

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY LAW REFORMS



KS SHRM is a professional organization representing over 2,200 HR professionals in Kansas, serving their needs and advancing the interests of the profession throughout the state. Our members serve public and private sectors as well as large and small businesses. On a daily basis, our members are on the front lines when it comes to important employment issues such as workforce planning, HR development, compensation and benefits, employee relations, workers' compensation, and unemployment insurance.

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CRITICAL REFORMS TO KANSAS UI SYSTEM AND PROGRAMS

The magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented, overwhelming the Kansas Department of Labor's Unemployment Division's ability to serve claimants in a timely manner, and exposing significant structural weaknesses in the system. The Kansas Unemployment Insurance system was not equipped to deal with the challenges workers and employers faced. The antiquated computer system in Kansas has caused delays in legitimate payments and has opened up the state for unprecedented fraud throughout the system.

REFORM RECOMMENDATIONS

It's imperative that we modernize our UI system so that it serves Kansans promptly, efficiently and securely. The Kansas State Council of the Society of Human Resource Management (KS SHRM) supports necessary and critical reforms:

1. Create Unemployment Compensation Modernization and Improvement Council
2. Modernization of UI IT System
3. Notify Recipients of UI Benefits of Tax Liability
4. Transparency in Kansas UI Fund Computations and Data Reporting
5. Realign Kansas Duration of Benefits to the Federal Reserve's Definition of Full Employment Threshold of 5.0%
6. Provide Employer Relief for Fraudulent Claim Charges
7. Base Employer Solvency Charge by Employers Experience Rating
8. Provide Immediate Refund to Employer Accounts for Claimant Fraud
9. Expand Work Share Program to Prevent Future Layoffs
10. Require KDOL to Acknowledge, Process and Respond to ALL Reported Job Refusals

KS SHRM strongly supports the critical changes necessary to preserve and strengthen the Employment Security Law and to ensure that payments made are not fraudulent and do not increase the financial burden on employers. We support HB 2196.