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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE RELIEF

I. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE WAIVERS

Typically, in order to qualify for unemployment benefits, an individual must be unemployed and actively seeking work. Under the current circumstances, the “work search” requirement could result in the spread of COVID-19.

Governor Ricketts has issued an Executive Order providing that some requirements for obtaining Nebraska unemployment benefits will be waived commencing March 22 and lasting until at least May 2. Specifically, the Governor has allowed the Nebraska Department of Labor to waive:

- the one-week wait time for employees to start collecting benefits;
- the requirement that individuals actively seek work and are willing to take a new job;
- charges incurred by employers whose employees (or former employees) file for unemployment benefits related to COVID-19 (no charge against individual employers’ accounts).

The Executive Order also directs the Commissioner of Labor to treat workers in an unpaid status for any reason as a result of COVID-19 as being on a temporary layoff and attached to their employment.

Workers filing for unemployment benefits should do so online at [NEworks.nebraska.gov](https://neworks.nebraska.gov). NEworks also has a free mobile app option for those without access to a computer.

II. SHORT-TIME COMPENSATION

Short-time compensation (STC) helps businesses retain their workforce during a temporary slowdown in work. The program allows employers to voluntarily reduce the hours of staff in lieu of layoffs. Employees of the business are allowed to receive a partial unemployment benefit to help them offset the loss of income. More information regarding the STC program is available at <https://www.dol.nebraska.gov/stc>.

The foregoing Compliance Update is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. As a reminder, the NBA general counsel is the attorney for the Nebraska Bankers Association, not its member banks. The general counsel is available to assist members with finding resources to help answer their questions. However, for specific legal advice about specific situations, members must consult and retain their own attorney.