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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5955**

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**State of Washington**

**58th Legislature**

**2003 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Committee on Economic Development (originally sponsored by Senator Benton)

READ FIRST TIME 03/05/03.

1       AN ACT Relating to the personal reemployment account program;  
2 adding a new chapter to Title 43 RCW; and providing an expiration date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4       NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the department of  
5 community, trade, and economic development has, through its individual  
6 development accounts program, shown the value of economic development  
7 efforts that focus on providing individuals with resources, skills, and  
8 incentives to engage in gainful employment. It is the intent of the  
9 legislature to promote economic development by creating the personal  
10 reemployment account program in the department to provide for the  
11 establishment of personal reemployment accounts for certain individuals  
12 identified as likely to have problems becoming reemployed. The  
13 personal reemployment account program is to assist such individuals by  
14 accelerating reemployment, promoting retention in employment, and  
15 providing enhanced flexibility, choice, and control in obtaining  
16 intensive reemployment, training, and supportive services. It is the  
17 further intent of the legislature to operate the program with funds  
18 granted to the state from the federal government and private resources.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    The personal reemployment account program is  
2 established in the department of community, trade, and economic  
3 development.

4        (1) An eligible individual may receive only one personal  
5 reemployment account. The amount of each reemployment account is three  
6 thousand dollars.

7        (2) An individual is eligible to receive a personal reemployment  
8 account if, after the state receives federal grant funds, the  
9 individual:

10        (a) Is identified, pursuant to section 303(j)(1) of the federal  
11 social security act: (i) As likely to exhaust regular unemployment  
12 compensation; (ii) to be in need of job search assistance to make a  
13 successful transition to new employment; (iii) as receiving regular  
14 unemployment compensation; and (iv) as eligible for not less than  
15 twenty weeks of regular unemployment compensation; or

16        (b) Has exhausted all rights to any unemployment compensation, and:

17        (i) Is enrolled in training and needs additional support to  
18 complete this training, with a priority of service to be provided to  
19 the individuals who are training for shortage occupations or high-  
20 growth industries; or

21        (ii) Is separated from employment in an industry or occupation that  
22 has experienced declining employment, or no longer provides any  
23 employment, in the local labor market during the two-year period  
24 preceding the individual's application for eligibility.

25        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    (1) Prior to the establishment of a personal  
26 reemployment account for an eligible individual, the department of  
27 community, trade, and economic development and the one-stop delivery  
28 system established under the federal work force investment act shall  
29 ensure that the individual:

30        (a) Is informed of the requirements applicable to the personal  
31 reemployment account, including the allowable uses of funds provided  
32 for in section 4 of this act and the conditions for their receipt, and  
33 the availability of and the limitations on access to services provided  
34 for by federal law;

35        (b) Has the option to develop a personal reemployment plan which  
36 will identify the employment goals and appropriate combination of

1 services selected by the individual to achieve the employment goals;  
2 and

3 (c) Signs an attestation that the individual will comply with the  
4 requirements relating to the personal reemployment accounts under this  
5 chapter and federal law and will reimburse the account or, if the  
6 account has been terminated, the program for any amounts expended from  
7 the account that are not allowable.

8 (2) The department shall conduct periodic interviews with  
9 recipients to assist them in meeting their individual employment goals  
10 if, after they exhaust any unemployment compensation due to them, they  
11 have remaining balances in their personal reemployment account.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) Subject to the requirements of federal  
13 law, a recipient may use amounts in a personal reemployment account to  
14 purchase one or more of the following:

15 (a) Intensive services, including:

16 (i) Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill level and  
17 service needs;

18 (ii) Development of an individual employment plan;

19 (iii) Counseling and career planning;

20 (iv) Case management of training selected by the recipient; and

21 (v) Short-term prevocational services such as communication skills,  
22 learning skills, interviewing skills, and personal conduct skills;

23 (b) Training services, including:

24 (i) Occupational skills training and retraining;

25 (ii) On-the-job training;

26 (iii) Programs that combine workplace training with related  
27 instruction;

28 (iv) Entrepreneurial training; and

29 (v) Job readiness and literacy training;

30 (c) Supportive services such as transportation, child care,  
31 dependent care, and housing, that are necessary to enable an individual  
32 to become reemployed but not needs-related payments; and

33 (d) Assistance to purchase or lease an automobile, if this  
34 assistance is necessary to allow the recipient to accept a bona fide  
35 offer of employment for which there is a reasonable expectation of  
36 long-term duration.

1 (2) A recipient eligible under section 2(2)(b) of this act may  
2 withdraw amounts from the personal reemployment account on a weekly  
3 basis for purposes of income support in amounts up to the average  
4 weekly amount of unemployment compensation that was received prior to  
5 his or her exhaustion of unemployment benefits, provided the recipient  
6 is engaged in job search, intensive services, or training that is  
7 expected to lead to employment.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Consistent with federal law, a recipient may  
9 receive a reemployment bonus of the balance of his or her personal  
10 reemployment account if he or she obtains full-time employment within  
11 thirteen weeks of:

12 (1) Starting unemployment payments for those recipients receiving  
13 unemployment benefits at the time their reemployment account was  
14 established; or

15 (2) The establishment of the reemployment account for those  
16 recipients who had exhausted unemployment benefits at the time their  
17 personal reemployment account was established.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The department of community, trade, and  
19 economic development shall, consistent with federal requirements and in  
20 cooperation with the work force training and education coordinating  
21 board and the employment security department, develop and submit a  
22 state plan for operating the personal reemployment account program  
23 authorized by this chapter. The department may operate the personal  
24 reemployment account program in conjunction with its related community-  
25 based programs and is authorized to seek private resources to assist in  
26 operating these programs.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Personal reemployment accounts and  
28 disbursements from these accounts shall not be counted as income or  
29 resources for purposes of determining eligibility or benefit level for  
30 all cash assistance programs administered by the department of social  
31 and health services.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** If any part of this act is found to be in  
33 conflict with federal law, the conflicting part of this act is

1 inoperative solely to the extent the conflict cannot be reconciled with  
2 this act, and this finding does not affect the operation of the  
3 remainder of this act.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** This act expires July 1, 2009.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** Sections 1 through 9 of this act constitute  
6 a new chapter in Title 43 RCW.

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