

Chapter 285

(House Bill 998)

AN ACT concerning

Maryland Department of Labor – Unemployment Insurance – Study on Actively Seeking Work Requirements

FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Department of Labor to conduct a study on the actively seeking work requirement of the unemployment insurance system in the State and other states to evaluate the effects of ghosting on actively seeking work requirements; and generally relating to a study on actively seeking work requirements for unemployment insurance benefits.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That:

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Actively seeking work requirements” means the requirement established under § 8-903(a)(iii) of the Labor and Employment Article to maintain eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits.

(3) “Department” means the Maryland Department of Labor.

(4) “Ghost” means the failure of a claimant for unemployment insurance benefits who is scheduled for a job interview with an employer to attend the interview or maintain contact with the employer after the interview is scheduled.

(b) The Department shall conduct a study on the actively seeking work requirements of the unemployment insurance system in the State and other states to evaluate the effects of ghosting on actively seeking work requirements.

(c) The study shall:

(1) examine the actively seeking work requirements of other states to determine:

(i) the ways in which the actively seeking work requirements of other states are different from those in the State; and

(ii) how the actively seeking work requirements of other states are verified to ensure a claimant remains eligible for unemployment insurance benefits;

(2) determine whether the Department, using existing resources, is able to perform periodic verification of the information reported by claimants to satisfy the claimant's actively seeking work requirement;

(3) evaluate and explain why the online BEACON system for claimants and employers does not or cannot allow an employer to input information about a claimant's actively seeking work requirement, including:

(i) confirmation that a claimant contacted an employer for work;
and

(ii) a report of ghosting;

(4) determine whether it is feasible to remove requirements for employers to input certain information in the BEACON system, such as a claimant's Social Security number, for purposes of reporting incidents of ghosting; and

(5) examine any other factors relevant to reporting ghosting or verifying whether a claimant meets the actively seeking work requirement.

(d) On or before December 1, 2024, the Department shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2024.

Approved by the Governor, April 25, 2024.