
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that many Hawaii workers
2 are unemployed as a result of the coronavirus disease 2019
3 (COVID-19) pandemic. Many state employment offices that assist
4 these unemployed workers are closed to in-person assistance and
5 require applicants to conduct business solely through online
6 web-based options. However, many of Hawaii's unemployed workers
7 lack basic computer skills and ready access to the internet.
8 Additionally, many unemployed workers are not proficient in
9 speaking, reading, or writing the English language. The purpose
10 of this bill is to provide meaningful assistance to unemployed
11 workers.

12 SECTION 2. (a) The department of labor and industrial
13 relations shall open for in-person assistance at least one
14 employment office in the counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui,
15 and at least two employment offices in the county of Honolulu to
16 be located in Waipahu and Honolulu.



1 (b) For the purposes of this section, "employment office"
2 has the same meaning as section 383-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

3 SECTION 3. The board of education and the state librarian
4 shall cooperate with the department of labor and industrial
5 relations to enact policies, including training as needed, to
6 ensure that all state library staff can minimally assist any
7 person wishing to use public access computers at any state
8 library to file the person's unemployment claim. All public
9 access computers at state libraries shall have the department of
10 labor and industrial relations unemployment claims webpage
11 bookmarked on all web browsers and, to the extent possible, at
12 least one public access computer in each state library shall be
13 reserved for persons wishing to file a claim for unemployment
14 insurance.

15 SECTION 4. The department of labor and industrial
16 relations shall hire, assign, or reassign staff as necessary to
17 increase the handling capacity for unemployment claims by thirty
18 per cent.

19 SECTION 5. The legislature allocated \$10,000,000 to the
20 department of labor and industrial relations for the purpose of
21 upgrading and modernizing the department's computer technology



1 used in the unemployment claims system. The department of labor
2 and industrial relations shall complete this upgrade along with
3 all other provisions of this Act within six months of the
4 effective date of this Act.

5 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY: _____

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JAN 22 2021



Report Title:

Unemployment Insurance; Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

Description:

Requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to open at least one office in each county for claimants wishing to file for unemployment insurance in person. Requires state library employees to minimally assist claimants wishing to file for unemployment insurance using public access computers at the library. Requires the department of labor and industrial relations to hire or reassign staff to increase capacity of processing unemployment insurance claims. Requires the department to complete its computer upgrade and modification project within six months of this Acts passage.

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