

AN ACT

RELATING TO UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION; AMENDING THE
UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION LAW TO INCREASE TEMPORARILY THE
WEEKLY BENEFIT AMOUNT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. Section 51-1-4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2003,
Chapter 47, Section 8, as amended) is amended to read:

"51-1-4. MONETARY COMPUTATION OF BENEFITS--PAYMENT
GENERALLY.--

A. All benefits provided herein are payable from
the unemployment compensation fund. All benefits shall be
paid in accordance with rules prescribed by the secretary
through employment offices or other agencies as the secretary
approves by general rule.

B. Weekly benefits shall be as follows:

(1) except as provided in Paragraph (2) of
this subsection, an individual's "weekly benefit amount" is an
amount equal to fifty-three and one-half percent of the
average weekly wage for insured work paid to the individual in
that quarter of the individual's base period in which total
wages were highest. No benefit as so computed may be less
than ten percent or more than fifty-three and one-half percent
of the state's average weekly wage for all insured work. The
state's average weekly wage shall be computed from all wages

reported to the department from employing units in accordance with rules of the secretary for the period ending June 30 of each calendar year divided by the total number of covered employees divided by fifty-two, effective for the benefit years commencing on or after the first Sunday of the following calendar year. An individual is not eligible to receive benefits unless the individual has wages in at least two quarters of that individual's base period. For the purposes of this subsection, "total wages" means all remuneration for insured work, including commissions and bonuses and the cash value of all remuneration in a medium other than cash;

(2) from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2011, an individual's "weekly benefit amount" shall be an amount equal to sixty percent of the average weekly wage for insured work paid to the individual in that quarter of the individual's base period in which total wages were highest, and no benefit as so computed may be less than ten percent or more than sixty percent of the state's average weekly wage for all insured work;

(3) an eligible individual who is unemployed in any week during which the individual is in a continued claims status shall be paid, with respect to the week, a benefit in an amount equal to the individual's weekly benefit amount, less that part of the wages, if any, or earnings from self-employment, payable to the individual with respect to

such week that is in excess of one-fifth of the individual's weekly benefit amount. For purposes of this subsection only, "wages" includes all remuneration for services actually performed in a week for which benefits are claimed, vacation pay for a period for which the individual has a definite return-to-work date, wages in lieu of notice and back pay for loss of employment but does not include payments through a court for time spent in jury service;

(4) notwithstanding any other provision of this section, an eligible individual who, pursuant to a plan financed in whole or in part by a base-period employer of the individual, is receiving a governmental or other pension, retirement pay, annuity or any other similar periodic payment that is based on the previous work of the individual and who is unemployed with respect to any week ending subsequent to April 9, 1981 shall be paid with respect to the week, in accordance with rules prescribed by the secretary, compensation equal to the individual's weekly benefit amount reduced, but not below zero, by the prorated amount of the pension, retirement pay, annuity or other similar periodic payment that exceeds the percentage contributed to the plan by the eligible individual. The maximum benefit amount payable to the eligible individual shall be an amount not more than twenty-six times the individual's reduced weekly benefit amount. If payments referred to in this section are being

received by an individual under the federal Social Security Act, the division shall take into account the individual's contribution and make no reduction in the weekly benefit amount;

(5) in the case of a lump-sum payment of a pension, retirement or retired pay, annuity or other similar payment by a base-period employer that is based on the previous work of the individual, the payment shall be allocated, in accordance with rules prescribed by the secretary, and shall reduce the amount of unemployment compensation paid, but not below zero, in accordance with Paragraph (4) of this subsection; and

(6) the retroactive payment of a pension, retirement or retired pay, annuity or any other similar periodic payment as provided in Paragraphs (4) and (5) of this subsection attributable to weeks during which an individual has claimed or has been paid unemployment compensation shall be allocated to those weeks and shall reduce the amount of unemployment compensation for those weeks, but not below zero, by an amount equal to the prorated amount of the pension. Any overpayment of unemployment compensation benefits resulting from the application of the provisions of this paragraph shall be recovered from the claimant in accordance with the provisions of Section 51-1-38 NMSA 1978.

C. An individual otherwise eligible for benefits

shall be paid for each week of unemployment, in addition to the amount payable under Subsection B of this section, the sum of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for each unemancipated child under the age of eighteen, up to a maximum of four and subject to the maximum stated in Subsection D of this section, of the individual who is in fact dependent upon and wholly or mainly supported by the individual, including:

(1) a child in the individual's custody pending the adjudication of a petition filed by the individual for the adoption of the child in a court of competent jurisdiction; or

(2) a child for whom the individual, under a decree or order from a court of competent jurisdiction, is required to contribute to the child's support and for whom no other person is receiving allowances under the Unemployment Compensation Law if the child is domiciled within the United States or its territories or possessions, the payment to be withheld and paid pursuant to Section 51-1-37.1 NMSA 1978.

D. Dependency benefits shall not exceed fifty percent of the individual's weekly benefit rate. The amount of dependency benefits determined as of the beginning of an individual's benefit year shall not be reduced for the duration of the benefit year, but this provision does not prevent the transfer of dependents' benefits from one spouse to another in accordance with this subsection. If both the

husband and wife receive benefits with respect to a week of unemployment, only one of them is entitled to a dependency allowance with respect to a child. The division shall prescribe standards as to who may receive a dependency allowance when both the husband and wife are eligible to receive unemployment compensation benefits. Dependency benefits shall not be paid unless the individual submits documentation satisfactory to the division establishing the existence of the claimed dependent. If the provisions of this subsection are satisfied, an otherwise eligible individual who has been appointed guardian of a dependent child by a court of competent jurisdiction shall be paid dependency benefits.

E. An otherwise eligible individual is entitled during any benefit year to a total amount of benefits equal to whichever is the lesser of twenty-six times the individual's weekly benefit amount, plus any dependency benefit amount pursuant to Subsections C and D of this section, or sixty percent of the individual's wages for insured work paid during the individual's base period.

F. A benefit as determined in Subsection B or C of this section, if not a multiple of one dollar (\$1.00), shall be rounded to the next lower multiple of one dollar (\$1.00).

G. The secretary may prescribe rules to provide for the payment of benefits that are due and payable to the legal representative, dependents, relatives or next of kin of

claimants since deceased. These rules need not conform with the laws governing successions, and the payment shall be deemed a valid payment to the same extent as if made under a formal administration of the succession of the claimant.

H. The division, on its own initiative, may reconsider a monetary determination whenever it is determined that an error in computation or identity has occurred or that wages of the claimant pertinent to such determination but not considered have been newly discovered or that the benefits have been allowed or denied on the basis of misrepresentation of fact, but no redetermination shall be made after one year from the date of the original monetary determination. Notice of a redetermination shall be given to all interested parties and shall be subject to an appeal in the same manner as the original determination. In the event that an appeal involving an original monetary determination is pending at the time a redetermination is issued, the appeal, unless withdrawn, shall be treated as an appeal from redetermination."