
The original instrument was prepared by Yoursheka George. The following digest, which does not constitute a part of the legislative instrument, was prepared by Michelle D. Ridge.

SB 225 Engrossed DIGEST Reese
2021 Regular Session

Present law provides relative to the maximum weekly amount of unemployment benefits.

Present law requires the secretary of the La. Workforce Commission (commission) to provide the Revenue Estimating Conference (conference) with certification from the U.S. Treasury of the September first balance of the state unemployment trust fund of the current calendar year. Requires the conference to adopt and report its official projection to the commission no earlier than September fifth and no later than September 30th.

Present law provides that after the conference's adoption of the official projection of the state unemployment trust fund for September first of the next calendar year, the secretary shall determine the comparative balance. The comparative balance is the lesser amount of the balance of the state unemployment trust fund as certified by the U.S. Treasury as of September first in the current calendar year or as projected by the conference for the September first of the next calendar year.

Present law provides that the amount of the comparative balance shall be used by the secretary to determine the applied trust fund balance range, and simultaneously, the maximum weekly benefit.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law sets the maximum weekly benefit as follows:

- (1) When the applied trust fund balance range is less than \$750,000,000, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall be \$221.
- (2) When the applied trust fund balance range is equal to or greater than \$750,000,000 but less than \$1,150,000,000, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall be \$247.
- (3) When the applied trust fund balance range is equal to or greater than \$1,150,000,000 but less than \$1,400,000,000, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall be \$258.
- (4) When the applied trust fund balance range is greater than \$1,400,000,000, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall be \$284.

Proposed law increases the maximum weekly benefit as follows:

- (1) When the applied trust fund balance range is less than \$750,000,000, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall be \$251.

- (2) When the applied trust fund balance range is equal to or greater than \$750,000,000 but less than \$1,150,000,000, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall be \$277.
- (3) When the applied trust fund balance range is equal to or greater than \$1,150,000,000 but less than \$1,400,000,000, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall be \$290.
- (4) When the applied trust fund balance range is greater than \$1,400,000,000, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall be \$300.

Present law provides that whenever a claimant's base period wages for insured work is not less than \$1,200, his weekly benefit amount shall be 1/25th of the average of his total wages for insured work paid during the four quarters of his base period and caps the weekly benefit amount paid at \$284.

Proposed law changes formula for the calculation of a claimant's weekly benefit amount to be determined each calendar year based upon the state's average unemployment rate for the third quarter of the previous calendar year.

Proposed law caps the weekly benefit amount paid at \$300.

Proposed law defines "state average unemployment rate" to mean the average of the three months for the most recent third calendar year quarter of the seasonally adjusted unemployment rates as published by the commission, who shall be responsible for collecting and publishing unemployment rate data.

Present law provides that any otherwise eligible individual shall be entitled during any benefit year to a total amount of benefits equal to 26 times his weekly benefit amount, as determined by law provided that such total amount of benefits, if not a multiple of one dollar, shall be rounded to the nearest dollar.

Proposed law changes the duration of benefits as follows:

- (1) Any time the states average unemployment rate is at or below 5.5%, any otherwise eligible individual shall be entitled during any benefit year to a total amount of benefits equal to 12 times his weekly benefit amount as determined by law.
- (2) In addition to the amount of benefits equal to 12 times his weekly benefit and when the state's average unemployment rate is above 5.5%, any otherwise eligible individual shall be entitled to an additional amount of benefits equivalent to his weekly benefit amount determined by law times the number of .5% increments that the state's average unemployment rate exceeds 5.5%, provided that such total amount of benefits, if not one dollar, shall be rounded to the nearest dollar. Provides that the additional amounts of weekly benefits shall not exceed an amount equivalent to eight times his weekly benefit amount.

Proposed law provides for extended benefits for up to eight weeks for a person who has exhausted their regular benefits and is enrolled and participating in an approved training program. Provides that

the weekly extended benefit amount is equal to the person's weekly benefit amount payable to such person during his benefit year. Provides that a person shall be determined ineligible for any extended benefit if he is no longer enrolled or participating in the training program or has completed the program.

Effective when the state's average unemployment rate, as determined by the Louisiana Workforce Commission, is less than 5.5% for two consecutive calendar quarters and the programs authorized by the 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act have expired.

(Amends R.S. 23:1474(I), 1592(A) and (E), and 1595; adds R.S. 23:1606)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations to the original bill

1. Provides for extended benefits for an individual who has exhausted regular unemployment benefits and who is enrolled and participating in an approved training program.
2. Specifies that the weekly benefit amount shall be determined each calendar year based upon the state average unemployment rate.
3. Adds that in addition the unemployment rate reaching a certain percentage for a specified period, the Act will be effective upon the termination of programs authorized in the 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.