

MINUTES
HOUSE COMMERCE & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, January 19, 2017

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW05

MEMBERS: Chairman Hartgen, Vice Chairman Anderson, Representatives Harris, Holtzclaw, Horman, Packer, Redman, Kingsley, Moon, Syme, King, Chew

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: Shelli Boggie, Kim Toryanski, Susan Buxton and Joe Webber, Division of Human Resources; Josh McKenna, Department of Labor; Paul Spannknebel, Department of Health and Welfare

Chairman Hartgen called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm.

MOTION: **Rep. King** made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2017, meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**DOCKET NO.
09-0130-1601:** **Joshua McKenna**, Benefits Bureau Chief, Department of Labor, presented **Docket No. 09-0130-1601**. These changes are meant to bring the rule language more in line with current operations by removing most references to "local offices" and replacing them with "Boise Office" or "Boise Claims Office" since most unemployment operations happen in Boise. He explained this move toward centralization has been driven by reduced funding from the U.S. Department of Labor. The Boise call center has protected claimants from longer processing times due to fewer personnel and has increased the volume of unemployment claims processed and employee productivity by working from a central location.

In response to multiple Committee questions, **Mr. McKenna** explained this will not result in decreased accessibility for people living outside of Boise, because they can file claims online or over the telephone. The intent in changing the language was not to discourage people from filing online at their local offices, because that option remains available, but to clarify they could file online anywhere they had an internet connection, not exclusively at a local office.

In response to further Committee questions, **Mr. McKenna** emphasized there are no plans to close local offices. Nine local offices still do unemployment work, but because unemployment claims are handled online or over the telephone, the associated staff positions have naturally shifted away from local offices. No one has been fired or forced to move to Boise, rather, as attrition among unemployment claims staff has occurred, these positions have either not been replaced or replaced by an employee in Boise. Those wishing to file a claim over the telephone may call their local office, but will likely be routed to Boise because that's where the bulk of the employees are located. The published unemployment claims number is for the Boise call center, but because of the nine remaining offices, the call may be routed to a different office. All employees handling unemployment claims do the same work, but a small number are physically located in a different place. The rule changes are to get in line with the direction the Department is moving and with where most of the employees operate from.

ORIGINAL MOTION: **Rep. Harris** made a motion to approve **Docket No. 09-0130-1601**.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: **Rep. Syme** made a substitute motion to approve **Docket No. 09-0130-1601**, with the exception of **Rule 425.11.b**. In response to Committee questions, Rep. Syme indicated he did not want to strike every instance of "Boise Claims Office" replacing "local office", only this particular instance because it refers specifically to filing claims via telephone, not online. **Substitute motion carried by voice vote.**

DOCKET NO. 15-0401-1601: **Shelli Boggie**, Senior Human Resources Specialist, Division of Human Resources, presented **Docket No. 15-0401-1601**. These rule changes give clarification or update language to meet current practices. The changes define "seasonal", remove references to non-online applications and exams and clarify practices regarding employees with probation status.

Chairman Hartgen turned the gavel over to **Vice Chairman Anderson**.

MOTION: **Rep. Redman** made a motion to approve **Docket No. 15-0401-1601**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:02 pm.

Representative Hartgen
Chair

Erica McGinnis
Secretary