



Tony Evers

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

October 31, 2025

To the Honorable Members of the Assembly:

I am vetoing Assembly Bill 169 in its entirety.

This bill would permit employers to report to the Department of Workforce Development when individuals claiming unemployment insurance benefits decline a job interview or job offer, fail to respond to a job interview offer or job offer, cancel or fail to attend a job interview without promptly rescheduling, are unavailable for or unable to perform work, or fail to return to work when recalled, except in certain circumstances. The department must consider these reports in determining whether a claimant is available for work and has maintained an attachment to the labor market and whether the claimant has conducted a reasonable search for suitable work. Furthermore, the bill requires claimants to provide to the department weekly verification of all job offers, interview offers, recalls to return to work, and other work offers as part of the claimant's verification of a reasonable search for suitable work.

The bill requires the department to implement methods to address circumstances in which an employee fails to return to work or to accept suitable work without good cause, and the department must recover benefit overpayments and benefit payments to an individual who made misrepresentations in the name of another in order to obtain benefits. The bill adds to the department's annual unemployment insurance fraud report to the Legislature information on employer-submitted reports as described above. The bill generally takes effect the day after publication, except that the department's methods to address circumstances in which an employee fails to return to work or to accept suitable work without good cause must be in place by the first Sunday after the 180th day after publication.

I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to creating additional barriers for individuals applying for and receiving benefits from a program that is designed to support people and families experiencing economic hardship, as well as creating additional mandates for the department in administering these benefits. State law already includes multiple safeguards to prevent fraudulent activity, making this bill both unnecessary and duplicative. Current law requires claimants to be able to work, available for work, actively seek employment, and report on job search activities and any job offers or referrals they receive on a weekly basis. Failure to comply with these existing requirements may result in disqualification from benefits, repayment of overpayments, or penalties. This bill expands reporting obligations for claimants, requires weekly verification of all job-related interactions, and directs the department to investigate these reports—even when a claimant may have had good cause for their actions. Moreover, it imposes these additional responsibilities on the department without allocating any additional resources, thereby increasing administrative burden without improving outcomes.



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I remain puzzled by the Legislature's persistent focus on changing and restricting economic assistance programs, particularly in the absence of any broader, substantive proposals to effectively tackle our state's workforce challenges. What is especially concerning is that, instead of advancing or adopting the comprehensive solutions I have proposed to address these issues, even without presenting alternatives on their own, the Legislature seems primarily intent on reintroducing bills I have previously vetoed.

Once again, as I have previously indicated several times, modifications proposed to the state's unemployment insurance law should be considered as part of the long-established process of review and recommendation by the Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council, or in consultation with the council and the department. The process is intended to ensure that proposed modifications reflect the expertise and agreement of employers, workers and the department.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony Evers".

Tony Evers
Governor