

2016 -- H 7693

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LC004864
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

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A N A C T

RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- EMPLOYMENT SECURITY--
BENEFITS

Introduced By: Representatives Chippendale, Nardolillo, Canario, Blazejewski, and
Jacquard

Date Introduced: February 24, 2016

Referred To: House Labor

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 28-44-17.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 28-44 entitled
2 "Employment Security - Benefits" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **28-44-17.1. Voluntary leaving as protection from domestic abuse.** -- (a) An individual
4 shall be eligible for ~~waiting period credit or~~ benefits if that individual voluntarily leaves work due
5 to circumstances directly resulting from domestic abuse, as defined in chapter 8.1 of title 8, and
6 the individual:

7 (1) Reasonably fears future domestic abuse at or on route to or from the individual's
8 place of employment;

9 (2) Wishes to relocate to another geographic area in order to avoid future domestic abuse
10 against the individual or the individual's family; or

11 (3) Reasonably believes that leaving work is necessary for the future safety of the
12 individual or the individual's family.

13 (b) When determining whether an individual has experienced domestic abuse for the
14 purpose of employment benefits, the department of labor and training shall require that the
15 individual provide documentation of domestic abuse, including, but not limited to, police or court
16 records, or other documentation of domestic abuse from a shelter worker, attorney, member of the
17 clergy, or medical or other professional from whom the individual has sought assistance, but such
18 documentation need not be provided prior to four (4) weeks after the date of filing the claim.

1 (c) The department of labor and training, upon receipt of a claim for unemployment
2 compensation based upon §28-44-17.1 shall give such claim priority, process the claim and pay
3 the benefits to the individual within three (3) business days.

4 (d) The individual claiming benefits pursuant to this section shall not be subject to the
5 seven (7) day waiting period as required by §28-44-14 and shall immediately be eligible for
6 benefits from the date of separation from employment.

7 (e) The individual claiming benefits pursuant to this section shall not be subject to the
8 provisions of §28-44-12 for a period of four (4) weeks subsequent to the filing of the claim.

9 (f) All documentation of evidence shall be kept confidential unless consent for disclosure
10 is given by the individual.

11 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- EMPLOYMENT SECURITY--
BENEFITS

1 This act would provide an accelerated process for collecting unemployment benefits for
2 persons claiming benefits after voluntarily leaving work for circumstances resulting from
3 domestic abuse.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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