9 (18) months of the application for benefits indicating that the
10 self-affirmation submitted under subsection (b) (3) included
11 false information or an individual fails to submit documentation
12 of the domestic violence situation under subsection (b) (1), (2)
13 or (4) within one hundred twenty (120) days of the date of
14 application.

15 (e) The department shall grant relief from charges under
16 section 302.1 to base year employers for benefit charges related
17 to a claim that is determined eligible in accordance with this
18 section. Relief from charges shall be provided without a request
19 from the employer.

20 (f) Subject to subsection (c), if an employer is granted
21 relief from charges without a request under subsection (e), the
22 department shall notify the employer that relief from charges
23 shall be granted without the need for the employer to submit a
24 request. Notice under this subsection may be included on the
25 eligibility determination provided to the employer or on other
26 relevant claim documentation delivered to the employer.

27 Section 2. The Department of Labor and Industry shall
28 consult with the Office of Victim Advocate and relevant advocacy
29 groups when implementing section 402.7 of the act, including
30 updates to the application for unemployment compensation,

1 updated notices to claimants and employers and the development
2 of any forms related to documentation of a domestic violence
3 situation.

4 Section 3. This act shall take effect in six months.