

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1684

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**As Passed House:**  
February 12, 2014

**Title:** An act relating to defining suitable work to include a minimum age requirement.

**Brief Description:** Defining suitable work to include a minimum age requirement.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Reykdal, Manweller, Sells and Ryu.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Labor & Workforce Development: 2/13/13, 2/14/13 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/27/13, 97-0.

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/12/14, 97-0.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- States expressly and requires that work for which an individual does not meet minimum age requirements does not constitute suitable work for purposes of work search and work refusal requirements for unemployment compensation eligibility.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Sells, Chair; Reykdal, Vice Chair; Manweller, Ranking Minority Member; Condotta, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Green, Holy, Moeller, Ormsby and Short.

**Staff:** Joan Elgee (786-7106).

**Background:**

An individual is eligible to receive unemployment benefits if he or she: (1) worked at least 680 hours in covered employment in his or her base year; (2) was separated from employment through no fault of his or her own or quit work for good cause; and (3) is able to

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work and is actively searching for suitable work. "Suitable work" is employment in an occupation in keeping with the individual's prior work experience, education, or training, or if the individual has no prior work experience, special education, or training for employment available in the general area, employment which the individual has the physical and mental ability to perform. The Commissioner of the Employment Security Department (Department) may consider other factors that he or she deems pertinent in determining whether work is suitable.

A rule adopted by the Department provides that, in general, individuals must make job search contacts with at least three employers or participate in three approved in-person job search activities during each week for which a claim for benefits is filed. The work applied for must be suitable.

An individual is disqualified for benefits if the Commissioner of the Department finds that the individual has failed, without good cause, either to apply for or accept suitable work.

**Summary of Bill:**

It is expressly stated and required that work for which an individual does not meet minimum age requirements required by law or regulation does not constitute suitable work.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill came to us from high school students who stumbled upon what could be unemployment fraud. All you need to apply for unemployment is your legal name and your social security number. You are not asked your age. It would be easy to cheat the system by applying for a bartender job, for example. This bill says if you are not eligible for a job because of age restrictions in the law, you cannot count those jobs for your three job contacts.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Reykdal, prime sponsor; and Taylor Torgeson and Tristen Holmberg, Snohomish High School.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.