

## CHAPTER 660

(House Bill 432)

AN ACT concerning

### **Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation – Unemployment Insurance Claims – Lower Appeals Division**

FOR the purpose of establishing a Lower Appeals Division in the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation for unemployment insurance claims; requiring the Secretary of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation to appoint a chief hearing examiner as head of the Lower Appeals Division; requiring the chief hearing examiner to be in a certain professional service in accordance with certain provisions of law; requiring the chief hearing examiner, subject to the approval of the Secretary, to appoint certain personnel; requiring the Secretary to have certain authority over certain personnel; requiring the Lower Appeals Division to hear and decide certain appeals; requiring the Secretary to adopt certain regulations under certain circumstances; authorizing certain hearing examiners to administer certain oaths, certify certain acts, and take certain depositions; authorizing certain hearing examiners to issue certain subpoenas for certain purposes; specifying that certain subpoenas must be served in a certain manner; authorizing certain courts to pass certain orders directing certain compliance with certain subpoenas; prohibiting certain persons from being excused from attending certain proceedings for certain grounds; prohibiting prosecution or certain penalties or certain forfeitures under certain circumstances; authorizing certain prosecutions and certain punishment for certain perjury; requiring certain hearing examiners to conduct certain hearings or appeals in a certain manner; specifying that certain hearing examiners are not bound by certain rules of evidence or certain rules of procedure; requiring certain hearing examiners to consider certain evidence; prohibiting certain hearing examiners from participating in certain proceedings; providing that the status of the Secretary as a party to a case may not constitute certain interest relating to certain hearing examiners; subjecting certain ex parte communications to certain provisions of law; providing for a certain exception to provisions of law relating to certain ex parte communications; authorizing certain hearing examiners to consolidate certain claims under certain circumstances; authorizing certain hearing officers who consolidate certain claims to make certain administrative and evidential determinations; requiring certain records to be kept; requiring certain testimony to be transcribed; authorizing certain compensation for certain witnesses; prohibiting the Lower Appeals Division from charging certain fees; requiring certain hearing examiners to give certain notice that includes certain information by certain methods; authorizing certain claimants to be represented by certain lawyers or certain agents; authorizing certain lawyers to charge and accept certain compensation; prohibiting certain

agents from charging or accepting certain compensation; authorizing certain employers to appear pro se or with certain representation; prohibiting the solicitation of certain appearances on behalf of certain claimants; authorizing certain appeals; authorizing the Secretary to be a party to certain appeals; requiring certain hearing examiners to give certain opportunity for a fair hearing to certain parties, make certain findings, and affirm, modify, or reverse certain determinations or redeterminations under certain circumstances; requiring certain hearing examiners to provide certain parties certain notice and certain copies of certain decisions; providing that certain decisions of certain hearing examiners are final unless further review is initiated under certain provisions of law; clarifying certain personnel appointed by the Board of Appeals; requiring the Board of Appeals to hear and decide certain appeals from the Lower Appeals Division; authorizing the chief hearing examiner of the Lower Appeals Division to extend the time for certain appeals; authorizing certain claimants to appeal to the Lower Appeals Division under certain circumstances; correcting certain cross-references; providing for the correction of certain references by the publishers of the Annotated Code; defining certain terms; and generally relating to the Lower Appeals Division of the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.

BY renumbering

Article – Labor and Employment

Section 8–101(t) through (y), respectively; and 8–501 through 8–503, 8–504 through 8–508, and 8–510 through 8–512, respectively, and the subtitle “Subtitle 5. Board of Appeals of Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation”

to be Section 8–101(u) through (z), respectively; and 8–5A–01 through 8–5A–03 and 8–5A–05 through 8–5A–12, respectively, and the subtitle “Subtitle 5A. Board of Appeals of the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation”

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

BY repealing

Article – Labor and Employment

Section 8–509

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – Labor and Employment

Section 8–101(a) and (f)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article – Labor and Employment

Section 8–101(t); 8–501 through 8–508 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 5.

Lower Appeals Division of the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation”; and 8–5A–04

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Labor and Employment

Section 8–602(c)(4), 8–621(d), and 8–806

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – Labor and Employment

Section 8–5A–01

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

(As enacted by Section 1 of this Act)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Labor and Employment

Section 8–5A–03(c)(1), 8–5A–05(a), 8–5A–07(a), (c), and (d), 8–5A–08, 8–5A–10(a) and (b), and 8–5A–11

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

(As enacted by Section 1 of this Act)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That Section(s) 8–101(t) through (y), respectively; and 8–501 through 8–503, 8–504 through 8–508, and 8–510 through 8–512, respectively, and the subtitle “Subtitle 5. Board of Appeals of Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation” of Article – Labor and Employment of the Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be Section(s) 8–101(u) through (z), respectively; and 8–5A–01 through 8–5A–03 and 8–5A–05 through 8–5A–12, respectively, and the subtitle “Subtitle 5A. Board of Appeals of the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation”.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section(s) 8–509 of Article – Labor and Employment of the Annotated Code of Maryland be repealed.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Labor and Employment**

8–101.

(a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated.

(f) "Board of Appeals" means the Board of Appeals of the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.

**(T) "LOWER APPEALS DIVISION" MEANS THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION.**

**SUBTITLE 5. LOWER APPEALS DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION.**

**8-501.**

**THERE IS A LOWER APPEALS DIVISION IN THE DEPARTMENT.**

**8-502.**

**(A) (1) THE SECRETARY SHALL APPOINT A CHIEF HEARING EXAMINER AS HEAD OF THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION.**

**(2) THE CHIEF HEARING EXAMINER SHALL BE IN THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 6-402 OF THE STATE PERSONNEL AND PENSIONS ARTICLE.**

**(B) (1) SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE SECRETARY, THE CHIEF HEARING EXAMINER SHALL APPOINT THE NUMBER OF HEARING EXAMINERS AND OTHER PERSONNEL NEEDED FOR THE EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE OF THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION.**

**(2) THE SECRETARY SHALL HAVE ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY OVER ALL PERSONNEL.**

**8-503.**

**THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION SHALL HEAR AND DECIDE APPEALS FROM THE DETERMINATIONS OF THE CLAIMS EXAMINERS.**

**8-504.**

**THE SECRETARY, WITH THE ADVICE OF THE CHIEF HEARING EXAMINER, SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-206 OF THE STATE**

**GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO GOVERN APPEALS AND HEARINGS BEFORE THE HEARING EXAMINERS.**

**8-505.**

**(A) TO ENFORCE THIS SUBTITLE, A HEARING EXAMINER MAY:**

- (1) ADMINISTER AN OATH;**
- (2) CERTIFY TO AN OFFICIAL ACT; AND**
- (3) TAKE A DEPOSITION.**

**(B) (1) TO ENFORCE THIS SUBTITLE, A HEARING EXAMINER MAY ISSUE A SUBPOENA FOR THE ATTENDANCE OF A WITNESS TO TESTIFY OR FOR THE PRODUCTION OF BOOKS, CORRESPONDENCE, MEMORANDA, PAPERS, AND OTHER RECORDS.**

**(2) A SUBPOENA ISSUED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE SERVED IN ANY MANNER IN WHICH COURT SUBPOENAS ARE AUTHORIZED TO BE SERVED.**

**(3) IF A PERSON FAILS TO COMPLY WITH A SUBPOENA ISSUED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION, ON A COMPLAINT FILED BY THE CHIEF HEARING EXAMINER OR AN AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHIEF HEARING EXAMINER, THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY WHERE THE INVESTIGATION OR HEARING IS CONDUCTED OR THE PERSON IS PRESENT, RESIDES, OR TRANSACTS BUSINESS MAY PASS AN ORDER DIRECTING COMPLIANCE WITH THE SUBPOENA OR COMPELLING TESTIMONY.**

**(4) (I) A PERSON MAY NOT BE EXCUSED FROM ATTENDING A PROCEEDING AND TESTIFYING OR PRODUCING BOOKS, CORRESPONDENCE, MEMORANDA, PAPERS, AND OTHER RECORDS BEFORE A HEARING EXAMINER IN OBEDIENCE TO A SUBPOENA ISSUED UNDER THIS SECTION ON THE GROUND THAT THE TESTIMONY OR EVIDENCE REQUIRED OF THE PERSON MAY TEND TO INCRIMINATE THE PERSON OR SUBJECT THE PERSON TO A PENALTY OR FORFEITURE.**

**(II) AFTER HAVING CLAIMED THE PRIVILEGE OF THE PERSON AGAINST SELF-INCRIMINATION, A PERSON MAY NOT BE PROSECUTED OR SUBJECTED TO ANY PENALTY OR FORFEITURE BECAUSE OF ANY TRANSACTION, MATTER, OR THING ABOUT WHICH THE PERSON IS COMPELLED TO TESTIFY OR PRODUCE EVIDENCE.**

**(III) A PERSON MAY BE PROSECUTED AND PUNISHED FOR PERJURY COMMITTED IN TESTIFYING.**

**8-506.**

**(A) (1) A HEARING EXAMINER SHALL CONDUCT A HEARING OR APPEAL IN A MANNER THAT ASCERTAINS THE SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS OF THE PARTIES.**

**(2) (I) A HEARING EXAMINER IS NOT BOUND BY STATUTORY OR COMMON LAW RULES OF EVIDENCE OR TECHNICAL RULES OF PROCEDURE.**

**(II) A HEARING EXAMINER SHALL CONSIDER EVIDENCE OFFERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-213 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.**

**(B) (1) (I) A HEARING EXAMINER MAY NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY PROCEEDING IN WHICH THE HEARING EXAMINER HAS A DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST.**

**(II) THE STATUS OF THE SECRETARY AS A PARTY TO A CASE MAY NOT CONSTITUTE A DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST AS TO A HEARING EXAMINER.**

**(2) (I) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO § 10-219 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.**

**(II) SECTION 10-219(D) OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE DOES NOT APPLY TO EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.**

**(C) (1) A HEARING EXAMINER MAY CONSOLIDATE CLAIMS BY MORE THAN ONE INDIVIDUAL OR CLAIMS BY A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL FOR 2 OR MORE WEEKS OF UNEMPLOYMENT IF:**

**(I) THE SAME OR SUBSTANTIALLY SIMILAR EVIDENCE IS RELEVANT AND MATERIAL TO THE MATTERS AT ISSUE; AND**

**(II) IN THE JUDGMENT OF THE HEARING EXAMINER, THE CONSOLIDATION WOULD NOT BE PREJUDICIAL TO A PARTY.**

**(2) WHEN CLAIMS ARE CONSOLIDATED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION, THE HEARING EXAMINER MAY:**

**(I) SET THE SAME TIME AND PLACE FOR CONSIDERING EACH CLAIM;**

**(II) CONDUCT JOINT HEARINGS;**

**(III) MAKE A SINGLE RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS; AND**

**(IV) CONSIDER EVIDENCE THAT IS INTRODUCED IN A PROCEEDING FOR ONE CLAIM AS HAVING BEEN INTRODUCED FOR ANOTHER CLAIM.**

**(D) (1) A RECORD SHALL BE KEPT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-218 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, OF ALL TESTIMONY AND PROCEEDINGS BEFORE A HEARING EXAMINER.**

**(2) TESTIMONY SHALL BE TRANSCRIBED IF:**

**(I) JUDICIAL REVIEW IS INITIATED; OR**

**(II) THE HEARING EXAMINER OR THE BOARD OF APPEALS ORDERS A TRANSCRIPTION.**

**(E) (1) A WITNESS WHO IS SUBPOENAED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE IS ENTITLED TO COMPENSATION AT A RATE THAT THE CHIEF HEARING EXAMINER SETS.**

**(2) THE COMPENSATION OF A WITNESS WHO IS SUBPOENAED ON BEHALF OF THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION OR A CLAIMANT SHALL BE CONSIDERED PART OF THE EXPENSE OF ADMINISTERING THIS TITLE.**

**(F) THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION MAY NOT CHARGE A CLAIMANT A FEE IN ANY PROCEEDING UNDER THIS TITLE.**

**(G) (1) A HEARING EXAMINER PROMPTLY SHALL GIVE EACH PARTY TO A PROCEEDING BEFORE IT WRITTEN NOTICE OF ITS DECISION BY MAILING THE NOTICE TO EACH PARTY AT THE LAST KNOWN ADDRESS OF THE PARTY OR BUSINESS ADDRESS OF A LICENSEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-209(A) OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, OR OTHERWISE DELIVERING THE NOTICE.**

**(2) THE NOTICE SHALL:**

(I) INCLUDE THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW THAT SUPPORT THE DECISION;

(II) BE ACCOMPANIED BY ANY ORDER NECESSARY TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE DECISION; AND

(III) CONFORM TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF § 10-221 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.

**8-507.**

(A) IN A PROCEEDING BEFORE A HEARING EXAMINER, A CLAIMANT MAY BE REPRESENTED BY A LAWYER OR ANOTHER AGENT AUTHORIZED BY THE CLAIMANT.

(B) A LAWYER MAY CHARGE AND ACCEPT COMPENSATION IN AN AMOUNT NOT GREATER THAN THAT APPROVED BY THE CHIEF HEARING EXAMINER.

(C) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, AN AGENT MAY NOT CHARGE OR ACCEPT COMPENSATION FOR REPRESENTING A CLAIMANT IN A PROCEEDING BEFORE A HEARING EXAMINER.

(D) IN A PROCEEDING BEFORE A HEARING EXAMINER, AN EMPLOYER MAY APPEAR PRO SE OR BE REPRESENTED BY A LAWYER OR ANOTHER AGENT AUTHORIZED BY THE EMPLOYER.

(E) A PERSON MAY NOT SOLICIT, FOR THAT PERSON OR ANOTHER PERSON, THE BUSINESS OF APPEARING ON BEHALF OF A CLAIMANT IN A PROCEEDING BEFORE A HEARING EXAMINER.

**8-508.**

(A) AN INDIVIDUAL WHO FILES A CLAIM FOR BENEFITS OR AN EMPLOYER ENTITLED TO NOTICE OF A DETERMINATION OR REDETERMINATION OF THE CLAIM MAY FILE AN APPEAL WITH THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER NOTICE OF THE DETERMINATION OR REDETERMINATION IS MAILED TO THE CLAIMANT OR EMPLOYER AT THE LAST KNOWN ADDRESS OF THE CLAIMANT OR EMPLOYER OR OTHERWISE IS DELIVERED.

**(B) THE SECRETARY, AT THE SECRETARY'S DISCRETION, MAY BE A PARTY TO AN APPEAL FILED BY A CLAIMANT OR EMPLOYING UNIT WITH THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION.**

**(C) UNLESS AN APPEAL FILED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION IS WITHDRAWN OR REMOVED TO THE BOARD OF APPEALS, A HEARING EXAMINER SHALL:**

**(1) GIVE THE PARTIES A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR A FAIR HEARING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NOTICE PROVISIONS IN §§ 10-207 AND 10-208 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, EXCEPT THAT THE NOTICE IS NOT SUBJECT TO § 10-208(B)(4) AND (7) OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE;**

**(2) MAKE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, BASED ON A PREPONDERANCE OF EVIDENCE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-217 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE; AND**

**(3) ON THE BASIS OF THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AFFIRM, MODIFY, OR REVERSE A DETERMINATION OR REDETERMINATION.**

**(D) THE HEARING EXAMINER PROMPTLY SHALL GIVE EACH PARTY:**

**(1) NOTICE OF THE DECISION OF THE HEARING EXAMINER IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-221 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE; AND**

**(2) A COPY OF THE DECISION AND THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW THAT SUPPORT THE DECISION.**

**(E) THE DECISION OF THE HEARING EXAMINER IS FINAL UNLESS FURTHER REVIEW IS INITIATED UNDER § 8-5A-10 OF THIS TITLE.**

8-5A-01.

There is a Board of Appeals in the Department.

8-5A-03.

(c) (1) Subject to the approval of the Board of Appeals, the Secretary shall appoint the number of [hearing examiners and other] personnel that the Board of Appeals needs for effective and proper performance of the appeals procedures under this [title] SUBTITLE.

**8-5A-04.**

**THE BOARD SHALL HEAR AND DECIDE APPEALS FROM THE DECISIONS OF THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION AND CLAIMS FOR BENEFITS REFERRED BY THE SECRETARY UNDER § 8-5A-09 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

8-5A-05.

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the Board of Appeals shall adopt reasonable regulations, in accordance with § 10-206 of the State Government Article, to govern appeals and hearings under this [title] SUBTITLE.

8-5A-07.

(a) (1) A [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,] and the Board of Appeals shall conduct a hearing or appeal in a manner that ascertains the substantial rights of the parties.

(2) (i) A [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,] and the Board of Appeals are not bound by statutory or common law rules of evidence or technical rules of procedure.

(ii) A [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,] and the Board of Appeals shall consider evidence offered in accordance with § 10-213 of the State Government Article.

(c) (1) A [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,] or the Board of Appeals may consolidate claims by more than 1 individual or claims by a single individual for 2 or more weeks of unemployment if:

(i) the same or substantially similar evidence is relevant and material to the matters at issue; and

(ii) in the judgment of the [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,] or the Board of Appeals, the consolidation would not be prejudicial to a party.

(2) When claims are consolidated under this subsection, the [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,] or Board of Appeals may:

(i) set the same time and place for considering each claim;

(ii) conduct joint hearings;

(iii) make a single record of the proceedings; and

(iv) consider evidence that is introduced in a proceeding for 1 claim as having been introduced for another claim.

(d) (1) A record shall be kept, in accordance with § 10–218 of the State Government Article, of all testimony and proceedings before a [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,], or the Board of Appeals.

(2) Testimony need not be transcribed unless:

(i) judicial review is initiated; or

(ii) the Board of Appeals orders a transcription.

8–5A–08.

(a) In a proceeding before a [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,], or the Board of Appeals, a claimant may be represented by a lawyer or another agent authorized by the claimant.

(b) An agent may not charge or accept compensation for representing a claimant in a proceeding before a [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,], or the Board of Appeals except that a lawyer may charge and accept compensation in an amount not greater than that approved by the Board of Appeals.

(c) In a proceeding before a [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,], or the Board of Appeals, an employer may appear for itself or be represented by a lawyer or another agent authorized by the employer.

(d) A person may not solicit, for that person or another person, the business of appearing on behalf of a claimant in a proceeding before a [hearing examiner,] special examiner[,], or the Board of Appeals.

8–5A–10.

(a) A party who wishes to file an appeal with the Board of Appeals shall do so within 15 days after notice of the decision of a hearing examiner [or determination of the Secretary] was mailed to the party at the last known address of the party or otherwise was delivered to the party.

(b) After a hearing examiner makes a final decision under § [8–509] **8–508** of this [subtitle] **TITLE**:

(1) if the hearing examiner does not affirm the determination or redetermination of a claim, the Board of Appeals shall allow an appeal by either the Secretary, or a party entitled to notice of the decision, or both; and

(2) if the hearing examiner affirms the determination or redetermination of a claim, the Board of Appeals may allow an appeal by a party entitled to notice of the decision.

8-5A-11.

[(a)] A decision of the Board of Appeals is final subject to judicial review under [§ 8-512] § **8-5A-12** of this subtitle.

[(b)] A decision of the Board of Appeals under § 8-806(h) of this title is final within 10 days after mailing or other delivery of the notice of the decision.]

8-602.

(c) (4) The Board of Appeals shall give the parties a reasonable opportunity for a fair hearing as provided under Subtitle [5] **5A** of this title.

8-621.

(d) Proceedings on appeal to the Board of Appeals from the amount of a bill or a redetermination of the amount shall be in accordance with Subtitle [5] **5A** of this title.

8-806.

(a) (1) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section a claims examiner promptly shall make a determination on a claim filed under § 8-805(a) of this subtitle.

(2) Whenever a determination involves resolution of a dispute of material fact, a claims examiner shall:

- (i) conduct a predetermination proceeding; and
- (ii) give each party notice of the time and place of the proceeding.

(b) (1) A claim shall be referred to the Board of Appeals if determination of the claim involves:

- (i) a disqualification based on a stoppage of work due to a labor dispute;

- (ii) multiple claims; or
- (iii) a difficult issue of fact or law.

(2) The Board of Appeals promptly shall hear and decide each claim referred to it under this subsection.

(c) (1) Every initial determination shall state:

- (i) whether the claimant has been paid the wages required by § 8–802 of this subtitle;
- (ii) the weekly benefit amount of the claimant for the benefit year; and
- (iii) the maximum benefits payable to the claimant for the benefit year.

(2) Each determination shall include a statement as to:

- (i) whether a claimant is eligible for benefits for the week for which the determination is made;
- (ii) the benefits to which the claimant is entitled; and
- (iii) the reasons for the determination.

(d) (1) On determination of a claim, the Secretary promptly shall mail notice of the determination to the claimant at the last known address of the claimant or otherwise deliver it to the claimant.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (3) of this subsection, on determination of a claim that involves application of § 8–903(a) of this title or disqualification under Subtitle 10 of this title, the Secretary promptly shall:

- (i) mail notice of the determination to the last employing unit of the claimant at the last known address of the employing unit or otherwise deliver it to that employer; and
- (ii) include in the notice the reasons for the determination.

(3) If, before a determination, an employer fails to indicate, in accordance with regulations of the Secretary, that a claimant may be disqualified or ineligible for benefits, the Secretary need not notify the employer of the determination.

(e) (1) A determination is final as to a claimant and an employer who is entitled to notice of the determination unless:

(i) within 15 days after the mailing or other delivery of the notice, the claimant or employer appeals the determination; or

(ii) after the time for an appeal on an initial determination has passed, the Secretary may make a redetermination under subsection (f) of this section.

(2) The [Board of Appeals] **CHIEF HEARING EXAMINER OF THE LOWER APPEALS DIVISION**, for good cause, may extend the time for an appeal under this subsection.

(f) (1) If an interested party does not appeal an initial determination, the Secretary may redetermine:

(i) the eligibility of the claimant to receive benefits;

(ii) the weekly benefit amount of the claimant;

(iii) the maximum benefits payable to the claimant in a benefit year; and

(iv) the decision to recover an overpayment.

(2) In accordance with subsection (d) of this section, the Secretary shall send notice of the redetermination to the claimant and an employer who is entitled to notice.

(3) A redetermination is final unless an appeal is filed in accordance with subsection (e) of this section.

(g) (1) Within 15 days after the date of mailing of the notice or the date of delivery, a claimant or employing unit entitled to notice of a determination or redetermination under this section may appeal to the [Board of Appeals] **LOWER APPEALS DIVISION**.

(2) The Secretary may, at the Secretary's discretion, be a party to an appeal filed by a claimant or employing unit with the [Board of Appeals] **LOWER APPEALS DIVISION**.

(3) Unless an appeal of a determination or redetermination under this section is withdrawn or removed to the Board of Appeals, a hearing examiner ~~designated by the Board of Appeals~~ shall:

(i) give the parties a reasonable opportunity for a fair hearing in accordance with the notice provisions in §§ 10–207 and 10–208 of the State Government Article, except that the provisions of § 10–208(b)(4) and (7) do not apply;

(ii) make findings of fact and conclusions of law; and

(iii) on the basis of those findings and conclusions, affirm, modify, or reverse a determination or redetermination.

(4) If an appeal involves an issue of whether employment that a claimant performed is covered employment:

(i) the hearing examiner shall give special notice of the issue and appeal to the Secretary and employer; and

(ii) on receipt of the notice, the Secretary and employer shall be parties to the proceeding and be given reasonable opportunity to offer evidence on that issue.

(5) The hearing examiner promptly shall mail to each party at the last known address of the party or otherwise deliver to the party:

(i) notice of the decision of the hearing examiner; and

(ii) a copy of the decision and the findings of fact and conclusions of law that support the decision.

(6) A decision under this subsection is final unless within 15 days after the mailing or other delivery of notice of the decision, further review is initiated under subsection (h) of this section.

(h) (1) When a party files an appeal of a decision under subsection (g) of this section:

(i) if the hearing examiner did not affirm the determination or redetermination of the claim, the Board of Appeals shall allow the appeal; and

(ii) if the hearing examiner affirmed the determination or redetermination, the Board of Appeals may allow the appeal.

(2) On the filing of an appeal or on its own motion, the Board of Appeals may affirm, modify, or reverse the findings and conclusions of a hearing examiner on the basis of evidence that was submitted previously in the case or that the Board of Appeals directs to be taken.

(3) The Board of Appeals promptly shall mail notice of its decision, including its findings and conclusions, to the last known address of each party or otherwise deliver the notice. The decision is final subject to judicial review after 10 days after the mailing or other delivery.

(4) If the Board of Appeals does not allow an appeal of a decision of a hearing examiner:

(i) the decision of the hearing examiner is considered to be a decision of the Board of Appeals;

(ii) the decision is subject to judicial review within the time and in the manner provided for a final decision of the Board of Appeals; and

(iii) the time for appeal begins on the date of the notice of the order of denial of the application for appeal to the Board of Appeals.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the publishers of the Annotated Code, in consultation with the Department of Legislative Services, shall correct all erroneous references in the Code to the former "Subtitle 5. Board of Appeals of Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation", as amended by Section 1 of this Act to be "Subtitle 5A. Board of Appeals of the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation", of the Labor and Employment Article.

SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2008.

**Approved by the Governor, May 22, 2008.**