



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 797

S.P. 363

In Senate, March 4, 2025

**An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Work Search Efforts for
Unemployment Benefits and to Eliminate Benefits for Temporary
Unemployment**

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on February 27, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Labor pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator STEWART of Aroostook.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 26 MRSA §1192, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2021, c. 456, §18, is further
3 amended to read:

4 **2. Has registered for work.** The individual has registered for work at, and continued
5 to report at, an employment office in accordance with rules the commissioner adopts,
6 except that the commissioner may, by rule, waive or alter either or both of the requirements
7 of this subsection as to individuals attached to regular jobs and as to such other types of
8 cases or situations with respect to which the commissioner finds that compliance with the
9 requirements would be oppressive, or would be inconsistent with the purposes of this
10 chapter. A rule under this subsection may not conflict with section 1191, subsection 1.

11 The individual must actively seek work 3 times each week in which a claim for benefits is
12 filed unless the individual is participating in approved training under subsection 6 ~~or work~~
13 ~~search has been waived in accordance with rules adopted by the commissioner~~ and provide
14 evidence of work search efforts in a manner and form as prescribed by the Department of
15 Labor. Failure to provide required work search documentation results in a denial of
16 benefits in accordance with section 1194, subsection 2 for the week or weeks for which no
17 documentation was provided unless the department determines there is good cause for the
18 individual's failure to comply with this requirement.

19 A. Acceptable work search efforts under this subsection include:

- 20 (1) Submitting a resume to an employer;
21 (2) Completing and submitting a job application to an employer or recruiter;
22 (3) Attending and completing an interview or skills test with an employer;
23 (4) Attending a job fair;
24 (5) Completing an online or in-person job search workshop or job club;
25 (6) Completing a job search assessment, including but not limited to a skills
26 assessment;
27 (7) Participating in a volunteer or on-the-job training opportunity likely to lead to
28 paid employment;
29 (8) Taking a civil service exam;
30 (9) Developing a complete resume in the State's employment services system;
31 (10) Completing career direction research or work, such as a job search plan or a
32 targeted employer list;
33 (11) Completing job search branding and marketing activities such as completing
34 a resume, cover letter or master application, creating an online professional
35 networking profile or uploading a completed resume to a job board, allowing
36 visibility to employers;
37 (12) Completing an online or in-person mock interview; and
38 (13) Participating in job search counseling.

39 B. Required evidence of work search efforts under this subsection must be submitted
40 to the Department of Labor each week via an online portal or by submitting a paper

1 form documenting such efforts to the Department of Labor, job center or other
2 designated office no later than 5 p.m. on the Friday of the week in which the work
3 search efforts were completed. Such a form must require the claimant to report the
4 following:

5 (1) The effort taken to fulfill each of the 3 weekly work search requirements;

6 (2) The employer, employment office, program or agency with which the claimant
7 interacted or educational program in which the claimant participated;

8 (3) The dates of the work search efforts; and

9 (4) A point of contact for each employer, employment office, program, agency or
10 educational program so the Department of Labor may verify each effort.

11 C. Prior to paying any weekly unemployment benefits to a claimant, the Department
12 of Labor shall verify that the claimant submitted the required weekly report of work
13 search efforts. Each week, the Department of Labor shall select a sample of at least
14 10% of all work search effort reports for random audits with employers, employment
15 offices or educational programs of reported work search efforts;

16 **Sec. 2. 26 MRSA §1192, sub-§13**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 233, §1, is further
17 amended to read:

18 **13. Reemployment services and eligibility assessment; participation.** In the case
19 that the individual has been referred to reemployment services and eligibility assessment
20 by the Department of Labor, the individual participates in those services, unless the
21 department determines there is good cause for the individual's failure to participate. Failure
22 to participate in reemployment services and eligibility assessment without good cause
23 results in a denial of benefits until the individual participates; and

24 **Sec. 3. 26 MRSA §1192, sub-§14**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 233, §2, is repealed.

25 SUMMARY

26 This bill updates the eligibility conditions for unemployment compensation to require
27 an individual to actively seek work 3 times each week to be considered eligible and
28 removes the provision exempting an individual from this requirement by receiving a waiver
29 by the Commissioner of Labor. The bill establishes acceptable work search efforts for the
30 purpose of fulfilling the requirements to receive unemployment compensation, establishes
31 submission requirements for the evidence of a work search to be submitted to the
32 Department of Labor and establishes verification and audit requirements for the
33 department. The bill also removes the provision allowing an individual to receive
34 unemployment compensation while temporarily unemployed.