

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

**2025 REGULAR SESSION**

**ENROLLED**

**Committee Substitute**

**for**

**Committee Substitute**

**for**

**House Bill 2441**

BY DELEGATE STREET

[Passed April 3, 2025; in effect 90 days from passage

(July 2, 2025)]



1 AN ACT to amend and reenact §21A-6-3 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to unemployment compensation; and providing that an employee is disqualified for  
3 benefits if discharged from work because of failure of random testing for alcohol or illegal  
4 controlled substances, where alcohol or drug use creates an inherent risk to the health  
5 and safety of the employee or others, or where the employee is employed in a safety-  
6 sensitive position.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 6. EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY; BENEFITS.**

**§21A-6-3. Disqualification for benefits.**

1 Upon the determination of the facts by the commissioner, an individual is disqualified for  
2 benefits:

3 (1) For the week in which he or she left his or her most recent work voluntarily without  
4 good cause involving fault on the part of the employer and until the individual returns to covered  
5 employment and has been employed in covered employment at least 30 working days.

6 For the purpose of this subdivision, an individual has not left his or her most recent work  
7 voluntarily without good cause involving fault on the part of the employer if the individual leaves  
8 his or her most recent work with an employer and if he or she in fact, within a 14-day calendar  
9 period, does return to employment with the last preceding employer with whom he or she was  
10 previously employed within the past year prior to his or her return to work, and which last  
11 preceding employer, after having previously employed the individual for 30 working days or more,  
12 laid off the individual because of lack of work, which layoff occasioned the payment of benefits  
13 under this chapter or could have occasioned the payment of benefits under this chapter had the  
14 individual applied for benefits. It is the intent of this paragraph to cause no disqualification for  
15 benefits for an individual who complies with the foregoing set of requirements and conditions.  
16 Further, for the purpose of this subdivision, an individual has not left his or her most recent work  
17 voluntarily without good cause involving fault on the part of the employer, if the individual was

18 compelled to leave his or her work for his or her own health-related reasons and notifies the  
19 employer prior to leaving the job or within two business days after leaving the job or as soon as  
20 practicable and presents written certification from a licensed physician within 30 days of leaving  
21 the job that his or her work aggravated, worsened, or will worsen the individual's health problem.

22 (2) For the week in which he or she was discharged from his or her most recent work for  
23 misconduct and the six weeks immediately following that week; or for the week in which he or she  
24 was discharged from his or her last 30-day employing unit for misconduct and the six weeks  
25 immediately following that week. The disqualification carries a reduction in the maximum benefit  
26 amount equal to six times the individual's weekly benefit. However, if the claimant returns to work  
27 in covered employment for 30 days during his or her benefit year, whether or not the days are  
28 consecutive, the maximum benefit amount is increased by the amount of the decrease imposed  
29 under the disqualification; except that:

30 If he or she were discharged from his or her most recent work for one of the following  
31 reasons, or if he or she were discharged from his or her last 30 days employing unit for one of the  
32 following reasons: Gross misconduct consisting of willful destruction of his or her employer's  
33 property; assault upon the person of his or her employer or any employee of his or her employer;  
34 if the assault is committed at the individual's place of employment or in the course of employment;  
35 reporting to work in an intoxicated condition, or being intoxicated while at work; reporting to work  
36 under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in chapter 60A of this code without a  
37 valid prescription, or being under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in said  
38 chapter without a valid prescription, while at work; adulterating or otherwise manipulating a  
39 sample or specimen in order to thwart a drug or alcohol test lawfully required of an employee;  
40 refusal to submit to, or failure of, random testing for alcohol or illegal controlled substances for  
41 employees in an employment position where alcohol or drug use creates an inherent risk to the  
42 health and safety of the employee or others, or employees in safety-sensitive positions as defined  
43 in §21-1D-2 of this code; violation of an employer's drug-free workplace program; violation of an

44 employer's alcohol-free workplace program; arson, theft, larceny, fraud, or embezzlement in  
45 connection with his or her work; or any other gross misconduct, he or she is disqualified for  
46 benefits until he or she has thereafter worked for at least 30 days in covered employment:  
47 *Provided*, That for the purpose of this subdivision, the words "any other gross misconduct"  
48 includes, but is not limited to, any act or acts of misconduct where the individual has received  
49 prior written warning that termination of employment may result from the act or acts.

50 (3) For the week in which he or she failed without good cause to apply for available,  
51 suitable work, accept suitable work when offered, or return to his or her customary self-  
52 employment when directed to do so by the commissioner, and for the four weeks which  
53 immediately follow for such additional period as any offer of suitable work shall continue open for  
54 his or her acceptance. The disqualification carries a reduction in the maximum benefit amount  
55 equal to four times the individual's weekly benefit amount.

56 (4) For any week or portion thereof in which he or she did not work as a result of:

57 (a) A strike or other bona fide labor dispute which caused him or her to leave or lose his  
58 or her employment.

59 (b) A lockout is not a strike or a bona fide labor dispute and no individual may be denied  
60 benefits by reason of a lockout. However, the operation of a facility by nonstriking employees of  
61 the company, contractors, or other personnel is not a reason to grant employees of the company  
62 on strike unemployment compensation benefit payments. If the operation of a facility is with  
63 workers hired to permanently replace the employees on strike, the employees would be eligible  
64 for benefits.

65 (c) For the purpose of this subsection, an individual shall be determined to leave or lose  
66 his or her employment by reason of a lockout where the individual employee has established that:

67 (i) The individual presented himself or herself physically for work at the workplace on the first day  
68 of such lockout or on the first day he or she is able to present himself at the workplace or herself;  
69 and (ii) the employer denied the individual the opportunity to perform work.

(d) For purposes of this subsection, an individual is determined to be permanently replaced where the individual employee establishes that: (i) He or she is currently employed by an employer who is the subject of a strike or other bona fide labor dispute; and (ii) the position of the employee has been occupied by another employee who has been notified they are permanently replacing the employee who previously occupied the position. Employees or contractors who are hired to perform striking employees' work on a temporary basis, such as the duration of a strike or other bona fide labor dispute, or a shorter period of time, may not be determined to have permanently replaced a striking employee.

(5) For a week with respect to which he or she is receiving or has received:

(a) Wages in lieu of notice;

(b) Compensation for temporary total disability under the workers' compensation law of any state or under a similar law of the United States; or

(c) Unemployment compensation benefits under the laws of the United States or any other state.

(6) For the week in which an individual has voluntarily quit employment to marry or to perform any marital, parental, or family duty, or to attend to his or her personal business or affairs and until the individual returns to covered employment and has been employed in covered employment at least 30 working days: *Provided*, That an individual who has voluntarily quit employment to accompany a spouse serving in active military service who has been reassigned from one military assignment to another is not disqualified for benefits pursuant to this subdivision: *Provided, however*, That the account of the employer of an individual who leaves the employment to accompany a spouse reassigned from one military assignment to another may not be charged.

(7) Benefits may not be paid to any individual on the basis of any services, substantially all of which consist of participating in sports or athletic events or training or preparing to so participate, for any week which commences during the period between two successive sport seasons (or similar periods) if the individual performed the services in the first of the seasons (or

96 similar periods) and there is a reasonable assurance that the individual will perform the services  
97 in the later of the seasons (or similar periods).

98 (8) (a) Benefits may not be paid on the basis of services performed by an alien unless the  
99 alien is an individual who was lawfully admitted for permanent residence at the time the services  
100 were performed, was lawfully present for purposes of performing the services or was permanently  
101 residing in the United States under color of law at the time the services were performed (including  
102 an alien who is lawfully present in the United States as a result of the application of the provisions  
103 of Section 203(a)(7) or Section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act): *Provided, That*  
104 any modifications to the provisions of Section 3304(a)(14) of the federal Unemployment Tax Act  
105 as provided by Public Law 94-566 which specify other conditions or other effective date than  
106 stated in this subdivision for the denial of benefits based on services performed by aliens and  
107 which modifications are required to be implemented under state law as a condition for full tax  
108 credit against the tax imposed by the federal Unemployment Tax Act are applicable under the  
109 provisions of this section.

110 (b) Any data or information required of individuals applying for benefits to determine  
111 whether benefits are not payable to them because of their alien status shall be uniformly required  
112 from all applicants for benefits.

113 (c) In the case of an individual whose application for benefits would otherwise be  
114 approved, no determination that benefits to the individual are not payable because of his or her  
115 alien status may be made except upon a preponderance of the evidence.

116 (9) For each week in which an individual is unemployed because, having voluntarily left  
117 employment to attend a school, college, university, or other educational institution, he or she is  
118 attending that school, college, university, or other educational institution, or is awaiting entrance  
119 thereto or is awaiting the starting of a new term or session thereof, and until the individual returns  
120 to covered employment.

121 (10) For each week in which he or she is unemployed because of his or her request, or  
122 that of his or her duly authorized agent, for a vacation period at a specified time that would leave  
123 the employer no other alternative but to suspend operations.

124 (11) In the case of an individual who accepts an early retirement incentive package, unless  
125 he or she: (i) Establishes a well-grounded fear of imminent layoff supported by definitive objective  
126 facts involving fault on the part of the employer; and (ii) establishes that he or she would suffer a  
127 substantial loss by not accepting the early retirement incentive package.

128 (12) For each week with respect to which he or she is receiving or has received benefits  
129 under Title II of the Social Security Act or similar payments under any Act of Congress, or  
130 remuneration in the form of an annuity, pension, or other retirement pay from a base period  
131 employer or chargeable employer or from any trust or fund contributed to by a base period  
132 employer or chargeable employer or any combination of the above, the weekly benefit amount  
133 payable to the individual for that week shall be reduced (but not below zero) by the prorated  
134 weekly amount of those benefits, payments, or remuneration: *Provided*, That if the amount of  
135 benefits is not a multiple of \$1, it shall be computed to the next lowest multiple of \$1: *Provided*,  
136 *however*, That there is no disqualification if in the individual's base period there are no wages  
137 which were paid by the base period employer or chargeable employer paying the remuneration,  
138 or by a fund into which the employer has paid during the base period: *Provided further*, That  
139 notwithstanding any other provision of this subdivision to the contrary, the weekly benefit amount  
140 payable to the individual for that week may not be reduced by any retirement benefits he or she  
141 is receiving or has received under Title II of the Social Security Act or similar payments under any  
142 Act of Congress. A claimant may be required to certify as to whether or not he or she is receiving  
143 or has been receiving remuneration in the form of an annuity, pension, or other retirement pay  
144 from a base period employer or chargeable employer or from a trust fund contributed to by a base  
145 period employer or chargeable employer.



146           (13) For each week in which and for 52 weeks thereafter, beginning with the date of the  
147 decision, if the commissioner finds the individual who within 24 calendar months immediately  
148 preceding the decision, has made a false statement or representation knowing it to be false or  
149 knowingly fails to disclose a material fact, to obtain or increase any benefit or payment under this  
150 article: *Provided*, That disqualification under this subdivision does not preclude prosecution under  
151 §21A-10-7 of this code.



The Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate hereby  
certify that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

.....  
*Clerk of the House of Delegates*

.....  
*Clerk of the Senate*

Originated in the House of Delegates.

In effect 90 days from passage.

.....  
*Speaker of the House of Delegates*

.....  
*President of the Senate*

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The within is ..... this the.....  
Day of ....., 2025.

.....  
*Governor*