



# HOUSE BILL 128: An Act to Reemploy NC's Workforce.

2021-2022 General Assembly

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<b>Committee:</b> Senate Rules and Operations of the Senate	<b>Date:</b> May 27, 2021
<b>Introduced by:</b> Reps. K. Hall, Elmore, D. Hall, Willis	<b>Prepared by:</b> Jeremy Ray
<b>Analysis of:</b> Third Edition	Staff Attorney

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**OVERVIEW:** *House Bill 128 would make changes to the unemployment insurance laws of North Carolina.*

**BILL ANALYSIS:** House Bill 128 would make the following changes to the unemployment insurance laws of North Carolina:

## Section 1 –

- Direct the Division of Employment Security (DES) to seek approval from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) to use the funds appropriated by Congress for the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program or other federal funds administered by the USDOL as a signing bonus for unemployed claimants who accept reemployment. The signing bonus would be payable as follows:
  - One thousand five hundred dollar (\$1,500) bonus for accepting reemployment within 30 days after this bill becomes law.
  - An eight hundred dollar (\$800.00) bonus for accepting reemployment within the period starting 30 days after this bill becomes law and ending 60 days after this bill becomes law.
  - No bonus paid for accepting reemployment after September 6, 2021.

## Section 2 –

- Clarify that those receiving unemployment insurance benefits must make three job contacts per week.
- Require claimants to respond to interview requests by an employer offering suitable work within 48 hours using the contact information provided by the employer.
- Require claimants to schedule an interview with an employer within seven days of the interview request, or outside of seven days if mutually agreed to by both parties.
- Require claimants to attend reemployment activities associated with the interview request if those activities are required by an employer in their normal course of recruitment.
- Permit employers to report to DES that a claimant has not responded to interview requests, refused to schedule an interview within seven days of the interview request, or failed to appear for a scheduled interview. It would require DES to audit those reports submitted by employers.
- Disqualify a claimant for any remaining unemployment insurance benefit if the claimant fails, absent good cause, to do any of the following three or more times during a benefit year:
  - Respond to an interview request within 48 hours.

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- Schedule an interview with an employer within seven days of an interview request.
- Appear for a scheduled interview.
- Attend a reemployment activity associated with the interview request.
- Require DES to audit at least twenty-five percent (25%) of all weekly certifications filed with the Division each week.
- Require DES to utilize a private third-party firm when necessary to satisfy the audit requirements of the bill.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Section 2 would become effective when it becomes law and apply to claims with weekly certification under G.S. 96-14.9 filed on or after that date, the remainder of the act would become effective when it becomes law.

*\*Cindy Avrette, Staff Attorney with the Legislative Analysis Division, substantially contributed to this bill analysis.*