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### State of Misconsin 2015 - 2016 LEGISLATURE

LRB-2020/P5 MED:cjs

### PRELIMINARY DRAFT - NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

AN ACT to repeal 108.04 (8) (e) and 108.062 (7); to renumber and amend 108.04 (11) (g), 108.04 (12) (f) 1. and 108.04 (12) (f) 2.; to amend 108.04 (1) (bm), 108.04 (2) (h), 108.04 (7) (c), 108.04 (7) (h), 108.04 (16) (b), 108.062 (6) (a), 108.14 (8n) (e), 108.141 (7) (a), 108.16 (6) (L), 108.16 (6m) (g), 108.16 (10), 108.22 (8) (b) 1. d. and 108.22 (9); to repeal and recreate 108.04 (1) (b); and to create 108.04 (7) (cg), 108.04 (11) (g) 2. and 3., 108.04 (12) (f) 1m., 108.04 (12) (f) 2m., 108.04 (12) (f) 3. b. to d., 108.04 (13) (g) and 108.22 (1r) of the statutes; relating to: various changes to the unemployment insurance law.

#### Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill makes various changes in the unemployment insurance (UI) law, which is administered by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). Significant changes include:

### Concealment by claimants

Under current law, if a claimant for UI benefits conceals any material fact relating to his or her eligibility for UI benefits or conceals any of his or her wages or hours worked (act of concealment), the claimant is ineligible for benefits in an amount ranging from to two to eight times the claimant's weekly benefit rate, depending on the number of acts of concealment committed, for each single act of

concealment, and is also liable for an additional administrative penalty. For purposes of these provisions, current law defines "conceal" to mean intentionally misleading or defrauding DWD by withholding or hiding information or making a false statement or misrepresentation. This bill does the following with respect to acts of concealment by claimants:

- 1. Deletes the reference to defrauding DWD from the definition of "conceal," so that "conceal" is defined as intentionally misleading DWD by withholding or hiding information or making a false statement or misrepresentation.
- 2. Provides that a claimant has a duty of care to provide an accurate and complete response to each inquiry made by DWD in connection with his or her receipt of UI benefits. The bill provides for a rebuttable presumption that a claimant has committed an act of concealment if the claimant, in response to such an inquiry, makes a false statement or representation regarding a material fact relating to his or her eligibility for benefits or regarding his or her wages earned or hours worked in a given week, which the claimant may rebut with competent evidence that the claimant did not intentionally mislead DWD. The bill, however, provides for limitations on what may be considered competent evidence to rebut the presumption.
- 3. Specifically provides that it is not a prerequisite to a finding that a claimant committed an act of concealment that the claimant had an intent or design to receive UI benefits to which the claimant knows he or she was not entitled.

### Concurrent receipt of UI and SSDI

Current law provides that any individual who actually receives social security disability insurance (SSDI) benefits in a given week is ineligible for UI benefits paid or payable in that same week.

This bill modifies current law with respect to the concurrent receipt of UI and SSDI benefits. Specifically, the bill provides that an individual is ineligible for UI benefits for each week in a month in which an SSDI payment is issued to the individual, but subject to the following: 1) in the first month an SSDI payment is first issued to an individual, the individual is ineligible for UI benefits for each week beginning with the week the SSDI payment is issued to the individual and for all subsequent weeks in that month; 2) following a cessation of SSDI payments to an individual and upon the individual again being issued an SSDI payment, the individual is ineligible for UI benefits for each week beginning with the week the SSDI payment is issued to the individual and all subsequent weeks in that month; and 3) following cessation of SSDI payments, the individual may be eligible for UI benefits, if otherwise qualified, beginning with the week following the last Saturday of the month in which the individual is issued his or her final SSDI payment.

The bill provides that the modifications take effect retroactively to January 5, 2014.

### Personal liability of partners in LLCs and others for UI contributions

Current law allows DWD, in certain circumstances, to hold an individual who is an officer, employee, member, or manager holding at least 20 percent of the ownership interest of a corporation or of a limited liability company (LLC) personally liable for UI contributions and certain other amounts. This bill adds partners and other responsible persons to the list of persons who may be held personally liable, and

allows such a person to be held liable if the person has a 20 percent ownership interest in other forms of business associations, as well as corporations and LLCs.

## Revisions to provisions concerning ability to work and availability for work

As a general qualifying requirement to receive UI benefits, current law provides that, subject to certain exceptions, a claimant is eligible for UI benefits as to any given week only if the claimant is able to work and available for work during that week. The bill eliminates other, duplicative language in the UI law that similarly provides that a claimant is ineligible for UI benefits while unable to work or unavailable for work.

Also under current law, unless an exemption applies, if a claimant voluntarily terminates his or her work with an employer, the claimant is generally ineligible to receive benefits until certain requalification requirements are satisfied. One such exemption applies if the claimant terminated his or her work but had no reasonable alternative because he or she was unable to do his or her work, or if the claimant terminated his or her work because of the verified illness or disability of an immediate family member that reasonably necessitates the care of the family member for a period of time that is longer than the employer is willing to grant leave. The exemption further provides that if the claimant is unable to work or unavailable for work, he or she is ineligible to receive benefits while such inability or unavailability continues. The bill: 1) eliminates the duplicative language providing that the claimant is ineligible for UI benefits while unable to work or unavailable for work; and 2) divides the exemption into two separate exemptions, one of which applies if the claimant terminated his or her work but had no reasonable alternative because of the verified illness or disability of the employee, and another which applies if the claimant terminated his or her work because of the verified illness or disability of an immediate family member and the verified illness or disability reasonably necessitates the care of the family member for a period of time that is longer than the employer is willing to grant leave.

# Recovery of employer UI debts under Treasury Offset Program

Current state law allows DWD to recoup certain UI benefit overpayments made to claimants by offsetting the amount of an overpayment against a federal tax refund through the federal Treasury Offset Program (TOP), but does not permit DWD to similarly recoup UI debts owed by employers. Under current federal law, however, a state must act to recover through the TOP certain UI-related debts that remain uncollected for one year or more, including those of both employers and claimants. This bill allows DWD to offset a UI debt found to be due to DWD by an employer against a federal tax refund through the TOP.

## Work-share programs

Under current law, any employer may create a work-share program, defined as a program approved by the Department of Workforce Development under which the hours of work of employees in a work unit are reduced in lieu of the layoffs of two or more employees in the work unit. An employee included under a work-share program who otherwise qualifies to receive regular UI benefits must receive a UI benefit payment for each week that the employee is included under the program. The amount of the benefit payment is the employee's regular UI benefit amount

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multiplied by the employee's proportionate reduction in hours for that week under the work-share program (work-share benefits). Current law also provides, however, that an employee included under a work-share program who would otherwise be paid benefits for any week under the UI law's partial benefits formula (partial benefits) must instead receive a benefit payment for that week in the amount payable to the employee under that formula, if that amount is higher than the work-share benefits amount.

Under this bill, employees included under a work-share program may only be paid work-share benefits, and not partial benefits.

## Determinations in combined-wage claims

Under federal law, a state must, as a condition of approval of its UI law by the U.S. Secretary of Labor, participate in arrangements for the payment of UI benefits on the basis of combining an individual's wages and employment covered under that state's UI law with wages and employment covered under another state's UI law (combined—wage claim). Also under federal law, as a condition of employers being able to receive certain tax credits under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, a state may not relieve an employer's account of certain erroneous charges in certain cases where the employer was at fault.

Under current state law, DWD may, in connection with any issue arising under the UI law as to the status or liability of an employer in this state, issue an appealable determination as to that issue. This bill allows DWD to similarly issue an appealable determination that an out–of–state employer in a combined–wage claim is at fault for the erroneous payment of benefits under a combined–wage claim.

For further information see the **state** fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

# The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 108.04 (1) (b) of the statutes is repealed and recreated to read:

108.04 (1) (b) Except as provided in s. 108.062 (10), if an employee is absent from work for 16 hours or less in the first week of his or her leave of absence or in the week in which his or her employment is suspended or terminated due to the employee's unavailability for work with the employer or inability to perform suitable work otherwise available with the employer, the employee's eligibility for benefits for that week shall be determined under par. (bm).

SECTION 2. 108.04 (1) (bm) of the statutes is amended to read:

department shall estimate wages that an employee would have earned if it is not possible to compute the exact amount of wages that would have been earned by the 108.04(1) (bm) For purposes of part part. (a) 1. and (b) 2., the department shall treat the amount that the employee would have earned as wages for a given week in available work as wages earned by the employee and shall apply the method specified in s. 108.05 (3) (a) to compute the benefits payable to the employee.

SECTION 3. 108.04 (2) (h) of the statutes is amended to read:

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108.04 (2) (h) A claimant shall, when the claimant first files a claim for benefits security disability insurance benefits under 42 USC ch. 7 subch. II payments, as under this chapter and during each subsequent week the claimant files for benefits under this chapter, inform the department whether he or she is receiving social defined in sub. (12) (f) 2m.

SECTION 4. 108.04 (7) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

willing to grant leave; but if the department determines that the employee is unable immediate family and the verified illness or disability reasonably necessitates the care of the family member for a period of time that is longer than the employer is to work or unavailable for work, the employee is incligible to receive benefits while 108.04 (7) (c) Paragraph (a) does not apply if the department determines that the employee terminated his or her work but had no reasonable alternative because the employee was unable to do his or her work, or that the employee terminated his or her work because of the verified illness or disability of a member of his or her such inability or unavailability continues the employee.

SECTION 5. 108.04 (7) (cg) of the statutes is created to read:

108.04 (7) (cg) Paragraph (a) does not apply if the department determines that the employee terminated his or her work because of the verified illness or disability of a member of his or her immediate family and the verified illness or disability reasonably necessitates the care of the family member for a period of time that is longer than the employer is willing to grant leave.

Section 6. 108.04 (7) (h) of the statutes is amended to read:

108.04 (7) (h) The department shall charge to the fund's balancing account benefits paid to an employee that are otherwise chargeable to the account of an employer that is subject to the contribution requirements of ss. 108.17 and 108.18 if the employee voluntarily terminates employment with that employer and par. (a), (c), (cg), (e), (L), (q), (s), or (t) applies.

SECTION 7. 108.04 (8) (e) of the statutes is repealed.

SECTION 8. 108.04 (11) (g) of the statutes is renumbered 108.04 (11) (g) 1. and amended to read:

108.04 (11) (g) 1. For purposes of <u>In</u> this subsection, "conceal" means to intentionally mislead or defraud the department by withholding or hiding information or making a false statement or misrepresentation.

Section 9. 108.04 (11) (g) 2. and 3. of the statutes are created to read:

108.04 (11) (g) 2. A claimant has a duty of care to provide an accurate and complete response to each inquiry made by the department in connection with his or her receipt of benefits. If a claimant, in response to such an inquiry, makes a false statement or representation regarding a material fact relating to his or her eligibility for benefits or regarding his or her wages earned or paid or payable or hours worked in a given week, there is a rebuttable presumption that the claimant has violated par.

(a) or (b), whichever is applicable. A claimant may rebut that presumption with

1	competent evidence that the claimant did not intentionally mislead the department,
2	but competent evidence does not include evidence that a claimant provided false or
3	misleading answers due to any of the following:
4	a. The claimant's failure to read or follow instructions or other communications
5	of the department related to a claim for benefits.
6	b. The claimant's reliance on the statements or representations of persons
7	other than an employee of the department who is authorized to provide advice
8	regarding the claimant's claim for benefits.
9	c. The claimant's limitation or disability, if the claimant did not, prior to the
10	issuance of the initial determination under s. 108.09, bring that limitation or
11	disability to the attention of an employee of the department who is authorized to
12	provide service to claimants and provide competent evidence to the department of
13	that disability or limitation.
14	3. It is not a prerequisite to a finding that a claimant concealed a material fact
15	relating to his or her eligibility for benefits as provided in par. (a) or concealed wages
16	or hours as provided in par. (b) that the claimant had an intent or design to receive
17	benefits to which the claimant knows he or she was not entitled.
18	SECTION 10. 108.04 (12) (f) 1. of the statutes is renumbered 108.04 (12) (f) 3.
19	a. and amended to read:
20	108.04 (12) (f) 3. a. Any Except as provided in subd. 3. b. to d., an individual
21	who actually receives social security disability insurance benefits under 42 USC ch.
22	7 subch. II in a given week is ineligible for benefits paid or payable in that same week
23	under this chapter for each week in the entire month in which a social security
24	disability insurance payment is issued to the individual.
25	SECTION 11. 108.04 (12) (f) 1m. of the statutes is created to read:

1	108.04 (12) (f) 1m. The intent of the legislature in enacting this paragraph is
2	to prevent the payment of duplicative government benefits for the replacement of lost
3	earnings or income, regardless of an individual's ability to work.
4	Section 12. 108.04 (12) (f) 2. of the statutes is renumbered 108.04 (12) (f) 4.
5	and amended to read:
6	108.04 (12) (f) 4. Information that the department receives or acquires from the
7	federal social security administration that an individual is receiving regarding the
8	issuance of social security disability insurance benefits under 42 USC ch. 7 subch.
9	II in a given week payments is considered conclusive, absent clear and convincing
10	evidence that the information was erroneous.
11	SECTION 13. 108.04 (12) (f) 2m. of the statutes is created to read:
12	108.04 (12) (f) 2m. In this paragraph, "social security disability insurance
13	payment" means a payment of social security disability insurance benefits under 42
14	USC ch. 7 subch. II.
15	SECTION 14. 108.04 (12) (f) 3. b. to d. of the statutes are created to read:
16	108.04 (12) (f) 3. b. In the first month a social security disability insurance
17	payment is first issued to an individual, the individual is ineligible for benefits under
18	this chapter for each week beginning with the week the social security disability
19	insurance payment is issued to the individual and all subsequent weeks in that
20	month.
21	c. Following a cessation of social security disability insurance payments to an
22	individual and upon the individual again being issued a social security disability
23	insurance payment, the individual is ineligible for benefits under this chapter for
24	each week beginning with the week the social security disability insurance payment
25	is issued to the individual and all subsequent weeks in that month.

d. Following cessation of social security disability insurance payments, an
individual may be eligible for benefits under this chapter, if otherwise qualified,
beginning with the week following the last Saturday of the month in which the
individual is issued his or her final social security disability insurance payment.
SECTION 15. 108.04 (13) (g) of the statutes is created to read:
108.04 (13) (g) 1. In this paragraph:
a. "Combined-wage claim" means a claim for benefits under this chapter that
is filed pursuant to a reciprocal arrangement entered into under s. 108.14 (8n).
b. "Out-of-state employer" means a person that employs an individual who
files a combined-wage claim in which the wages and employment from that person
are covered under the unemployment compensation law of another state.
2. The department may issue a determination that an out-of-state employer
is at fault for the erroneous payment of benefits under a combined-wage claim in the
same manner as the department issues determinations under s. 108.10, if the
unemployment insurance account of the out-of-state employer is potentially
chargeable.
3. A determination issued under subd. 2. is subject to s. 108.10 and may be
appealed in the same manner as a determination issued under s. 108.10.
SECTION 16. 108.04 (16) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:
108.04 (16) (b) The department shall not apply any benefit reduction or
disqualification under sub. (1) (b), (2) (a), or (7) (c), or (8) (e) (cg) or s. 108.141 (3g) (d)
that is not the result of approved training while an individual is enrolled in approved
training.
SECTION 17. 108.062 (6) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

108.062 (6) (a) Except as provided in par. (b) and sub. (7), an employee who is included under a work-share program and who qualifies to receive regular benefits for any week during the effective period of the program shall receive a benefit payment for each week that the employee is included under the program in an amount equal to the employee's regular benefit amount under s. 108.05 (1) multiplied by the employee's proportionate reduction in hours worked for that week as a result of the work-share program. Such an employee shall receive benefits as calculated under this paragraph and not as provided under s. 108.05 (3).

Section 18. 108.062 (7) of the statutes is repealed.

SECTION 19. 108.14 (8n) (e) of the statutes is amended to read:

108.14 (8n) (e) The department shall charge this state's share of any benefits paid under this subsection to the account of each employer by which the employee claiming benefits was employed in the applicable base period, in proportion to the total amount of wages he or she earned from each employer in the base period, except that if s. 108.04 (1) (f), (5), (7) (a), (c), (cg), (e), (L), (q), (s), or (t), (7m) or (8) (a) or 108.07 (3), (3r), or (5) (b) would have applied to employment by such an employer who is subject to the contribution requirements of ss. 108.17 and 108.18, the department shall charge the share of benefits based on employment with that employer to the fund's balancing account, or, if s. 108.04 (1) (f) or (5) or 108.07 (3) would have applied to an employer that is not subject to the contribution requirements of ss. 108.17 and 108.18, the department shall charge the share of benefits based on that employment in accordance with s. 108.07 (5) (a) and (b). The department shall also charge the fund's balancing account with any other state's share of such benefits pending reimbursement by that state.

SECTION 20. 108.141 (7) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

108.141 (7) (a) The department shall charge the state's share of each week of
extended benefits to each employer's account in proportion to the employer's share
of the total wages of the employee receiving the benefits in the employee's base
period, except that if the employer is subject to the contribution requirements of ss.
108.17 and 108.18 the department shall charge the share of extended benefits to
which s. 108.04 (1) (f), (5), (7) (a), (c), (cg), (e), (L), (q), (s), or (t), (7m) or (8) (a) or 108.07
(3), (3r), or (5) (b) applies to the fund's balancing account.

SECTION 21. 108.16 (6) (L) of the statutes is amended to read:

108.16 (6) (L) The amount of any overpayments that are recovered by the department by setoff pursuant to s. 71.93 or the amount of any overpayments resulting from fraud or failure to report earnings that are recovered by the department by offset pursuant to section 26 USC 6402 (f) of the federal Internal Revenue Code in effect on June 1, 2009.

SECTION 22. 108.16 (6m) (g) of the statutes is amended to read:

108.16 (6m) (g) Any payments of fees or expenses assessed by the U.S. secretary of the treasury and charged to the department under section 26 USC 6402 (f) of the federal Internal Revenue Code in effect on June 1, 2009.

SECTION 23. 108.16 (10) of the statutes is amended to read:

108.16 (10) All money withdrawn from the fund shall be used solely in the payment of benefits, exclusive of expenses of administration, and for refunds of sums erroneously paid into the fund, for refund of a positive net balance in an employer's reimbursement account under ss. 108.15 (4) and 108.151 (5) on request by the employer, for expenditures made pursuant to s. 108.161 and consistently with the federal limitations applicable to s. 108.161, and for payment of fees and expenses for collection of overpayments resulting from fraud or failure to report earnings that are

SECTION 23

assessed by the U.S. secretary of the treasury and charged to the department under
section 26 USC 6402 (f) of the federal Internal Revenue Code in effect on June 1,
<del>2009</del> .

Section 24. 108.22 (1r) of the statutes is created to read:

108.22 (1r) If any employing unit or any individual who is found personally liable under sub. (9) fails to pay to the department any amount found to be due it in proceedings pursuant to s. 108.10, provided that no appeal or review permitted under s. 108.10 is pending and that the time for taking an appeal or review has expired, the department or any authorized representative may offset the amount against a federal tax refund as provided in 26 USC 6402 (f).

SECTION 25. 108.22 (8) (b) 1. d. of the statutes is amended to read:

108.22 (8) (b) 1. d. If the overpayment results from fraud or failure to report earnings, offsetting the amount of the overpayment against a federal tax refund as provided in section <u>26 USC</u> 6402 (f) of the federal Internal Revenue Code in effect on June 1, 2009.

**Section 26.** 108.22 (9) of the statutes is amended to read:

108.22 (9) An individual who is an officer, employee, member or, manager, partner, or other responsible person holding at least 20% 20 percent of the ownership interest of a corporation or of a, limited liability company, or other business association subject to this chapter, and who has control or supervision of or responsibility for filing any required contribution reports or making payment of contributions, and who willfully fails to file such reports or to make such payments to the department, or to ensure that such reports are filed or that such payments are made, may be found personally liable for such amounts, including interest, tardy payment or filing fees, costs and other fees, in the event that after proper proceedings

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for the collection of such amounts, as provided in this chapter, the corporation or, limited liability company, or other business association is unable to pay such amounts to the department. Ownership interest of a corporation or, limited liability company, or other business association includes ownership or control, directly or indirectly, by legally enforceable means or otherwise, by the individual, by the individual's spouse or child, by the individual's parent if the individual is under age 18, or by a combination of 2 or more of them, and such ownership interest of a parent corporation or, limited liability company, or other business association of which the corporation or, limited liability company, or other business association unable to pay such amounts is a wholly owned subsidiary. The personal liability of such officer, employee, member or, manager, partner, or other responsible person as provided in this subsection survives dissolution, reorganization, bankruptcy, receivership, assignment for the benefit of creditors, judicially confirmed extension or composition, or any analogous situation of the corporation or, limited liability company, or other business association and shall be set forth in a determination or decision issued under s. 108.10.

### SECTION 27. Initial applicability.

- (1) CONCEALMENT BY CLAIMANTS. The renumbering and amendment of section 108.04 (11) (g) of the statutes and the creation of section 108.04 (11) (g) 2. and 3. of the statutes first apply to determinations issued under section 108.09 of the statutes on the effective date of this subsection.
- (2) CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF SSDI AND UI BENEFITS. The treatment of section 108.04 (2) (h) and (12) (f) 1., 1m., 2., 2m., and 3. b. to d. of the statutes first applies retroactively to determinations issued under section 108.09 of the statutes on the effective date of this subsection.

1	(3) Able and available determinations. The treatment of sections 108.04 (1)
2	(b) and (bm), (7) (c), (cg), and (h), (8) (e), and (16) (b), 108.14 (8n) (e), and 108.141 (7)
3	(a) of the statutes first applies to determinations issued under section 108.09 of the
4	statutes on the effective date of this subsection.
5	(4) Personal liability of LLP partners. The treatment of section 108.22 (9)
6	of the statutes first applies to determinations issued under section 108.10 of the
7	statutes on the effective date of this subsection.
8	(5) Work-share benefits. The treatment of section 108.062 (6) (a) and (7) of
9	the statutes first applies to work-share plans submitted for approval on the effective
0	date of this subsection.
1	SECTION 28. Effective dates. This act takes effect on the first Sunday after
2	publication, except as follows:
3	(1) CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF SSDI AND UI BENEFITS. The treatment of section
Ļ	108.04 (2) (h) and (12) (f) 1., 1m., 2., 2m., and 3. b. to d. of the statutes and Section
i	27 (2) of this act take effect retroactively to January 5, 2014.

(END)