New DOL Website Focuses on Benefits Of Shared Work Unemployment Program

WETHERSFIELD, June 22, 2016 – A new information-packed “Shared Work” website developed by the Connecticut Department of Labor is geared to help businesses save jobs and withstand many of the economic difficulties that can occur when an employer experiences a temporary business downturn.

“Instead of devastating employee layoffs often experienced during a slowdown, employers taking part in our Shared Work program can reduce employee hours and the Labor Department will provide partial unemployment compensation benefits for the hours workers have lost,” said State Labor Commissioner Scott D. Jackson. “Once business picks up again, employers can return to full production or services more quickly since their skilled workforce has remained with the company.”

More than 200 employers currently use the Shared Work unemployment program as a way to keep their companies running and their employees working until business picks up again. A video overview in English and Spanish, an easy-to-understand brochure, employer application, testimonials, and contact information can all be found at www.SharedWorkCT.com.

As part of the application process, employers interested in the program submit a plan to the Labor Department that includes the number of employees taking part, planned reduction of hours, and estimated duration of the slowdown. “Although our guidelines note that an application can take up to 30 days for approval, employers typically hear back from us in 7 to 10 days,” said Shared Work Program Coordinator Devon O’Nalty.

When participating in Shared Work, employees can be permanent full- or part-time staff, benefits such as healthcare must be maintained, and employee hours cannot be reduced by less than 10 percent or no more than 60 percent, O’Nalty added.

The website also offers employers an option to contact the agency to request a no-commitment, on-site meeting to learn more about the program. Informational presentations can be provided to the entire company, human resource personnel, or specific employee groups.

“Whether you’re a small business or a large manufacturer, Shared Work saves you the time, worry and expense of hiring and training new workers by keeping your skilled employees on the job until business improves,” Jackson said. “The program is sometimes referred to as one of our best kept secrets, which is why we want to reach out to more employers with a new website and the information it offers. Our end goal is to keep our companies strong, our residents employed and the economy growing.”

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