

**Fifty-seventh Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 9, 2001**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1087
(Industry, Business and Labor Committee)
(At the request of Job Service North Dakota)

AN ACT to amend and reenact subsections 3 and 4 of section 52-04-05, section 52-04-08, and subsection 1 of section 52-04-11.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to unemployment compensation employer industrial classification, employer experience record, employer experience record transfers, and corporate officer personal liability; and to provide a penalty.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT. Subsections 3 and 4 of section 52-04-05 of the North Dakota Century Code are amended and reenacted as follows:

3. a. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, an employer's rate may not be less than the negative employer minimum rate for a calendar year unless the employer's account has been chargeable with benefits throughout the thirty-six-consecutive-calendar-month period ending on September thirtieth of the preceding calendar year. If an employer in construction services has not been subject to the law as required, that employer qualifies for a reduced rate if the account has been chargeable with benefits throughout the twenty-four-consecutive-calendar-month period ending September thirtieth of the preceding calendar year. If an employer in nonconstruction services has not been subject to the law as required, the employer in nonconstruction services qualifies for a reduced rate if the account has been chargeable with benefits throughout the twelve-consecutive-calendar-month period ending September thirtieth of the preceding calendar year. During the building of the trust fund reserve, the rate assigned to an employer may not exceed one hundred thirty percent of the previous year's rate for that employer and an employer may not receive more than a ten percent decrease in that employer's rate from the previous year's rate, for the calendar years 2000, 2001, and 2002. The executive director may provide any negative employer whose contributions paid into the trust fund are greater than the benefit charges against that employer's account, for a minimum of three consecutive years immediately preceding the computation date or subject to the law as required, with up to a thirty percent reduction to that employer's rate for any year if that employer has in place a plan approved by the bureau which addresses substantive changes to that employer's business operation and ensures that any rate reduction provided will not put the employer account back into a negative status.
- b. An employer that does not qualify under subdivision a is subject to a rate determined as follows:
 - (1) For each calendar year new employers must be assigned a rate that is one hundred fifty percent of the positive employer maximum rate or a rate of one percent, whichever is greater, unless the employer is classified in construction services. However, an employer must be assigned within the negative employer rate ranges for any year if, as of the computation date, the cumulative benefits charged to that employer's account equal or exceed the cumulative contributions paid on or before October thirty-first with respect to wages paid by that employer before October first of that year.

- (2) New employers in construction services must be assigned the negative employer maximum rate.
 - (3) Assignment by the bureau of an employer's industrial classification for the purposes of this section must be the ~~two-digit~~ three-digit major group provided in the ~~standard~~ North American industrial classification system manual, in accordance with established classification practices found in the ~~standard~~ North American industrial classification system manual, issued by the executive office of the president, office of management and budget. Employers who are liable for coverage before August 1, 2001, remain under an industrial classification under the two-digit major group provided in the standard industrial classification manual unless they are classified in the construction industry within the standard industrial classification code.
4. An employer who has ceased to be liable for contributions shall continue its established experience rating account if it again becomes liable within three years from the date that it ceased to be liable providing that the employer's experience record has not been transferred in accordance with section 52-04-08. Such employer's rate, however, must be determined in accordance with subsection 3.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT. Section 52-04-08 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

52-04-08. Succession to predecessor's experience record. An employing unit that in any manner acquires all or part of the organization, business, trade, or assets of another employer and continues essentially the same business activity of the whole or part transferred, must upon request be transferred in accordance with such regulations as the bureau may prescribe, the whole or appropriate part of the experience record, reserve balance, and benefit experience of the preceding employer. Provided that if the predecessor files a written protest against such transfer within fifteen days of being notified of the successor's application, the transfer will not be made ~~without opportunity for a hearing.~~

When an employing unit in any manner acquires all or part of the organization, business, trade, or assets of another employer, the bureau shall transfer all or the appropriate part of the experience record, reserve balance, whether positive or negative, and benefit experience of such predecessor to the successor if it finds that (a) the predecessor was owned or controlled by or owned or controlled the successor directly or indirectly, by legally enforceable means or otherwise or (b) both the predecessor and successor were owned or controlled either directly or indirectly, by legally enforceable means or otherwise, by the same interests.

When a part of an employer's experience record reserve account and benefit experience is to be transferred under this section, the portion of the experience record and reserve account transferred must be in the same ratio to the total experience record and reserve account as the average annual payroll of the transferred organization, trade, business, or assets is to the total average annual payroll of the predecessor.

An employing unit's experience record may not be transferred in an amount that results in the successor and predecessor portions totaling more than one hundred percent of the predecessor's history.

SECTION 3. AMENDMENT. Subsection 1 of section 52-04-11.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

1. Any officer, director, or any employee having twenty percent ownership interest of a corporation and any manager, governor, or employee having twenty percent ownership interest of a limited liability company, that is an employer under the North Dakota Unemployment Compensation Law who has control of or supervision over the filing of and responsibility for filing contribution reports or making payment of contributions under the North Dakota Unemployment Compensation Laws, and who ~~willfully~~ fails to file the reports

or to make payments as required, is personally liable for contributions or reimbursement, including interest, penalties, and costs in the event the corporation or limited liability company does not pay to the bureau those amounts for which the employer is liable.

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Secretary of the Senate

This certifies that the within bill originated in the House of Representatives of the Fifty-seventh Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as House Bill No. 1087.

House Vote: Yeas 96 Nays 0 Absent 2

Senate Vote: Yeas 44 Nays 0 Absent 5

Chief Clerk of the House

Received by the Governor at _____ M. on _____, 2001.

Approved at _____ M. on _____, 2001.

Governor

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 2001,
at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State