CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5963

61st Legislature 2009 Regular Session

Passed by the Senate April 26, 2009 YEAS 46 NAYS 0	CERTIFICATE		
TEAD 40 NATO 0	I, Thomas Hoemann, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached		
President of the Senate	is SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5963 as passed by the Senate and the House		
Passed by the House April 26, 2009 YEAS 71 NAYS 25	of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.		
Speaker of the House of Representatives	Secretary		
Approved	FILED		
	Secretary of State State of Washington		
Governor of the State of Washington			

SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5963

AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2009 Regular Session

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Senate Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Holmquist, King, Honeyford, Keiser, Franklin, Kline, Hewitt, Marr, Parlette, McCaslin, Schoesler, and Morton)

READ FIRST TIME 02/25/09.

- 1 AN ACT Relating to unemployment insurance; amending RCW 50.29.021,
- 2 50.29.025, 50.20.050, and 50.22.010; creating a new section; and
- 3 declaring an emergency.

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- 4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:
- 5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 50.29.021 and 2008 c 323 s 2 are each amended to read 6 as follows:
 - (1) This section applies to benefits charged to the experience rating accounts of employers for claims that have an effective date on or after January 4, 2004.
 - (2)(a) An experience rating account shall be established and maintained for each employer, except employers as described in RCW 50.44.010, 50.44.030, and 50.50.030 who have properly elected to make payments in lieu of contributions, taxable local government employers as described in RCW 50.44.035, and those employers who are required to make payments in lieu of contributions, based on existing records of the employment security department.
- 17 (b) Benefits paid to an eligible individual shall be charged to the 18 experience rating accounts of each of such individual's employers 19 during the individual's base year in the same ratio that the wages paid

by each employer to the individual during the base year bear to the wages paid by all employers to that individual during that base year, except as otherwise provided in this section.

- (c) When the eligible individual's separating employer is a covered contribution paying base year employer, benefits paid to the eligible individual shall be charged to the experience rating account of only the individual's separating employer if the individual qualifies for benefits under:
- (i) RCW $50.20.050((\frac{(2)}{2}))$ $\underline{(1)}(b)(i)$, as applicable, and became unemployed after having worked and earned wages in the bona fide work; or
- 12 (ii) RCW 50.20.050($(\frac{(2)}{(2)})$) (1)(b) (v) through (x).
 - (3) The legislature finds that certain benefit payments, in whole or in part, should not be charged to the experience rating accounts of employers except those employers described in RCW 50.44.010, 50.44.030, and 50.50.030 who have properly elected to make payments in lieu of contributions, taxable local government employers described in RCW 50.44.035, and those employers who are required to make payments in lieu of contributions, as follows:
 - (a) Benefits paid to any individual later determined to be ineligible shall not be charged to the experience rating account of any contribution paying employer. However, when a benefit claim becomes invalid due to an amendment or adjustment of a report where the employer failed to report or inaccurately reported hours worked or remuneration paid, or both, all benefits paid will be charged to the experience rating account of the contribution paying employer or employers that originally filed the incomplete or inaccurate report or reports. An employer who reimburses the trust fund for benefits paid to workers and who fails to report or inaccurately reported hours worked or remuneration paid, or both, shall reimburse the trust fund for all benefits paid that are based on the originally filed incomplete or inaccurate report or reports.
 - (b) Benefits paid to an individual filing under the provisions of chapter 50.06 RCW shall not be charged to the experience rating account of any contribution paying employer only if:
- 36 (i) The individual files under RCW 50.06.020(1) after receiving 37 crime victims' compensation for a disability resulting from a nonwork-38 related occurrence; or

(ii) The individual files under RCW 50.06.020(2).

- (c) Benefits paid which represent the state's share of benefits payable as extended benefits defined under RCW 50.22.010(6) shall not be charged to the experience rating account of any contribution paying employer.
 - (d) In the case of individuals who requalify for benefits under RCW 50.20.050 or 50.20.060, benefits based on wage credits earned prior to the disqualifying separation shall not be charged to the experience rating account of the contribution paying employer from whom that separation took place.
 - (e) Benefits paid to an individual who qualifies for benefits under RCW $50.20.050((\frac{(2)}{(2)}))$ (1)(b) (iv) or (xi), as applicable, shall not be charged to the experience rating account of any contribution paying employer.
 - (f) With respect to claims with an effective date on or after the first Sunday following April 22, 2005, benefits paid that exceed the benefits that would have been paid if the weekly benefit amount for the claim had been determined as one percent of the total wages paid in the individual's base year shall not be charged to the experience rating account of any contribution paying employer. This subsection (3)(f) does not apply to the calculation of contribution rates under RCW 50.29.025 for rate year 2010 and thereafter.
 - (4)(a) A contribution paying base year employer, not otherwise eligible for relief of charges for benefits under this section, may receive such relief if the benefit charges result from payment to an individual who:
- (i) Last left the employ of such employer voluntarily for reasons not attributable to the employer;
- (ii) Was discharged for misconduct or gross misconduct connected with his or her work not a result of inability to meet the minimum job requirements;
- (iii) Is unemployed as a result of closure or severe curtailment of operation at the employer's plant, building, worksite, or other facility. This closure must be for reasons directly attributable to a catastrophic occurrence such as fire, flood, or other natural disaster; or
- (iv) Continues to be employed on a regularly scheduled permanent part-time basis by a base year employer and who at some time during the

- base year was concurrently employed and subsequently separated from at least one other base year employer. Benefit charge relief ceases when the employment relationship between the employer requesting relief and the claimant is terminated. This subsection does not apply to shared work employers under chapter 50.06 RCW.
- (b) The employer requesting relief of charges under this subsection must request relief in writing within thirty days following mailing to the last known address of the notification of the valid initial determination of such claim, stating the date and reason for the separation or the circumstances of continued employment. The commissioner, upon investigation of the request, shall determine whether relief should be granted.
- **Sec. 2.** RCW 50.29.025 and 2007 c 51 s 1 are each amended to read 14 as follows:
 - (1) ((Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, the contribution rate for each employer subject to contributions under RCW 50.24.010 shall be determined under this subsection.
 - (a) A fund balance ratio shall be determined by dividing the balance in the unemployment compensation fund as of the September 30th immediately preceding the rate year by the total remuneration paid by all employers subject to contributions during the second calendar year preceding the rate year and reported to the department by the following March 31st. The division shall be carried to the fourth decimal place with the remaining fraction, if any, disregarded. The fund balance ratio shall be expressed as a percentage.
 - (b) The interval of the fund balance ratio, expressed as a percentage, shall determine which tax schedule in (e) of this subsection shall be in effect for assigning tax rates for the rate year. The intervals for determining the effective tax schedule shall be:

31	Interval of the	
32	Fund Balance Ratio	Effective
33	Expressed as a Percentage	Tax Schedule
34	2.90 and above	AA
35	2.10 to 2.89	A

1	1.70 to 2.09	₽
2	1.40 to 1.69	E
3	1.00 to 1.39	Đ
4	0.70 to 0.99	E
5	Less than 0.70	F

(c) An array shall be prepared, listing all qualified employers in ascending order of their benefit ratios. The array shall show for each qualified employer: (i) Identification number; (ii) benefit ratio; (iii) taxable payrolls for the four calendar quarters immediately preceding the computation date and reported to the department by the cut-off date; (iv) a cumulative total of taxable payrolls consisting of the employer's taxable payroll plus the taxable payrolls of all other employers preceding him or her in the array; and (v) the percentage equivalent of the cumulative total of taxable payrolls.

(d) Each employer in the array shall be assigned to one of twenty rate classes according to the percentage intervals of cumulative taxable payrolls set forth in (e) of this subsection: PROVIDED, That if an employer's taxable payroll falls within two or more rate classes, the employer and any other employer with the same benefit ratio shall be assigned to the lowest rate class which includes any portion of the employer's taxable payroll.

(e) Except as provided in RCW 50.29.026, the contribution rate for each employer in the array shall be the rate specified in the following tables for the rate class to which he or she has been assigned, as determined under (d) of this subsection, within the tax schedule which is to be in effect during the rate year:

28	Pero	eent of							
29	Cum	ulative		Schedul	es of C	ontrib	utions	Rates	
30	Taxable	e Payrolls		for E	ffectiv	e Tax	Schedu	lle	
31		Rate							
32	From	To Class	AA	A	₽	ϵ	Đ	E	F
33	0.00	5.00 1	0.47	0.47	0.57	0.97	1.47	1.87	2.47
34	5.01	10.00 2	0.47	0.47	0.77	1.17	1.67	2.07	2.67
35	10.01	15.00 3	0.57	0.57	0.97	1.37	1.77	2.27	2.87

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1 15.01 20.00 4 0.57 0.73 1.11 1.51 1.90 2.40 2.98 2 25.00 5 0.72 0.92 1.30 1.70 2.09 2.59 3.08 20.01 3 25.01 30.00 6 0.91 1.11 1.49 1.89 2.29 2.69 3.18 7 1.00 1.29 4 30.01 35.00 1.69 2.08 2.48 2.88 3.27 40.00 8 1.19 1.48 1.88 2.27 2.67 3.07 3.47 5 35.01 45.00 9 1.37 1.67 2.07 2.47 2.87 3.27 3.66 6 40.01 45.01 50.00 10 1.56 1.86 2.26 2.66 3.06 3.46 3.86 8 50.01 55.00 ++ 1.84 2.14 2.45 2.85 3.25 3.66 3.95 9 55.01 60.00 12 2.03 2.33 2.64 3.04 3.44 3.85 4.15 4.04 4.34 10 13 2.22 2.52 2.83 3.23 3.64 60.01 65.00 14 2.40 2.71 3.02 3.43 3.83 11 65.01 70.00 4.24 4.54 3.21 3.62 4.02 4.43 4.63 12 70.01 75.00 15 2.68 2.90 13 75.01 80.00 16 2.87 3.09 3.42 3.81 4.22 4.53 4.73 3.27 3.47 14 80.01 85.00 17 3.77 4.17 4.57 4.87 4.97 4.17 4.57 4.87 15 85.01 90.00 18 3.67 3.87 4.97 5.17 16 90.01 95.00 19 4.07 4.27 4.57 4.97 5.07 5.17 5.37 17 95.01 100.00 20 5.40 5.40 5.40 5.40 5.40 5.40 5.40

- (f) The contribution rate for each employer not qualified to be in the array shall be as follows:
- (i) Employers who do not meet the definition of "qualified employer" by reason of failure to pay contributions when due shall be assigned a contribution rate two tenths higher than that in rate class 20 for the applicable rate year, except employers who have an approved agency deferred payment contract by September 30 of the previous rate year. If any employer with an approved agency deferred payment contract fails to make any one of the succeeding deferred payments or fails to submit any succeeding tax report and payment in a timely manner, the employer's tax rate shall immediately revert to a contribution rate two tenths higher than that in rate class 20 for the applicable rate year; and
- (ii) For all other employers not qualified to be in the array, the contribution rate shall be a rate equal to the average industry rate as determined by the commissioner; however, the rate may not be less than one percent.
- $\frac{(2) \text{ Beginning with}}{(2) \text{ Beginning with}})$ For contributions assessed for rate years 2005 through 2009, the contribution rate for each employer subject to contributions under RCW 50.24.010 shall be the sum of the array calculation factor rate and the graduated social cost factor rate

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determined under this subsection, and the solvency surcharge determined under RCW 50.29.041, if any.

- (a) The array calculation factor rate shall be determined as follows:
- (i) An array shall be prepared, listing all qualified employers in ascending order of their benefit ratios. The array shall show for each qualified employer: (A) Identification number; (B) benefit ratio; and (C) taxable payrolls for the four consecutive calendar quarters immediately preceding the computation date and reported to the employment security department by the cut-off date.
- (ii) Each employer in the array shall be assigned to one of forty rate classes according to his or her benefit ratio as follows, and, except as provided in RCW 50.29.026, the array calculation factor rate for each employer in the array shall be the rate specified in the rate class to which the employer has been assigned:

16	Bene	efit Ratio	Rate	Rate
17	At least	Less than	Class	(percent)
18		0.000001	1	0.00
19	0.000001	0.001250	2	0.13
20	0.001250	0.002500	3	0.25
21	0.002500	0.003750	4	0.38
22	0.003750	0.005000	5	0.50
23	0.005000	0.006250	6	0.63
24	0.006250	0.007500	7	0.75
25	0.007500	0.008750	8	0.88
26	0.008750	0.010000	9	1.00
27	0.010000	0.011250	10	1.15
28	0.011250	0.012500	11	1.30
29	0.012500	0.013750	12	1.45
30	0.013750	0.015000	13	1.60
31	0.015000	0.016250	14	1.75
32	0.016250	0.017500	15	1.90
33	0.017500	0.018750	16	2.05
34	0.018750	0.020000	17	2.20
35	0.020000	0.021250	18	2.35
36	0.021250	0.022500	19	2.50

1	0.022500	0.023750	20	2.65
2	0.023750	0.025000	21	2.80
3	0.025000	0.026250	22	2.95
4	0.026250	0.027500	23	3.10
5	0.027500	0.028750	24	3.25
6	0.028750	0.030000	25	3.40
7	0.030000	0.031250	26	3.55
8	0.031250	0.032500	27	3.70
9	0.032500	0.033750	28	3.85
10	0.033750	0.035000	29	4.00
11	0.035000	0.036250	30	4.15
12	0.036250	0.037500	31	4.30
13	0.037500	0.040000	32	4.45
14	0.040000	0.042500	33	4.60
15	0.042500	0.045000	34	4.75
16	0.045000	0.047500	35	4.90
17	0.047500	0.050000	36	5.05
18	0.050000	0.052500	37	5.20
19	0.052500	0.055000	38	5.30
20	0.055000	0.057500	39	5.35
21	0.057500		40	5.40

- 22 (b) The graduated social cost factor rate shall be determined as follows:
 - (i)(A) Except as provided in (b)(i)(B) and (C) of this subsection, the commissioner shall calculate the flat social cost factor for a rate year by dividing the total social cost by the total taxable payroll. The division shall be carried to the second decimal place with the remaining fraction disregarded unless it amounts to five hundredths or more, in which case the second decimal place shall be rounded to the next higher digit. The flat social cost factor shall be expressed as a percentage.
 - (B) If, on the cut-off date, the balance in the unemployment compensation fund is determined by the commissioner to be an amount that will provide more than ten months of unemployment benefits, the commissioner shall calculate the flat social cost factor for the rate year immediately following the cut-off date by reducing the total social cost by the dollar amount that represents the number of months

for which the balance in the unemployment compensation fund on the cutoff date will provide benefits above ten months and dividing the result by the total taxable payroll. However, the calculation under this subsection $((\frac{1}{2}))$ (1) (b) (i) (b) for a rate year may not result in a flat social cost factor that is more than four-tenths lower than the calculation under (b) (i) (A) of this subsection for that rate year.

For the purposes of this subsection, the commissioner shall determine the number of months of unemployment benefits in the unemployment compensation fund using the benefit cost rate for the average of the three highest calendar benefit cost rates in the twenty consecutive completed calendar years immediately preceding the cut-off date or a period of consecutive calendar years immediately preceding the cut-off date that includes three recessions, if longer.

- (C) The minimum flat social cost factor calculated under this subsection $((\frac{1}{2}))$ (1)(b) shall be six-tenths of one percent, except that if the balance in the unemployment compensation fund is determined by the commissioner to be an amount that will provide:
- (I) At least twelve months but less than fourteen months of unemployment benefits, the minimum shall be five-tenths of one percent; or
- (II) At least fourteen months of unemployment benefits, the minimum shall be five-tenths of one percent, except that, for employers in rate class 1, the minimum shall be forty-five hundredths of one percent.
- (ii)(A) Except as provided in (b)(ii)(B) of this subsection, the graduated social cost factor rate for each employer in the array is the flat social cost factor multiplied by the percentage specified as follows for the rate class to which the employer has been assigned in (a)(ii) of this subsection, except that the sum of an employer's array calculation factor rate and the graduated social cost factor rate may not exceed six and five-tenths percent or, for employers whose North American industry classification system code is within "111," "112," "1141," "115," "3114," "3117," "42448," or "49312," may not exceed six percent through rate year 2007 and may not exceed five and seven-tenths percent for rate years 2008 and ((thereafter)) 2009:
 - (I) Rate class 1 78 percent;
- 36 (II) Rate class 2 82 percent;

- 37 (III) Rate class 3 86 percent;
- 38 (IV) Rate class 4 90 percent;

- 1 (V) Rate class 5 94 percent;
- 2 (VI) Rate class 6 98 percent;
- 3 (VII) Rate class 7 102 percent;
- 4 (VIII) Rate class 8 106 percent;
- 5 (IX) Rate class 9 110 percent;
- 6 (X) Rate class 10 114 percent;
- 7 (XI) Rate class 11 118 percent; and
- 8 (XII) Rate classes 12 through 40 120 percent.
- 9 (B) For contributions assessed beginning July 1, 2005, through 10 December 31, 2007, for employers whose North American industry classification system code is "111," "112," "1141," "115," "3114," "3117," "42448," or "49312," the graduated social cost factor rate is zero.
- 14 (iii) For the purposes of this section:
 - (A) "Total social cost" means the amount calculated by subtracting the array calculation factor contributions paid by all employers with respect to the four consecutive calendar quarters immediately preceding the computation date and paid to the employment security department by the cut-off date from the total unemployment benefits paid to claimants in the same four consecutive calendar quarters. To calculate the flat social cost factor for rate year 2005, the commissioner shall calculate the total social cost using the array calculation factor contributions that would have been required to be paid by all employers in the calculation period if (a) of this subsection had been in effect for the relevant period.
 - (B) "Total taxable payroll" means the total amount of wages subject to tax, as determined under RCW 50.24.010, for all employers in the four consecutive calendar quarters immediately preceding the computation date and reported to the employment security department by the cut-off date.
 - (c) For employers who do not meet the definition of "qualified employer" by reason of failure to pay contributions when due:
 - (i) The array calculation factor rate shall be two-tenths higher than that in rate class 40, except employers who have an approved agency-deferred payment contract by September 30th of the previous rate year. If any employer with an approved agency-deferred payment contract fails to make any one of the succeeding deferred payments or fails to submit any succeeding tax report and payment in a timely

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- manner, the employer's tax rate shall immediately revert to an array calculation factor rate two-tenths higher than that in rate class 40; and
 - (ii) The social cost factor rate shall be the social cost factor rate assigned to rate class 40 under (b)(ii) of this subsection.
 - (d) For all other employers not qualified to be in the array:
 - (i) For rate years 2005, 2006, and 2007:

- (A) The array calculation factor rate shall be a rate equal to the average industry array calculation factor rate as determined by the commissioner, plus fifteen percent of that amount; however, the rate may not be less than one percent or more than the array calculation factor rate in rate class 40; and
- (B) The social cost factor rate shall be a rate equal to the average industry social cost factor rate as determined by the commissioner, plus fifteen percent of that amount, but not more than the social cost factor rate assigned to rate class 40 under (b)(ii) of this subsection.
- (ii) ((Beginning with)) <u>For</u> contributions assessed for rate years 2008 <u>and 2009</u>:
- (A) The array calculation factor rate shall be a rate equal to the average industry array calculation factor rate as determined by the commissioner, multiplied by the history factor, but not less than one percent or more than the array calculation factor rate in rate class 40;
- (B) The social cost factor rate shall be a rate equal to the average industry social cost factor rate as determined by the commissioner, multiplied by the history factor, but not more than the social cost factor rate assigned to rate class 40 under (b)(ii) of this subsection; and
- (C) The history factor shall be based on the total amounts of benefits charged and contributions paid in the three fiscal years ending prior to the computation date by employers not qualified to be in the array, other than employers in (c) of this subsection, who were first subject to contributions in the calendar year ending three years prior to the computation date. The commissioner shall calculate the history ratio by dividing the total amount of benefits charged by the total amount of contributions paid in this three-year period by these employers. The division shall be carried to the second decimal place

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with the remaining fraction disregarded unless it amounts to five one-hundredths or more, in which case the second decimal place shall be rounded to the next higher digit. The commissioner shall determine the history factor according to the history ratio as follows:

5		History		History
6		Ratio		Factor
7				(percent)
8		At least	Less than	
9	(I)		.95	90
10	(II)	.95	1.05	100
11	(III)	1.05		115

- (2) For contributions assessed in rate year 2010 and thereafter, the contribution rate for each employer subject to contributions under RCW 50.24.010 shall be the sum of the array calculation factor rate and the graduated social cost factor rate determined under this subsection, and the solvency surcharge determined under RCW 50.29.041, if any.
- (a) The array calculation factor rate shall be determined as follows:
 - (i) An array shall be prepared, listing all qualified employers in ascending order of their benefit ratios. The array shall show for each qualified employer: (A) Identification number; (B) benefit ratio; and (C) taxable payrolls for the four consecutive calendar quarters immediately preceding the computation date and reported to the employment security department by the cut-off date.
 - (ii) Each employer in the array shall be assigned to one of forty rate classes according to his or her benefit ratio as follows, and, except as provided in RCW 50.29.026, the array calculation factor rate for each employer in the array shall be the rate specified in the rate class to which the employer has been assigned:

30	Ben	efit Ratio	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Rate</u>
31	At least	<u>Less than</u>	<u>Class</u>	(percent)
32		0.000001	<u>1</u>	0.00
33	0.000001	0.001250	<u>2</u>	0.11

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1	0.001250	0.002500	<u>3</u>	0.22
2	0.002500	0.003750	<u>4</u>	<u>0.33</u>
3	0.003750	0.005000	<u>5</u>	<u>0.43</u>
4	0.005000	0.006250	<u>6</u>	<u>0.54</u>
5	0.006250	0.007500	<u>7</u>	0.65
6	0.007500	0.008750	<u>8</u>	<u>0.76</u>
7	0.008750	0.010000	9	0.88
8	0.010000	0.011250	<u>10</u>	<u>1.01</u>
9	<u>0.011250</u>	0.012500	<u>11</u>	<u>1.14</u>
10	0.012500	0.013750	<u>12</u>	<u>1.28</u>
11	<u>0.013750</u>	0.015000	<u>13</u>	<u>1.41</u>
12	<u>0.015000</u>	0.016250	<u>14</u>	<u>1.54</u>
13	<u>0.016250</u>	0.017500	<u>15</u>	<u>1.67</u>
14	<u>0.017500</u>	0.018750	<u>16</u>	<u>1.80</u>
15	<u>0.018750</u>	0.020000	<u>17</u>	<u>1.94</u>
16	0.020000	0.021250	<u>18</u>	<u>2.07</u>
17	<u>0.021250</u>	0.022500	<u>19</u>	<u>2.20</u>
18	0.022500	0.023750	<u>20</u>	<u>2.38</u>
19	0.023750	0.025000	<u>21</u>	<u>2.50</u>
20	0.025000	0.026250	<u>22</u>	<u>2.63</u>
21	0.026250	0.027500	<u>23</u>	<u>2.75</u>
22	0.027500	0.028750	<u>24</u>	<u>2.88</u>
23	<u>0.028750</u>	0.030000	<u>25</u>	<u>3.00</u>
24	0.030000	0.031250	<u>26</u>	<u>3.13</u>
25	<u>0.031250</u>	0.032500	<u>27</u>	<u>3.25</u>
26	0.032500	0.033750	<u>28</u>	<u>3.38</u>
27	0.033750	0.035000	<u>29</u>	<u>3.50</u>
28	0.035000	0.036250	<u>30</u>	<u>3.63</u>
29	0.036250	0.037500	<u>31</u>	<u>3.75</u>
30	0.037500	0.040000	<u>32</u>	<u>4.00</u>
31	<u>0.040000</u>	0.042500	<u>33</u>	<u>4.25</u>
32	0.042500	0.045000	<u>34</u>	<u>4.50</u>
33	<u>0.045000</u>	0.047500	<u>35</u>	<u>4.75</u>
34	0.047500	0.050000	<u>36</u>	<u>5.00</u>
35	0.050000	0.052500	<u>37</u>	<u>5.15</u>
36	0.052500	0.055000	<u>38</u>	<u>5.25</u>
37	0.055000	0.057500	<u>39</u>	<u>5.30</u>

0.057500 40 5.40

2 <u>(b) The graduated social cost factor rate shall be determined as</u> 3 follows:

(i)(A) Except as provided in (b)(i)(B) and (C) of this subsection, the commissioner shall calculate the flat social cost factor for a rate year by dividing the total social cost by the total taxable payroll. The division shall be carried to the second decimal place with the remaining fraction disregarded unless it amounts to five hundredths or more, in which case the second decimal place shall be rounded to the next higher digit. The flat social cost factor shall be expressed as a percentage.

(B) If, on the cut-off date, the balance in the unemployment compensation fund is determined by the commissioner to be an amount that will provide more than ten months of unemployment benefits, the commissioner shall calculate the flat social cost factor for the rate year immediately following the cut-off date by reducing the total social cost by the dollar amount that represents the number of months for which the balance in the unemployment compensation fund on the cut-off date will provide benefits above ten months and dividing the result by the total taxable payroll. However, the calculation under this subsection (2)(b)(i)(B) for a rate year may not result in a flat social cost factor that is more than four-tenths lower than the calculation under (b)(i)(A) of this subsection for that rate year.

For the purposes of this subsection, the commissioner shall determine the number of months of unemployment benefits in the unemployment compensation fund using the benefit cost rate for the average of the three highest calendar benefit cost rates in the twenty consecutive completed calendar years immediately preceding the cut-off date or a period of consecutive calendar years immediately preceding the cut-off date that includes three recessions, if longer.

- (C) The minimum flat social cost factor calculated under this subsection (2)(b) shall be six-tenths of one percent, except that if the balance in the unemployment compensation fund is determined by the commissioner to be an amount that will provide:
- 35 <u>(I) At least ten months but less than eleven months of unemployment</u> 36 benefits, the minimum shall be five-tenths of one percent; or

- 1 (II) At least eleven months but less than twelve months of 2 unemployment benefits, the minimum shall be forty-five hundredths of 3 one percent; or
 - (III) At least twelve months but less than thirteen months of unemployment benefits, the minimum shall be four-tenths of one percent; or
- 7 (IV) At least thirteen months but less than fifteen months of 8 unemployment benefits, the minimum shall be thirty-five hundredths of 9 one percent; or
- 10 <u>(V) At least fifteen months but less than seventeen months of</u>
 11 <u>unemployment benefits, the minimum shall be twenty-five hundredths of</u>
 12 one percent; or
- 13 <u>(VI) At least seventeen months but less than eighteen months of</u> 14 <u>unemployment benefits, the minimum shall be fifteen hundredths of one</u> 15 percent; or
- 16 <u>(VII) At least eighteen months of unemployment benefits, the</u>
 17 <u>minimum shall be fifteen hundredths of one percent through rate year</u>
 18 2011 and shall be zero thereafter.
 - (ii) The graduated social cost factor rate for each employer in the array is the flat social cost factor multiplied by the percentage specified as follows for the rate class to which the employer has been assigned in (a)(ii) of this subsection, except that the sum of an employer's array calculation factor rate and the graduated social cost factor rate may not exceed six percent or, for employers whose North American industry classification system code is within "111," "112," "1141," "115," "3114," "3117," "42448," or "49312," may not exceed five and four-tenths percent:
- 28 (A) Rate class 1 78 percent;

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- 29 (B) Rate class 2 82 percent;
- 30 (C) Rate class 3 86 percent;
- 31 (D) Rate class 4 90 percent;
- 32 (E) Rate class 5 94 percent;
- 33 (F) Rate class 6 98 percent;
- 34 (G) Rate class 7 102 percent;
- 35 (H) Rate class 8 106 percent;
- 36 (I) Rate class 9 110 percent;
- 37 <u>(J) Rate class 10 114 percent;</u>
- 38 (K) Rate class 11 118 percent; and

- 1 (L) Rate classes 12 through 40 120 percent.
- 2 (iii) For the purposes of this section:
- (A) "Total social cost" means the amount calculated by subtracting
 the array calculation factor contributions paid by all employers with
 respect to the four consecutive calendar quarters immediately preceding
 the computation date and paid to the employment security department by
 the cut-off date from the total unemployment benefits paid to claimants
 in the same four consecutive calendar quarters.
 - (B) "Total taxable payroll" means the total amount of wages subject to tax, as determined under RCW 50.24.010, for all employers in the four consecutive calendar quarters immediately preceding the computation date and reported to the employment security department by the cut-off date.
 - (c) For employers who do not meet the definition of "qualified employer" by reason of failure to pay contributions when due:
 - (i) The array calculation factor rate shall be two-tenths higher than that in rate class 40, except employers who have an approved agency-deferred payment contract by September 30th of the previous rate year. If any employer with an approved agency-deferred payment contract fails to make any one of the succeeding deferred payments or fails to submit any succeeding tax report and payment in a timely manner, the employer's tax rate shall immediately revert to an array calculation factor rate two-tenths higher than that in rate class 40; and
 - (ii) The social cost factor rate shall be the social cost factor rate assigned to rate class 40 under (b)(ii) of this subsection.
 - (d) For all other employers not qualified to be in the array:
 - (i) The array calculation factor rate shall be a rate equal to the average industry array calculation factor rate as determined by the commissioner, multiplied by the history factor, but not less than one percent or more than the array calculation factor rate in rate class 40;
- (ii) The social cost factor rate shall be a rate equal to the average industry social cost factor rate as determined by the commissioner, multiplied by the history factor, but not more than the social cost factor rate assigned to rate class 40 under (b)(ii) of this subsection; and

(iii) The history factor shall be based on the total amounts of benefits charged and contributions paid in the three fiscal years ending prior to the computation date by employers not qualified to be in the array, other than employers in (c) of this subsection, who were first subject to contributions in the calendar year ending three years prior to the computation date. The commissioner shall calculate the history ratio by dividing the total amount of benefits charged by the total amount of contributions paid in this three-year period by these employers. The division shall be carried to the second decimal place with the remaining fraction disregarded unless it amounts to five one-hundredths or more, in which case the second decimal place shall be rounded to the next higher digit. The commissioner shall determine the history factor according to the history ratio as follows:

14		<u>History</u>		<u>History</u>
15		<u>Ratio</u>		<u>Factor</u>
16				(percent)
17		At least	<u>Less than</u>	
18	<u>(A)</u>		<u>.95</u>	<u>90</u>
19	<u>(B)</u>	<u>.95</u>	<u>1.05</u>	<u>100</u>
20	<u>(C)</u>	<u>1.05</u>		<u>115</u>

(3) Assignment of employers by the commissioner to industrial classification, for purposes of this section, shall be in accordance with established classification practices found ((in the "Standard Industrial Classification Manual" issued by the federal office of management and budget to the third digit provided in the standard industrial classification code, or)) in the North American industry classification system code.

- **Sec. 3.** RCW 50.20.050 and 2008 c 323 s 1 are each amended to read 29 as follows:
- 30 (1) ((With respect to claims that have an effective date before 31 January 4, 2004:
 - (a) An individual shall be disqualified from benefits beginning with the first day of the calendar week in which he or she has left work voluntarily without good cause and thereafter for seven calendar

weeks and until he or she has obtained bona fide work in employment covered by this title and earned wages in that employment equal to seven times his or her weekly benefit amount.

The disqualification shall continue if the work obtained is a mere sham to qualify for benefits and is not bona fide work. In determining whether work is of a bona fide nature, the commissioner shall consider factors including but not limited to the following:

(i) The duration of the work;

- (ii) The extent of direction and control by the employer over the work; and
 - (iii) The level of skill required for the work in light of the individual's training and experience.
 - (b) An individual shall not be considered to have left work voluntarily without good cause when:
- (i) He or she has left work to accept a bona fide offer of bona fide work as described in (a) of this subsection;
- (ii) The separation was because of the illness or disability of the claimant or the death, illness, or disability of a member of the claimant or the death, illness, or disability of a member of the claimant's immediate family if the claimant took all reasonable precautions, in accordance with any regulations that the commissioner may prescribe, to protect his or her employment status by having promptly notified the employer of the reason for the absence and by having promptly requested reemployment when again able to assume employment: PROVIDED, That these precautions need not have been taken when they would have been a futile act, including those instances when the futility of the act was a result of a recognized labor/management dispatch system;
- (iii) He or she has left work to relocate for the spouse's employment that is due to an employer initiated mandatory transfer that is outside the existing labor market area if the claimant remained employed as long as was reasonable prior to the move; or
- (iv) The separation was necessary to protect the claimant or the claimant's immediate family members from domestic violence, as defined in RCW 26.50.010, or stalking, as defined in RCW 9A.46.110.
- (c) In determining under this subsection whether an individual has left work voluntarily without good cause, the commissioner shall only consider work-connected factors such as the degree of risk involved to the individual's health, safety, and morals, the individual's physical

fitness for the work, the individual's ability to perform the work, and such other work connected factors as the commissioner may deem pertinent, including state and national emergencies. Good cause shall not be established for voluntarily leaving work because of its distance from an individual's residence where the distance was known to the individual at the time he or she accepted the employment and where, in the judgment of the department, the distance is customarily traveled by workers in the individual's job classification and labor market, nor because of any other significant work factor which was generally known and present at the time he or she accepted employment, unless the related circumstances have so changed as to amount to a substantial involuntary deterioration of the work factor or unless the commissioner determines that other related circumstances would work an unreasonable hardship on the individual were he or she required to continue in the employment.

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(d) Subsection (1)(a) and (c) of this section shall not apply to an individual whose marital status or domestic responsibilities cause him or her to leave employment. Such an individual shall not be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits beginning with the first day of the calendar week in which he or she left work and thereafter for seven calendar weeks and until he or she has requalified, either by obtaining bona fide work in employment covered by this title and earning wages in that employment equal to seven times his or her weekly benefit amount or by reporting in person to the department during ten different calendar weeks and certifying on each occasion that he or she is ready, able, and willing to immediately accept any suitable work which may be offered, is actively seeking work pursuant to customary trade practices, and is utilizing such employment counseling and placement services as are available through the department. This subsection does not apply to individuals covered by (b)(ii) or (iii) of this subsection.

 $\frac{(2)}{(2)}$) With respect to claims that have an effective date on or after January 4, 2004, and for separations that occur before September 6, 2009:

(a) An individual shall be disqualified from benefits beginning with the first day of the calendar week in which he or she has left work voluntarily without good cause and thereafter for seven calendar

weeks and until he or she has obtained bona fide work in employment covered by this title and earned wages in that employment equal to seven times his or her weekly benefit amount.

The disqualification shall continue if the work obtained is a mere sham to qualify for benefits and is not bona fide work. In determining whether work is of a bona fide nature, the commissioner shall consider factors including but not limited to the following:

(i) The duration of the work;

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- 9 (ii) The extent of direction and control by the employer over the 10 work; and
- 11 (iii) The level of skill required for the work in light of the 12 individual's training and experience.
- 13 (b) An individual is not disqualified from benefits under (a) of this subsection when:
- 15 (i) He or she has left work to accept a bona fide offer of bona 16 fide work as described in (a) of this subsection;
 - (ii) The separation was necessary because of the illness or disability of the claimant or the death, illness, or disability of a member of the claimant's immediate family if:
 - (A) The claimant pursued all reasonable alternatives to preserve his or her employment status by requesting a leave of absence, by having promptly notified the employer of the reason for the absence, and by having promptly requested reemployment when again able to assume employment. These alternatives need not be pursued, however, when they would have been a futile act, including those instances when the futility of the act was a result of a recognized labor/management dispatch system; and
 - (B) The claimant terminated his or her employment status, and is not entitled to be reinstated to the same position or a comparable or similar position;
 - (iii)(A) With respect to claims that have an effective date before July 2, 2006, he or she: (I) Left work to relocate for the spouse's employment that, due to a mandatory military transfer: (1) Is outside the existing labor market area; and (2) is in Washington or another state that, pursuant to statute, does not consider such an individual to have left work voluntarily without good cause; and (II) remained employed as long as was reasonable prior to the move;

(B) With respect to claims that have an effective date on or after July 2, 2006, he or she: (I) Left work to relocate for the spouse's employment that, due to a mandatory military transfer, is outside the existing labor market area; and (II) remained employed as long as was reasonable prior to the move;

- (iv) The separation was necessary to protect the claimant or the claimant's immediate family members from domestic violence, as defined in RCW 26.50.010, or stalking, as defined in RCW 9A.46.110;
- 9 (v) The individual's usual compensation was reduced by twenty-five 10 percent or more;
- 11 (vi) The individual's usual hours were reduced by twenty-five 12 percent or more;
 - (vii) The individual's worksite changed, such change caused a material increase in distance or difficulty of travel, and, after the change, the commute was greater than is customary for workers in the individual's job classification and labor market;
 - (viii) The individual's worksite safety deteriorated, the individual reported such safety deterioration to the employer, and the employer failed to correct the hazards within a reasonable period of time;
 - (ix) The individual left work because of illegal activities in the individual's worksite, the individual reported such activities to the employer, and the employer failed to end such activities within a reasonable period of time;
 - (x) The individual's usual work was changed to work that violates the individual's religious convictions or sincere moral beliefs; or
 - (xi) The individual left work to enter an apprenticeship program approved by the Washington state apprenticeship training council. Benefits are payable beginning Sunday of the week prior to the week in which the individual begins active participation in the apprenticeship program.
 - (2) With respect to separations that occur on or after September 6, 2009:
- 34 <u>(a) An individual shall be disqualified from benefits beginning</u>
 35 <u>with the first day of the calendar week in which he or she has left</u>
 36 <u>work voluntarily without good cause and thereafter for seven calendar</u>
 37 weeks and until he or she has obtained bona fide work in employment

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- covered by this title and earned wages in that employment equal to seven times his or her weekly benefit amount. Good cause reasons to leave work are limited to reasons listed in (b) of this subsection.
 - The disqualification shall continue if the work obtained is a mere sham to qualify for benefits and is not bona fide work. In determining whether work is of a bona fide nature, the commissioner shall consider factors including but not limited to the following:
 - (i) The duration of the work;

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- 9 <u>(ii) The extent of direction and control by the employer over the</u> 10 work; and
- 11 <u>(iii) The level of skill required for the work in light of the</u> 12 individual's training and experience.
- 13 <u>(b) An individual has good cause and is not disqualified from</u>
 14 <u>benefits under (a) of this subsection only under the following</u>
 15 circumstances:
- 16 <u>(i) He or she has left work to accept a bona fide offer of bona</u>
 17 <u>fide work as described in (a) of this subsection;</u>
- (ii) The separation was necessary because of the illness or disability of the claimant or the death, illness, or disability of a member of the claimant's immediate family if:
 - (A) The claimant pursued all reasonable alternatives to preserve his or her employment status by requesting a leave of absence, by having promptly notified the employer of the reason for the absence, and by having promptly requested reemployment when again able to assume employment. These alternatives need not be pursued, however, when they would have been a futile act, including those instances when the futility of the act was a result of a recognized labor/management dispatch system; and
- 29 <u>(B) The claimant terminated his or her employment status, and is</u>
 30 <u>not entitled to be reinstated to the same position or a comparable or</u>
 31 <u>similar position;</u>
- (iii) The claimant: (A) Left work to relocate for the employment
 of a spouse or domestic partner that is outside the existing labor
 market area; and (B) remained employed as long as was reasonable prior
 to the move;
- (iv) The separation was necessary to protect the claimant or the claimant's immediate family members from domestic violence, as defined in RCW 26.50.010, or stalking, as defined in RCW 9A.46.110;

- 1 (v) The individual's usual compensation was reduced by twenty-five percent or more;
- 3 (vi) The individual's usual hours were reduced by twenty-five
 4 percent or more;
- 5 (vii) The individual's worksite changed, such change caused a
 6 material increase in distance or difficulty of travel, and, after the
 7 change, the commute was greater than is customary for workers in the
 8 individual's job classification and labor market;
- 9 <u>(viii)</u> The individual's worksite safety deteriorated, the 10 <u>individual reported such safety deterioration to the employer, and the</u> 11 <u>employer failed to correct the hazards within a reasonable period of</u> 12 time;
- (ix) The individual left work because of illegal activities in the individual's worksite, the individual reported such activities to the employer, and the employer failed to end such activities within a reasonable period of time;
- 17 (x) The individual's usual work was changed to work that violates
 18 the individual's religious convictions or sincere moral beliefs; or
- 19 (xi) The individual left work to enter an apprenticeship program
 20 approved by the Washington state apprenticeship training council.
 21 Benefits are payable beginning Sunday of the week prior to the week in
 22 which the individual begins active participation in the apprenticeship
 23 program.
- 24 **Sec. 4.** RCW 50.22.010 and 1993 c 483 s 15 are each amended to read 25 as follows:
- As used in this chapter, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:
 - (1) "Extended benefit period" means a period which:

- 29 (a) Begins with the third week after a week for which there is an 30 "on" indicator; and
- 31 (b) Ends with the third week after the first week for which there 32 is an "off" indicator: PROVIDED, That no extended benefit period shall 33 last for a period of less than thirteen consecutive weeks, and further 34 that no extended benefit period may begin by reason of an "on" 35 indicator before the fourteenth week after the close of a prior 36 extended benefit period which was in effect with respect to this state.

- (2) There is an "on" indicator for this state for a week if the commissioner determines, in accordance with the regulations of the United States secretary of labor, that for the period consisting of such week and the immediately preceding twelve weeks:
- (a) The rate of insured unemployment, not seasonally adjusted, equaled or exceeded one hundred twenty percent of the average of such rates for the corresponding thirteen-week period ending in each of the preceding two calendar years and equaled or exceeded five percent; or
- (b) For benefits for weeks of unemployment beginning after March 6, 1993:
- (i) The average rate of total unemployment, seasonally adjusted, as determined by the United States secretary of labor, for the period consisting of the most recent three months for which data for all states are published before the close of the week equals or exceeds six and one-half percent; and
- (ii) The average rate of total unemployment in the state, seasonally adjusted, as determined by the United States secretary of labor, for the three-month period referred to in (b)(i) of this subsection, equals or exceeds one hundred ten percent of the average for either or both of the corresponding three-month periods ending in the two preceding calendar years.
- (3) "High unemployment period" means any period of unemployment beginning after March 6, 1993, during which an extended benefit period would be in effect if:
- (a) The average rate of total unemployment, seasonally adjusted, as determined by the United States secretary of labor, for the period consisting of the most recent three months for which data for all states are published before the close of the week equals or exceeds eight percent; and
- (b) The average rate of total unemployment in the state, seasonally adjusted, as determined by the United States secretary of labor, for the three-month period referred to in (a) of this subsection, equals or exceeds one hundred ten percent of the average for either or both of the corresponding three-month periods ending in the two preceding calendar years.
- (4) There is an "off" indicator for this state for a week only if, for the period consisting of such week and immediately preceding twelve

weeks, none of the options specified in subsection (2) or (3) of this section result in an "on" indicator.

- (5) "Regular benefits" means benefits payable to an individual under this title or under any state law (including benefits payable to federal civilian employees and to ex-servicemen pursuant to 5 U.S.C. chapter 85) other than extended benefits or additional benefits.
- (6) "Extended benefits" means benefits payable for weeks of unemployment beginning in an extended benefit period to an individual under this title or under any state law (including benefits payable to federal civilian employees and to ex-servicemen pursuant to 5 U.S.C. chapter 85) other than regular or additional benefits.
- (7) "Additional benefits" are benefits totally financed by the state and payable under this title to exhaustees by reason of conditions of high unemployment or by reason of other special factors.
 - (8) "Eligibility period" of an individual means:
- (a) The period consisting of the weeks in his or her benefit year which begin in an extended benefit period that is in effect in this state and, if his or her benefit year ends within such extended benefit period, any weeks thereafter which begin in such period; or
- (b) For an individual who is eligible for emergency unemployment compensation during the extended benefit period beginning February 15, 2009, the period consisting of the week ending February 28, 2009, through the week ending May 29, 2010.
- (9) "Additional benefit eligibility period" of an individual means the period consisting of the weeks in his or her benefit year which begin in an additional benefit period that is in effect and, if his or her benefit year ends within such additional benefit period, any weeks thereafter which begin in such period.
- (10) "Exhaustee" means an individual who, with respect to any week of unemployment in his or her eligibility period:
- (a) Has received, prior to such week, all of the regular benefits that were payable to him or her under this title or any other state law (including dependents' allowances and regular benefits payable to federal civilian employees and ex-servicemen under 5 U.S.C. chapter 85) in his or her current benefit year that includes such week; or
- (b) Has received, prior to such week, all of the regular benefits that were available to him or her under this title or any other state law (including dependents' allowances and regular benefits available to

- federal civilian employees and ex-servicemen under 5 U.S.C. chapter 85) in his or her current benefit year that includes such week, after the cancellation of some or all of his or her wage credits or the total or partial reduction of his or her rights to regular benefits: PROVIDED, That, for the purposes of (a) and (b), an individual shall be deemed to have received in his or her current benefit year all of the regular benefits that were payable to him or her, or available to him or her, as the case may be, even though:
 - (i) As a result of a pending appeal with respect to wages or employment, or both, that were not included in the original monetary determination with respect to his or her current benefit year, he or she may subsequently be determined to be entitled to more regular benefits; or
 - (ii) By reason of the seasonal provisions of another state law, he or she is not entitled to regular benefits with respect to such week of unemployment (although he or she may be entitled to regular benefits with respect to future weeks of unemployment in the next season, as the case may be, in his or her current benefit year), and he or she is otherwise an exhaustee within the meaning of this section with respect to his or her right to regular benefits under such state law seasonal provisions during the season or off season in which that week of unemployment occurs; or
 - (iii) Having established a benefit year, no regular benefits are payable to him or her during such year because his or her wage credits were canceled or his or her right to regular benefits was totally reduced as the result of the application of a disqualification; or
 - (c) His or her benefit year having ended prior to such week, he or she has insufficient wages or employment, or both, on the basis of which he or she could establish in any state a new benefit year that would include such week, or having established a new benefit year that includes such week, he or she is precluded from receiving regular benefits by reason of the provision in RCW 50.04.030 which meets the requirement of section 3304(a)(7) of the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, or the similar provision in any other state law; and
 - (d)(i) Has no right for such week to unemployment benefits or allowances, as the case may be, under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, and such other federal

laws as are specified in regulations issued by the United States secretary of labor; and

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- (ii) Has not received and is not seeking for such week unemployment benefits under the unemployment compensation law of Canada, unless the appropriate agency finally determines that he or she is not entitled to unemployment benefits under such law for such week.
- (11) "State law" means the unemployment insurance law of any state, approved by the United States secretary of labor under section 3304 of the internal revenue code of 1954.
- 10 Sec. 5. If any part of this act is found to be in 11 conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to 12 the allocation of federal funds to the state or the eligibility of employers in this state for federal unemployment tax credits, the 13 14 conflicting part of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict, and the finding or determination does not affect the 15 operation of the remainder of this act. Rules adopted under this act 16 17 must meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the 18 receipt of federal funds by the state or the granting of federal unemployment tax credits to employers in this state. 19
- NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.
- NEW SECTION. Sec. 7. Section 4 of this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

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