

June 28, 2011

**MEMORANDUM NO: 051-11HR**

**TO: Agency Administrators**

**FROM: Bobbie Chappell**

**VIA: Rip Colvin, Executive Director**

**RE: Governor Scott signs HB 7005 Unemployment Compensation into law**

**As discussed during the Unemployment Compensation Webinar:**

**[Governor Rick Scott Signs Bill to Enhance Efficiency and Accountability of Unemployment Compensation Program](#)**

TALLAHASSEE – Governor Rick Scott today signed HB 7005 into law, implementing several reforms to the Unemployment Compensation (UC) program that will save the state money, reduce taxes on employers, and help get Floridians back to work.

“This new law will enhance the Unemployment Compensation program’s efficiency for claimants, businesses, and the state,” said Agency for Workforce Innovation Director Cynthia R. Lorenzo.” Reform measures included in this legislation are projected to save our state more than \$100 million annually, easing the tax burden on employers to help them expand and create jobs.”

**Reforms include:**

Misconduct – Under the new law, misconduct is defined as any action that demonstrates conscious disregard of an employer’s interests and is found to be a deliberate disregard or violation of reasonable standards of behavior, and may include activities that did not occur at the workplace or during working hours.

**Effective July 1, 2011**

Benefit Payments – Claimants receiving benefits by paper check as of July 1, 2011 may continue to do so until the end of their claims. Claimants whose claims were filed after July 1, 2011 must select payments via Florida Unemployment Compensation Debit Card or direct deposit to their bank account.

**Effective August 1, 2011**

Online Filing and Certification of Weeks – Initial and continued claims must be filed electronically. The change will improve government efficiency and provide a projected \$4.7 million savings annually in administrative costs.

Work Search – Claimants are required on a weekly basis to contact five potential employers and provide this information via the Internet during their bi-weekly certification for benefits. A quick, efficient way to contact employers is by using the Employ Florida Marketplace at [employflorida.com](http://employflorida.com), the state’s online job matching system where you can search thousands of job postings and apply for jobs.

If a claimant is not able to make at least five employer contacts in a week, meeting with a representative at a local One-Stop Career Center for reemployment services may satisfy this requirement for that week.

Skills Assessment – In order to receive benefits, claimants filing new claims must complete an initial online skills assessment. The results of the assessment will be used by your local One-Stop Career Center to assist in your job search efforts.

**Effective January 1, 2012**

Duration of Benefits – The maximum duration of benefits adjusts from the current 26 weeks to a range of 12 to 23 weeks. The bill indexes maximum weeks of benefits to the state’s unemployment rate, which will be determined once a year.

If you have any question, please direct them to Andy Snuggs at [SnuggsA@justiceadmin.org](mailto:SnuggsA@justiceadmin.org).

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