

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1458

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As of March 9, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to unemployment insurance benefits for individuals participating in an apprenticeship program.

**Brief Description:** Concerning unemployment insurance benefits for apprenticeship program participants.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Labor & Workplace Standards (originally sponsored by Representatives Shavers, Fosse, Santos, Berry, Simmons, Alvarado, Doglio, Ormsby, Gregerson and Pollet).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/28/23, 86-11.

**Committee Activity:** Labor & Commerce: 3/13/23.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Employment Security Department to convene a work group for the purpose of identifying and addressing legal and procedural barriers faced by eligible claimants participating in apprenticeship programs.

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

**Staff:** Jarrett Sacks (786-7448)

**Background:** An unemployed individual is eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits (UI benefits) if the individual (1) worked at least 680 hours in the base year, (2) was separated from employment through no fault of the claimant's or quit work for good cause, and (3) is able to work, available to work, and is actively searching for suitable work. The Employment Security Department (ESD) administers Washington State's unemployment insurance program.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Individuals who leave work to enter certain apprenticeship programs are considered to have left work for good cause and, therefore, are not disqualified from receiving UI benefits. The apprenticeship program must be approved by the Washington State Apprenticeship Training Council. Benefits are payable beginning the Sunday of the week prior to the week in which the claimant begins active participation in the apprenticeship program. These UI benefits are not charged to employers' experience rating accounts.

**Summary of Bill:** ESD is required to convene a work group for the purpose of identifying and addressing legal and procedural barriers faced by eligible claimants participating in apprenticeship programs when those claimants seek timely access to UI benefits. The work group must include representatives of apprenticeship programs and ESD staff, as well as other appropriate stakeholders identified by ESD.

By December 1, 2023, ESD must submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature with findings and recommendations, including a status update on applicable administrative efforts to reduce procedural barriers identified by the work group.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.