



INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to RCW 34.05.328, the Employment Security Department hereby analyzes the costs and benefits of proposing new and amended rules regarding the implementation of Chapter 109, Laws of 2021 (HB 1073) and Chapter 232, Laws of 2021 (SB 5097). HB 1073 created a pandemic leave assistance grant for employees whose employment was reduced or ended due to the COVID-19 pandemic and an employer grant to help offset costs for small businesses whose employees receive a pandemic assistance grant, and SB 5097 expanded the definition of “family member.” Rules are necessary to more precisely define how these changes affect an employee’s eligibility for benefits under Title 50A RCW.

COSTS

The rule changes provide clarity on newly adopted statutes and do not impose additional costs on employers or employees. Funding for the pandemic assistance grants will be provided by the Federal American Rescue Plan Act . Any new costs associated with these requirements can be attributed to the statutory change.

BENEFITS

HB 1073 created a pandemic leave assistance grant for employees whose employment was reduced or ended due to the COVID-19 pandemic and an employer grant to help offset costs for small businesses whose employees receive a pandemic assistance grant, and SB 5097 expanded the definition of “family member.” Both changes will result in additional benefit eligibility for employees.

Amending the rules will allow the Department to conform to new statutory requirements.

CONCLUSION

The benefits for employees are greater than the anticipated implementation costs. The Department must amend the rules in order to comply with the new statutes.