

SENATE, No. 788

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Senator GORDON M. JOHNSON
District 37 (Bergen)

SYNOPSIS

Exempts certain volunteer first responders from coverage under “unemployment compensation law”; excludes from gross income amounts received for certain volunteer emergency services.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** exempting certain volunteer first responders from coverage
2 under the “unemployment compensation law” and excluding
3 from gross income amounts received for certain volunteer
4 emergency services, and amending R.S.43:21-19 and
5 supplementing chapter 6 of Title 54A of the New Jersey Statutes.

6
7 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
8 *of New Jersey:*

9
10 1. R.S.43:21-19 is amended to read as follows:

11 43:21-19. Definitions. As used in this chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et
12 seq.), unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

13 (a) (1) "Annual payroll" means the total amount of wages paid
14 during a calendar year (regardless of when earned) by an employer
15 for employment.

16 (2) "Average annual payroll" means the average of the annual
17 payrolls of any employer for the last three or five preceding
18 calendar years, whichever average is higher, except that any year or
19 years throughout which an employer has had no "annual payroll"
20 because of military service shall be deleted from the reckoning; the
21 "average annual payroll" in such case is to be determined on the
22 basis of the prior three or five calendar years in each of which the
23 employer had an "annual payroll" in the operation of his business, if
24 the employer resumes his business within 12 months after
25 separation, discharge or release from such service, under conditions
26 other than dishonorable, and makes application to have his "average
27 annual payroll" determined on the basis of such deletion within 12
28 months after he resumes his business; provided, however, that
29 "average annual payroll" solely for the purposes of paragraph (3) of
30 subsection (e) of R.S.43:21-7 means the average of the annual
31 payrolls of any employer on which he paid contributions to the
32 State disability benefits fund for the last three or five preceding
33 calendar years, whichever average is higher; provided further that
34 only those wages be included on which employer contributions have
35 been paid on or before January 31 (or the next succeeding day if
36 such January 31 is a Saturday or Sunday) immediately preceding
37 the beginning of the 12-month period for which the employer's
38 contribution rate is computed.

39 (b) "Benefits" means the money payments payable to an
40 individual, as provided in this chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.), with
41 respect to his unemployment.

42 (c) (1) "Base year" with respect to benefit years commencing on
43 or after July 1, 1986, shall mean the first four of the last five
44 completed calendar quarters immediately preceding an individual's
45 benefit year.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

 Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 With respect to a benefit year commencing on or after July 1,
2 1995, if an individual does not have sufficient qualifying weeks or
3 wages in his base year to qualify for benefits, the individual shall
4 have the option of designating that his base year shall be the
5 "alternative base year," which means the last four completed
6 calendar quarters immediately preceding the individual's benefit
7 year; except that, with respect to a benefit year commencing on or
8 after October 1, 1995, if the individual also does not have sufficient
9 qualifying weeks or wages in the last four completed calendar
10 quarters immediately preceding his benefit year to qualify for
11 benefits, "alternative base year" means the last three completed
12 calendar quarters immediately preceding his benefit year and, of the
13 calendar quarter in which the benefit year commences, the portion
14 of the quarter which occurs before the commencing of the benefit
15 year.

16 The division shall inform the individual of his options under this
17 section as amended by P.L.1995, c.234. If information regarding
18 weeks and wages for the calendar quarter or quarters immediately
19 preceding the benefit year is not available to the division from the
20 regular quarterly reports of wage information and the division is not
21 able to obtain the information using other means pursuant to State
22 or federal law, the division may base the determination of eligibility
23 for benefits on the affidavit of an individual with respect to weeks
24 and wages for that calendar quarter. The individual shall furnish
25 payroll documentation, if available, in support of the affidavit. A
26 determination of benefits based on an alternative base year shall be
27 adjusted when the quarterly report of wage information from the
28 employer is received if that information causes a change in the
29 determination.

30 (2) With respect to a benefit year commencing on or after June 1,
31 1990 for an individual who immediately preceding the benefit year
32 was subject to a disability compensable under the provisions of the
33 "Temporary Disability Benefits Law," P.L.1948, c.110 (C.43:21-25
34 et seq.), "base year" shall mean the first four of the last five
35 completed calendar quarters immediately preceding the individual's
36 period of disability, if the employment held by the individual
37 immediately preceding the period of disability is no longer
38 available at the conclusion of that period and the individual files a
39 valid claim for unemployment benefits after the conclusion of that
40 period. For the purposes of this paragraph, "period of disability"
41 means the period defined as a period of disability by section 3 of
42 the "Temporary Disability Benefits Law," P.L.1948, c.110
43 (C.43:21-27). An individual who files a claim under the provisions
44 of this paragraph (2) shall not be regarded as having left work
45 voluntarily for the purposes of subsection (a) of R.S.43:21-5.

46 (3) With respect to a benefit year commencing on or after June 1,
47 1990 for an individual who immediately preceding the benefit year
48 was subject to a disability compensable under the provisions of the

1 workers' compensation law (chapter 15 of Title 34 of the Revised
2 Statutes), "base year" shall mean the first four of the last five
3 completed calendar quarters immediately preceding the individual's
4 period of disability, if the period of disability was not longer than
5 two years, if the employment held by the individual immediately
6 preceding the period of disability is no longer available at the
7 conclusion of that period and if the individual files a valid claim for
8 unemployment benefits after the conclusion of that period. For the
9 purposes of this paragraph, "period of disability" means the period
10 from the time at which the individual becomes unable to work
11 because of the compensable disability until the time that the
12 individual becomes able to resume work and continue work on a
13 permanent basis. An individual who files a claim under the
14 provisions of this paragraph (3) shall not be regarded as having left
15 work voluntarily for the purposes of subsection (a) of R.S.43:21-5.

16 (d) "Benefit year" with respect to any individual means the 364
17 consecutive calendar days beginning with the day on, or as of,
18 which he first files a valid claim for benefits, and thereafter
19 beginning with the day on, or as of, which the individual next files a
20 valid claim for benefits after the termination of his last preceding
21 benefit year. Any claim for benefits made in accordance with
22 subsection (a) of R.S.43:21-6 shall be deemed to be a "valid claim"
23 for the purpose of this subsection if (1) he is unemployed for the
24 week in which, or as of which, he files a claim for benefits; and (2)
25 he has fulfilled the conditions imposed by subsection (e) of
26 R.S.43:21-4.

27 (e) (1) "Division" means the Division of Unemployment and
28 Temporary Disability Insurance of the Department of Labor and
29 Workforce Development, and any transaction or exercise of
30 authority by the director of the division thereunder, or under this
31 chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.), shall be deemed to be performed by
32 the division.

33 (2) "Controller" means the Office of the Assistant Commissioner
34 for Finance and Controller of the Department of Labor and
35 Workforce Development, established by the 1982 Reorganization
36 Plan of the Department of Labor.

37 (f) "Contributions" means the money payments to the State
38 Unemployment Compensation Fund, required by R.S.43:21-7.
39 "Payments in lieu of contributions" means the money payments to
40 the State Unemployment Compensation Fund by employers electing
41 or required to make payments in lieu of contributions, as provided
42 in section 3 or section 4 of P.L.1971, c.346 (C.43:21-7.2 or 43:21-
43 7.3).

44 (g) "Employing unit" means the State or any of its
45 instrumentalities or any political subdivision thereof or any of its
46 instrumentalities or any instrumentality of more than one of the
47 foregoing or any instrumentality of any of the foregoing and one or
48 more other states or political subdivisions or any individual or type

1 of organization, any partnership, association, trust, estate, joint-
2 stock company, insurance company or corporation, whether
3 domestic or foreign, or the receiver, trustee in bankruptcy, trustee or
4 successor thereof, or the legal representative of a deceased person,
5 which has or subsequent to January 1, 1936, had in its employ one
6 or more individuals performing services for it within this State. All
7 individuals performing services within this State for any employing
8 unit which maintains two or more separate establishments within
9 this State shall be deemed to be employed by a single employing
10 unit for all the purposes of this chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.). Each
11 individual employed to perform or to assist in performing the work
12 of any agent or employee of an employing unit shall be deemed to
13 be employed by such employing unit for all the purposes of this
14 chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.), whether such individual was hired or
15 paid directly by such employing unit or by such agent or employee;
16 provided the employing unit had actual or constructive knowledge
17 of the work.

18 (h) "Employer" means:

19 (1) Any employing unit which in either the current or the
20 preceding calendar year paid remuneration for employment in the
21 amount of \$1,000.00 or more;

22 (2) Any employing unit (whether or not an employing unit at the
23 time of acquisition) which acquired the organization, trade or
24 business, or substantially all the assets thereof, of another which, at
25 the time of such acquisition, was an employer subject to this chapter
26 (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.);

27 (3) Any employing unit which acquired the organization, trade or
28 business, or substantially all the assets thereof, of another
29 employing unit and which, if treated as a single unit with such other
30 employing unit, would be an employer under paragraph (1) of this
31 subsection;

32 (4) Any employing unit which together with one or more other
33 employing units is owned or controlled (by legally enforceable
34 means or otherwise), directly or indirectly by the same interests, or
35 which owns or controls one or more other employing units (by
36 legally enforceable means or otherwise), and which, if treated as a
37 single unit with such other employing unit or interest, would be an
38 employer under paragraph (1) of this subsection;

39 (5) Any employing unit for which service in employment as
40 defined in R.S.43:21-19 (i) (1) (B) (i) is performed after December
41 31, 1971; and as defined in R.S.43:21-19 (i) (1) (B) (ii) is
42 performed after December 31, 1977;

43 (6) Any employing unit for which service in employment as
44 defined in R.S.43:21-19 (i) (1) (c) is performed after December 31,
45 1971 and which in either the current or the preceding calendar year
46 paid remuneration for employment in the amount of \$1,000.00 or
47 more;

1 (7) Any employing unit not an employer by reason of any other
2 paragraph of this subsection (h) for which, within either the current
3 or preceding calendar year, service is or was performed with respect
4 to which such employing unit is liable for any federal tax against
5 which credit may be taken for contributions required to be paid into
6 a state unemployment fund; or which, as a condition for approval of
7 the "unemployment compensation law" for full tax credit against
8 the tax imposed by the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, is required
9 pursuant to such act to be an employer under this chapter
10 (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.);

11 (8) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1977, c.307.)

12 (9) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1977, c.307.)

13 (10) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1977, c.307.)

14 (11) Any employing unit subject to the provisions of the Federal
15 Unemployment Tax Act within either the current or the preceding
16 calendar year, except for employment hereinafter excluded under
17 paragraph (7) of subsection (i) of this section;

18 (12) Any employing unit for which agricultural labor in
19 employment as defined in R.S.43:21-19 (i) (1) (I) is performed after
20 December 31, 1977;

21 (13) Any employing unit for which domestic service in
22 employment as defined in R.S.43:21-19 (i) (1) (J) is performed after
23 December 31, 1977;

24 (14) Any employing unit which having become an employer
25 under the "unemployment compensation law" (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.),
26 has not under R.S.43:21-8 ceased to be an employer; or for the
27 effective period of its election pursuant to R.S.43:21-8, any other
28 employing unit which has elected to become fully subject to this
29 chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.).

30 (i) (1) "Employment" means:

31 (A) Any service performed prior to January 1, 1972, which was
32 employment as defined in the "unemployment compensation law"
33 (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.) prior to such date, and, subject to the other
34 provisions of this subsection, service performed on or after January
35 1, 1972, including service in interstate commerce, performed for
36 remuneration or under any contract of hire, written or oral, express
37 or implied.

38 (B) (i) Service performed after December 31, 1971 by an
39 individual in the employ of this State or any of its instrumentalities
40 or in the employ of this State and one or more other states or their
41 instrumentalities for a hospital or institution of higher education
42 located in this State, if such service is not excluded from
43 "employment" under paragraph (D) below.

44 (ii) Service performed after December 31, 1977, in the employ of
45 this State or any of its instrumentalities or any political subdivision
46 thereof or any of its instrumentalities or any instrumentality of more
47 than one of the foregoing or any instrumentality of the foregoing
48 and one or more other states or political subdivisions, if such

1 service is not excluded from "employment" under paragraph (D)
2 below.

3 (C) Service performed after December 31, 1971 by an individual
4 in the employ of a religious, charitable, educational, or other
5 organization, which is excluded from "employment" as defined in
6 the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, solely by reason of section
7 3306 (c)(8) of that act, if such service is not excluded from
8 "employment" under paragraph (D) below.

9 (D) For the purposes of paragraphs (B) and (C), the term
10 "employment" does not apply to services performed

11 (i) In the employ of (I) a church or convention or association of
12 churches, or (II) an organization, or school which is operated
13 primarily for religious purposes and which is operated, supervised,
14 controlled or principally supported by a church or convention or
15 association of churches;

16 (ii) By a duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed minister of a
17 church in the exercise of his ministry or by a member of a religious
18 order in the exercise of duties required by such order;

19 (iii) Prior to January 1, 1978, in the employ of a school which is
20 not an institution of higher education, and after December 31, 1977,
21 in the employ of a governmental entity referred to in R.S.43:21-19
22 (i) (1) (B), if such service is performed by an individual in the
23 exercise of duties

24 (aa) as an elected official;

25 (bb) as a member of a legislative body, or a member of the
26 judiciary, of a state or political subdivision;

27 (cc) as a member of the State National Guard or Air National
28 Guard;

29 (dd) as an employee serving on a temporary basis in case of fire,
30 storm, snow, earthquake, flood or similar emergency;

31 (ee) in a position which, under or pursuant to the laws of this
32 State, is designated as a major nontenured policy making or
33 advisory position, or a policy making or advisory position, the
34 performance of the duties of which ordinarily does not require more
35 than eight hours per week; or

36 (iv) By an individual receiving rehabilitation or remunerative
37 work in a facility conducted for the purpose of carrying out a
38 program of rehabilitation of individuals whose earning capacity is
39 impaired by age or physical or mental deficiency or injury or
40 providing remunerative work for individuals who because of their
41 impaired physical or mental capacity cannot be readily absorbed in
42 the competitive labor market;

43 (v) By an individual receiving work-relief or work-training as
44 part of an unemployment work-relief or work-training program
45 assisted in whole or in part by any federal agency or an agency of a
46 state or political subdivision thereof; or

47 (vi) Prior to January 1, 1978, for a hospital in a State prison or
48 other State correctional institution by an inmate of the prison or

1 correctional institution and after December 31, 1977, by an inmate
2 of a custodial or penal institution.

3 (E) The term "employment" shall include the services of an
4 individual who is a citizen of the United States, performed outside
5 the United States after December 31, 1971 (except in Canada and in
6 the case of the Virgin Islands, after December 31, 1971) and prior
7 to January 1 of the year following the year in which the U.S.
8 Secretary of Labor approves the unemployment compensation law
9 of the Virgin Islands, under section 3304 (a) of the Internal
10 Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. s.3304 (a)) in the employ of an
11 American employer (other than the service which is deemed
12 employment under the provisions of R.S.43:21-19 (i) (2) or (5) or
13 the parallel provisions of another state's unemployment
14 compensation law), if

15 (i) The American employer's principal place of business in the
16 United States is located in this State; or

17 (ii) The American employer has no place of business in the
18 United States, but (I) the American employer is an individual who
19 is a resident of this State; or (II) the American employer is a
20 corporation which is organized under the laws of this State; or (III)
21 the American employer is a partnership or trust and the number of
22 partners or trustees who are residents of this State is greater than the
23 number who are residents of another state; or

24 (iii) None of the criteria of divisions (i) and (ii) of this
25 subparagraph (E) is met but the American employer has elected to
26 become an employer subject to the "unemployment compensation
27 law" (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.) in this State, or the American employer
28 having failed to elect to become an employer in any state, the
29 individual has filed a claim for benefits, based on such service,
30 under the law of this State;

31 (iv) An "American employer," for the purposes of this
32 subparagraph (E), means (I) an individual who is a resident of the
33 United States; or (II) a partnership, if two-thirds or more of the
34 partners are residents of the United States; or (III) a trust, if all the
35 trustees are residents of the United States; or (IV) a corporation
36 organized under the laws of the United States or of any state.

37 (F) Notwithstanding R.S.43:21-19 (i) (2), all service performed
38 after January 1, 1972 by an officer or member of the crew of an
39 American vessel or American aircraft on or in connection with such
40 vessel or aircraft, if the operating office from which the operations
41 of such vessel or aircraft operating within, or within and without,
42 the United States are ordinarily and regularly supervised, managed,
43 directed, and controlled, is within this State.

44 (G) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection,
45 service in this State with respect to which the taxes required to be
46 paid under any federal law imposing a tax against which credit may
47 be taken for contributions required to be paid into a state
48 unemployment fund or which as a condition for full tax credit

1 against the tax imposed by the Federal Unemployment Tax Act is
2 required to be covered under the "unemployment compensation
3 law" (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.).

4 (H) The term "United States" when used in a geographical sense
5 in subsection R.S.43:21-19 (i) includes the states, the District of
6 Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and, effective on the
7 day after the day on which the U.S. Secretary of Labor approves for
8 the first time under section 3304 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code
9 of 1986 (26 U.S.C. s.3304 (a)) an unemployment compensation law
10 submitted to the Secretary by the Virgin Islands for such approval,
11 the Virgin Islands.

12 (I) (i) Service performed after December 31, 1977 in agricultural
13 labor in a calendar year for an entity which is an employer as
14 defined in the "unemployment compensation law," (R.S.43:21-1 et
15 seq.) as of January 1 of such year; or for an employing unit which

16 (aa) during any calendar quarter in either the current or the
17 preceding calendar year paid remuneration in cash of \$20,000.00 or
18 more for individuals employed in agricultural labor, or

19 (bb) for some portion of a day in each of 20 different calendar
20 weeks, whether or not such weeks were consecutive, in either the
21 current or the preceding calendar year, employed in agricultural
22 labor 10 or more individuals, regardless of whether they were
23 employed at the same moment in time.

24 (ii) for the purposes of this subsection any individual who is a
25 member of a crew furnished by a crew leader to perform service in
26 agricultural labor for any other entity shall be treated as an
27 employee of such crew leader

28 (aa) if such crew leader holds a certification of registration under
29 the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act,
30 Pub.L.97-470 (29 U.S.C. s.1801 et seq.), or P.L.1971, c.192
31 (C.34:8A-7 et seq.); or substantially all the members of such crew
32 operate or maintain tractors, mechanized harvesting or cropdusting
33 equipment, or any other mechanized equipment, which is provided
34 by such crew leader; and

35 (bb) if such individual is not an employee of such other person
36 for whom services were performed.

37 (iii) For the purposes of subparagraph (I) (i) in the case of any
38 individual who is furnished by a crew leader to perform service in
39 agricultural labor or any other entity and who is not treated as an
40 employee of such crew leader under (I) (ii)

41 (aa) such other entity and not the crew leader shall be treated as
42 the employer of such individual; and

43 (bb) such other entity shall be treated as having paid cash
44 remuneration to such individual in an amount equal to the amount
45 of cash remuneration paid to such individual by the crew leader
46 (either on his own behalf or on behalf of such other entity) for the
47 service in agricultural labor performed for such other entity.

1 (iv) For the purpose of subparagraph (I)(ii), the term "crew
2 leader" means an individual who

3 (aa) furnishes individuals to perform service in agricultural labor
4 for any other entity;

5 (bb) pays (either on his own behalf or on behalf of such other
6 entity) the individuals so furnished by him for the service in
7 agricultural labor performed by them; and

8 (cc) has not entered into a written agreement with such other
9 entity under which such individual is designated as an employee of
10 such other entity.

11 (J) Domestic service after December 31, 1977 performed in the
12 private home of an employing unit which paid cash remuneration of
13 \$1,000.00 or more to one or more individuals for such domestic
14 service in any calendar quarter in the current or preceding calendar
15 year.

16 (2) The term "employment" shall include an individual's entire
17 service performed within or both within and without this State if:

18 (A) The service is localized in this State; or

19 (B) The service is not localized in any state but some of the
20 service is performed in this State, and (i) the base of operations, or,
21 if there is no base of operations, then the place from which such
22 service is directed or controlled, is in this State; or (ii) the base of
23 operations or place from which such service is directed or
24 controlled is not in any state in which some part of the service is
25 performed, but the individual's residence is in this State.

26 (3) Services performed within this State but not covered under
27 paragraph (2) of this subsection shall be deemed to be employment
28 subject to this chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.) if contributions are not
29 required and paid with respect to such services under an
30 unemployment compensation law of any other state or of the federal
31 government.

32 (4) Services not covered under paragraph (2) of this subsection
33 and performed entirely without this State, with respect to no part of
34 which contributions are required and paid under an unemployment
35 compensation law of any other state or of the federal government,
36 shall be deemed to be employment subject to this chapter
37 (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.) if the individual performing such services is a
38 resident of this State and the employing unit for whom such
39 services are performed files with the division an election that the
40 entire service of such individual shall be deemed to be employment
41 subject to this chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.).

42 (5) Service shall be deemed to be localized within a state if:

43 (A) The service is performed entirely within such state; or

44 (B) The service is performed both within and without such state,
45 but the service performed without such state is incidental to the
46 individual's service within the state; for example, is temporary or
47 transitory in nature or consists of isolated transactions.

1 (6) Services performed by an individual for remuneration shall
2 be deemed to be employment subject to this chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et
3 seq.) unless and until it is shown to the satisfaction of the division
4 that:

5 (A) Such individual has been and will continue to be free from
6 control or direction over the performance of such service, both
7 under his contract of service and in fact;

8 (B) Such service is either outside the usual course of the business
9 for which such service is performed, or that such service is
10 performed outside of all the places of business of the enterprise for
11 which such service is performed; and

12 (C) Such individual is customarily engaged in an independently
13 established trade, occupation, profession or business.

14 (7) Provided that such services are also exempt under the Federal
15 Unemployment Tax Act, as amended, or that contributions with
16 respect to such services are not required to be paid into a state
17 unemployment fund as a condition for a tax offset credit against the
18 tax imposed by the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, as amended,
19 the term "employment" shall not include:

20 (A) Agricultural labor performed prior to January 1, 1978; and
21 after December 31, 1977, only if performed in a calendar year for
22 an entity which is not an employer as defined in the "unemployment
23 compensation law," (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.) as of January 1 of such
24 calendar year; or unless performed for an employing unit which

25 (i) during a calendar quarter in either the current or the preceding
26 calendar year paid remuneration in cash of \$20,000.00 or more to
27 individuals employed in agricultural labor, or

28 (ii) for some portion of a day in each of 20 different calendar
29 weeks, whether or not such weeks were consecutive, in either the
30 current or the preceding calendar year, employed in agricultural
31 labor 10 or more individuals, regardless of whether they were
32 employed at the same moment in time;

33 (B) Domestic service in a private home performed prior to
34 January 1, 1978; and after December 31, 1977, unless performed in
35 the private home of an employing unit which paid cash
36 remuneration of \$1,000.00 or more to one or more individuals for
37 such domestic service in any calendar quarter in the current or
38 preceding calendar year;

39 (C) Service performed by an individual in the employ of his son,
40 daughter or spouse, and service performed by a child under the age
41 of 18 in the employ of his father or mother;

42 (D) Service performed prior to January 1, 1978, in the employ of
43 this State or of any political subdivision thereof or of any
44 instrumentality of this State or its political subdivisions, except as
45 provided in R.S.43:21-19 (i) (1) (B) above, and service in the
46 employ of the South Jersey Port Corporation or its successors;

47 (E) Service performed in the employ of any other state or its
48 political subdivisions or of an instrumentality of any other state or

1 states or their political subdivisions to the extent that such
2 instrumentality is with respect to such service exempt under the
3 Constitution of the United States from the tax imposed under the
4 Federal Unemployment Tax Act, as amended, except as provided in
5 R.S.43:21-19 (i) (1) (B) above;

6 (F) Service performed in the employ of the United States
7 Government or of any instrumentality of the United States exempt
8 under the Constitution of the United States from the contributions
9 imposed by the "unemployment compensation law," except that to
10 the extent that the Congress of the United States shall permit states
11 to require any instrumentalities of the United States to make
12 payments into an unemployment fund under a state unemployment
13 compensation law, all of the provisions of this act shall be
14 applicable to such instrumentalities, and to service performed for
15 such instrumentalities, in the same manner, to the same extent and
16 on the same terms as to all other employers, employing units,
17 individuals and services; provided that if this State shall not be
18 certified for any year by the Secretary of Labor of the United States
19 under section 3304 of the federal Internal Revenue Code of 1986
20 (26 U.S.C. s.3304), the payments required of such instrumentalities
21 with respect to such year shall be refunded by the division from the
22 fund in the same manner and within the same period as is provided
23 in R.S.43:21-14 (f) with respect to contributions erroneously paid to
24 or collected by the division;

25 (G) Services performed in the employ of fraternal beneficiary
26 societies, orders, or associations operating under the lodge system
27 or for the exclusive benefit of the members of a fraternity itself
28 operating under the lodge system and providing for the payment of
29 life, sick, accident, or other benefits to the members of such society,
30 order, or association, or their dependents;

31 (H) Services performed as a member of the board of directors, a
32 board of trustees, a board of managers, or a committee of any bank,
33 building and loan, or savings and loan association, incorporated or
34 organized under the laws of this State or of the United States, where
35 such services do not constitute the principal employment of the
36 individual;

37 (I) Service with respect to which unemployment insurance is
38 payable under an unemployment insurance program established by
39 an Act of Congress;

40 (J) Service performed by agents of mutual fund brokers or
41 dealers in the sale of mutual funds or other securities, by agents of
42 insurance companies, exclusive of industrial insurance agents or by
43 agents of investment companies, if the compensation to such agents
44 for such services is wholly on a commission basis;

45 (K) Services performed by real estate salesmen or brokers who
46 are compensated wholly on a commission basis;

47 (L) Services performed in the employ of any veterans'
48 organization chartered by Act of Congress or of any auxiliary

- 1 thereof, no part of the net earnings of which organization, or
2 auxiliary thereof, inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or
3 individual;
- 4 (M) Service performed for or in behalf of the owner or operator
5 of any theater, ballroom, amusement hall or other place of
6 entertainment, not in excess of 10 weeks in any calendar year for
7 the same owner or operator, by any leader or musician of a band or
8 orchestra, commonly called a "name band," entertainer, vaudeville
9 artist, actor, actress, singer or other entertainer;
- 10 (N) Services performed after January 1, 1973 by an individual
11 for a labor union organization, known and recognized as a union
12 local, as a member of a committee or committees reimbursed by the
13 union local for time lost from regular employment, or as a part-time
14 officer of a union local and the remuneration for such services is
15 less than \$1,000.00 in a calendar year;
- 16 (O) Services performed in the sale or distribution of merchandise
17 by home-to-home salespersons or in-the-home demonstrators whose
18 remuneration consists wholly of commissions or commissions and
19 bonuses;
- 20 (P) Service performed in the employ of a foreign government,
21 including service as a consular, nondiplomatic representative, or
22 other officer or employee;
- 23 (Q) Service performed in the employ of an instrumentality
24 wholly owned by a foreign government if (i) the service is of a
25 character similar to that performed in foreign countries by
26 employees of the United States Government or of an instrumentality
27 thereof, and (ii) the division finds that the United States Secretary
28 of State has certified to the United States Secretary of the Treasury
29 that the foreign government, with respect to whose instrumentality
30 exemption is claimed, grants an equivalent exemption with respect
31 to similar services performed in the foreign country by employees
32 of the United States Government and of instrumentalities thereof;
- 33 (R) Service in the employ of an international organization
34 entitled to enjoy the privileges, exemptions and immunities under
35 the International Organizations Immunities Act (22 U.S.C. s.288 et
36 seq.);
- 37 (S) Service covered by an election duly approved by an agency
38 charged with the administration of any other state or federal
39 unemployment compensation or employment security law, in
40 accordance with an arrangement pursuant to R.S.43:21-21 during
41 the effective period of such election;
- 42 (T) Service performed in the employ of a school, college, or
43 university if such service is performed (i) by a student enrolled at
44 such school, college, or university on a full-time basis in an
45 educational program or completing such educational program
46 leading to a degree at any of the severally recognized levels, or (ii)
47 by the spouse of such a student, if such spouse is advised at the time
48 such spouse commences to perform such service that (I) the

1 employment of such spouse to perform such service is provided
2 under a program to provide financial assistance to such student by
3 such school, college, or university, and (II) such employment will
4 not be covered by any program of unemployment insurance;

5 (U) Service performed by an individual who is enrolled at a
6 nonprofit or public educational institution which normally
7 maintains a regular faculty and curriculum and normally has a
8 regularly organized body of students in attendance at the place
9 where its educational activities are carried on, as a student in a full-
10 time program, taken for credit at such institution, which combines
11 academic instruction with work experience, if such service is an
12 integral part of such program, and such institution has so certified
13 to the employer, except that this subparagraph shall not apply to
14 service performed in a program established for or on behalf of an
15 employer or group of employers;

16 (V) Service performed in the employ of a hospital, if such
17 service is performed by a patient of the hospital; service performed
18 as a student nurse in the employ of a hospital or a nurses' training
19 school by an individual who is enrolled and regularly attending
20 classes in a nurses' training school approved under the laws of this
21 State;

22 (W) Services performed after the effective date of this
23 amendatory act by agents of mutual benefit associations if the
24 compensation to such agents for such services is wholly on a
25 commission basis;

26 (X) Services performed by operators of motor vehicles weighing
27 18,000 pounds or more, licensed for commercial use and used for
28 the highway movement of motor freight, who own their equipment
29 or who lease or finance the purchase of their equipment through an
30 entity which is not owned or controlled directly or indirectly by the
31 entity for which the services were performed and who were
32 compensated by receiving a percentage of the gross revenue
33 generated by the transportation move or by a schedule of payment
34 based on the distance and weight of the transportation move;

35 (Y) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.2009, c.211.)

36 (Z) Services performed, using facilities provided by a travel
37 agent, by a person, commonly known as an outside travel agent,
38 who acts as an independent contractor, is paid on a commission
39 basis, sets his own work schedule and receives no benefits, sick
40 leave, vacation or other leave from the travel agent owning the
41 facilities.

42 (AA) Services provided by a commercial fisherman whose
43 compensation is comprised solely of a percentage of fish caught or
44 a percentage of the proceeds from the sale of the catch.

45 (BB) Services provided by a volunteer first responder who
46 receives a stipend, including any clothing allowance provided,
47 which is less than an amount which would result in the stipend
48 being regarded as compensation and subject to the "Fair Labor

1 Standards Act of 1938,” 29 U.S.C. s.201 et seq., for the volunteer’s
2 first responder services.

3 (8) If one-half or more of the services in any pay period
4 performed by an individual for an employing unit constitutes
5 employment, all the services of such individual shall be deemed to
6 be employment; but if more than one-half of the service in any pay
7 period performed by an individual for an employing unit does not
8 constitute employment, then none of the service of such individual
9 shall be deemed to be employment. As used in this paragraph, the
10 term "pay period" means a period of not more than 31 consecutive
11 days for which a payment for service is ordinarily made by an
12 employing unit to individuals in its employ.

13 (9) Services performed by the owner of a limousine franchise
14 (franchisee) shall not be deemed to be employment subject to the
15 "unemployment compensation law," R.S.43:21-1 et seq., with
16 regard to the franchisor if:

17 (A) The limousine franchisee is incorporated;

18 (B) The franchisee is subject to regulation by the Interstate
19 Commerce Commission;

20 (C) The limousine franchise exists pursuant to a written franchise
21 arrangement between the franchisee and the franchisor as defined
22 by section 3 of P.L.1971, c.356 (C.56:10-3); and

23 (D) The franchisee registers with the Department of Labor and
24 Workforce Development and receives an employer registration
25 number.

26 (10) Services performed by a legal transcriber, or certified court
27 reporter certified pursuant to P.L.1940, c.175 (C.45:15B-1 et seq.),
28 shall not be deemed to be employment subject to the
29 "unemployment compensation law," R.S.43:21-1 et seq., if those
30 services are provided to a third party by the transcriber or reporter
31 who is referred to the third party pursuant to an agreement with
32 another legal transcriber or legal transcription service, or certified
33 court reporter or court reporting service, on a freelance basis,
34 compensation for which is based upon a fee per transcript page, flat
35 attendance fee, or other flat minimum fee, or combination thereof,
36 set forth in the agreement.

37 For purposes of this paragraph (10): "legal transcription service"
38 and "legal transcribing" mean making use, by audio, video or voice
39 recording, of a verbatim record of court proceedings, depositions,
40 other judicial proceedings, meetings of boards, agencies,
41 corporations, or other bodies or groups, and causing that record to
42 be printed in readable form or produced on a computer screen in
43 readable form; and "legal transcriber" means a person who engages
44 in "legal transcribing."

45 (j) "Employment office" means a free public employment office,
46 or branch thereof operated by this State or maintained as a part of a
47 State-controlled system of public employment offices.

48 (k) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1984, c.24.)

1 (l) "State" includes, in addition to the states of the United States
2 of America, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands and Puerto
3 Rico.

4 (m) "Unemployment."

5 (1) An individual shall be deemed "unemployed" for any week
6 during which:

7 (A) The individual is not engaged in full-time work and with
8 respect to which his remuneration is less than his weekly benefit
9 rate, including any week during which he is on vacation without
10 pay; provided such vacation is not the result of the individual's
11 voluntary action, except that for benefit years commencing on or
12 after July 1, 1984, an officer of a corporation, or a person who has
13 more than a 5% equitable or debt interest in the corporation, whose
14 claim for benefits is based on wages with that corporation shall not
15 be deemed to be unemployed in any week during the individual's
16 term of office or ownership in the corporation; or

17 (B) The individual is eligible for and receiving a self-
18 employment assistance allowance pursuant to the requirements of
19 P.L.1995, c.394 (C.43:21-67 et al.).

20 (2) The term "remuneration" with respect to any individual for
21 benefit years commencing on or after July 1, 1961, and as used in
22 this subsection, shall include only that part of the same which in
23 any week exceeds 20% of his weekly benefit rate (fractional parts
24 of a dollar omitted) or \$5.00, whichever is the larger, and shall not
25 include any moneys paid to an individual by a county board of
26 elections for work as a board worker on an election day or for work
27 pursuant to subsection d. of section 1 of P.L.2021, c.40 (C.19:15A-
28 1) during the early voting period.

29 (3) An individual's week of unemployment shall be deemed to
30 commence only after the individual has filed a claim at an
31 unemployment insurance claims office, except as the division may
32 by regulation otherwise prescribe.

33 (n) "Unemployment compensation administration fund" means
34 the unemployment compensation administration fund established by
35 this chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.), from which administrative
36 expenses under this chapter (R.S.43:21-1 et seq.) shall be paid.

37 (o) "Wages" means remuneration paid by employers for
38 employment. If a worker receives gratuities regularly in the course
39 of his employment from other than his employer, his "wages" shall
40 also include the gratuities so received, if reported in writing to his
41 employer in accordance with regulations of the division, and if not
42 so reported, his "wages" shall be determined in accordance with the
43 minimum wage rates prescribed under any labor law or regulation
44 of this State or of the United States, or the amount of remuneration
45 actually received by the employee from his employer, whichever is
46 the higher.

- 1 (p) "Remuneration" means all compensation for personal
2 services, including commission and bonuses and the cash value of
3 all compensation in any medium other than cash.
- 4 (q) "Week" means for benefit years commencing on or after
5 October 1, 1984, the calendar week ending at midnight Saturday, or
6 as the division may by regulation prescribe.
- 7 (r) "Calendar quarter" means the period of three consecutive
8 calendar months ending March 31, June 30, September 30, or
9 December 31.
- 10 (s) "Investment company" means any company as defined in
11 subsection a. of section 1 of P.L.1938, c.322 (C.17:16A-1).
- 12 (t) (1) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.2001, c.17).
- 13 (2) "Base week," commencing on or after January 1, 1996 and
14 before January 1, 2001, means:
- 15 (A) Any calendar week during which the individual earned in
16 employment from an employer remuneration not less than an
17 amount which is 20% of the Statewide average weekly
18 remuneration defined in subsection (c) of R.S.43:21-3 which
19 amount shall be adjusted to the next higher multiple of \$1.00 if not
20 already a multiple thereof, except that if in any calendar week an
21 individual subject to this subparagraph (A) is in employment with
22 more than one employer, the individual may in that calendar week
23 establish a base week with respect to each of the employers from
24 whom the individual earns remuneration equal to not less than the
25 amount defined in this subparagraph (A) during that week; or
- 26 (B) If the individual does not establish in his base year 20 or
27 more base weeks as defined in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph
28 (2), any calendar week of an individual's base year during which the
29 individual earned in employment from an employer remuneration
30 not less than an amount 20 times the minimum wage in effect
31 pursuant to section 5 of P.L.1966, c.113 (C.34:11-56a4) on October
32 1 of the calendar year preceding the calendar year in which the
33 benefit year commences, which amount shall be adjusted to the next
34 higher multiple of \$1.00 if not already a multiple thereof, except
35 that if in any calendar week an individual subject to this
36 subparagraph (B) is in employment with more than one employer,
37 the individual may in that calendar week establish a base week with
38 respect to each of the employers from whom the individual earns
39 remuneration not less than the amount defined in this subparagraph
40 (B) during that week.
- 41 (3) "Base week," commencing on or after January 1, 2001,
42 means any calendar week during which the individual earned in
43 employment from an employer remuneration not less than an
44 amount 20 times the minimum wage in effect pursuant to section 5
45 of P.L.1966, c.113 (C.34:11-56a4) on October 1 of the calendar
46 year preceding the calendar year in which the benefit year
47 commences, which amount shall be adjusted to the next higher
48 multiple of \$1.00 if not already a multiple thereof, except that if in

1 any calendar week an individual subject to this paragraph (3) is in
2 employment with more than one employer, the individual may in
3 that calendar week establish a base week with respect to each of the
4 employers from whom the individual earns remuneration equal to
5 not less than the amount defined in this paragraph (3) during that
6 week.

7 (u) "Average weekly wage" means the amount derived by
8 dividing an individual's total wages received during his base year
9 base weeks (as defined in subsection (t) of this section) from that
10 most recent base year employer with whom he has established at
11 least 20 base weeks, by the number of base weeks in which such
12 wages were earned. In the event that such claimant had no
13 employer in his base year with whom he had established at least 20
14 base weeks, then such individual's average weekly wage shall be
15 computed as if all of his base week wages were received from one
16 employer and as if all his base weeks of employment had been
17 performed in the employ of one employer.

18 For the purpose of computing the average weekly wage, the
19 monetary alternative in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) of
20 subsection (e) of R.S.43:21-4 shall only apply in those instances
21 where the individual did not have at least 20 base weeks in the base
22 year. For benefit years commencing on or after July 1, 1986,
23 "average weekly wage" means the amount derived by dividing an
24 individual's total base year wages by the number of base weeks
25 worked by the individual during the base year; provided that for the
26 purpose of computing the average weekly wage, the maximum
27 number of base weeks used in the divisor shall be 52.

28 (v) "Initial determination" means, subject to the provisions of
29 R.S.43:21-6(b)(2) and (3), a determination of benefit rights as
30 measured by an eligible individual's base year employment with a
31 single employer covering all periods of employment with that
32 employer during the base year.

33 (w) "Last date of employment" means the last calendar day in the
34 base year of an individual on which he performed services in
35 employment for a given employer.

36 (x) "Most recent base year employer" means that employer with
37 whom the individual most recently, in point of time, performed
38 service in employment in the base year.

39 (y) (1) "Educational institution" means any public or other
40 nonprofit institution (including an institution of higher education):

41 (A) In which participants, trainees, or students are offered an
42 organized course of study or training designed to transfer to them
43 knowledge, skills, information, doctrines, attitudes or abilities from,
44 by or under the guidance of an instructor or teacher;

45 (B) Which is approved, licensed or issued a permit to operate as
46 a school by the State Department of Education or other government

1 agency that is authorized within the State to approve, license or
2 issue a permit for the operation of a school; and

3 (C) Which offers courses of study or training which may be
4 academic, technical, trade, or preparation for gainful employment in
5 a recognized occupation.

6 (2) "Institution of higher education" means an educational
7 institution which:

8 (A) Admits as regular students only individuals having a
9 certificate of graduation from a high school, or the recognized
10 equivalent of such a certificate;

11 (B) Is legally authorized in this State to provide a program of
12 education beyond high school;

13 (C) Provides an educational program for which it awards a
14 bachelor's or higher degree, or provides a program which is
15 acceptable for full credit toward such a degree, a program of post-
16 graduate or post-doctoral studies, or a program of training to
17 prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized
18 occupation; and

19 (D) Is a public or other nonprofit institution.

20 Notwithstanding any of the foregoing provisions of this
21 subsection, all colleges and universities in this State are institutions
22 of higher education for purposes of this section.

23 (z) "Hospital" means an institution which has been licensed,
24 certified or approved under the law of this State as a hospital.

25 (aa) "Volunteer first responder" means a volunteer firefighter,
26 volunteer member of a duly incorporated first aid, emergency,
27 ambulance, or rescue squad association, or any other individual
28 who, in the course of volunteer services, is dispatched to the scene
29 of a motor vehicle accident or other emergency situation for the
30 purpose of providing medical care or other assistance.

31 (cf: P.L.2022, c.71, s.4)

32
33 2. (New section) Gross income shall not include amounts
34 received through stipends, including any clothing allowance,
35 provided by a municipality for services performed by a volunteer
36 first responder. As used in this section, "volunteer first responder"
37 means a volunteer firefighter, volunteer member of a duly
38 incorporated first aid, emergency, ambulance, or rescue squad
39 association, or any other individual who, in the course of volunteer
40 services, is dispatched to the scene of a motor vehicle accident or
41 other emergency situation for the purpose of providing medical care
42 or other assistance.

43
44 3. This act shall take effect immediately and, with respect to
45 section 2 of this act, shall apply to taxable years beginning after
46 January 1 of the year following enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill exempts from coverage under the “unemployment compensation,” R.S.43:21-1 et seq., any services provided by a volunteer first responder who receives a stipend, including any clothing allowance, for the volunteer’s services. The exempted first responder would not be subject to unemployment insurance (UI) taxes and not be eligible for UI benefits. The exclusion would also exclude the first responder’s stipend from contributions to the temporary disability and family temporary disability benefits funds, and it would exclude the first responder from being eligible to receive those benefits for the volunteer first responder services.

Under the bill, “volunteer first responder” means a volunteer firefighter, volunteer member of a duly incorporated first aid, emergency, ambulance, or rescue squad association, or any other individual who, in the course of volunteer services, is dispatched to the scene of a motor vehicle accident or other emergency situation for the purpose of providing medical care or other assistance.

Additionally, the bill excludes from gross income the amounts received through stipends, including any clothing allowance, provided by a municipality for services performed by a volunteer first responder.

Recently, municipalities have found it more difficult to recruit volunteers to serve as emergency services personnel. In response, many have begun providing stipends to help alleviate staffing shortages. Although they provide a greater incentive to volunteer, the amounts received through these stipends are subject to State and federal income tax. By exempting these stipends from calculation of a taxpayer’s gross income under State law, the State can further assist municipalities in their efforts to provide proper emergency services to their residents.