

## Explain Responsibilities And Rights of Workers Under The Unemployment Compensation Act

Payments of unemployment compensation, or benefits, to eligible unemployed workers in North Carolina begin soon after January 1, probably on January 23. The worker employed in covered employment and by a covered employer, who has become unemployed during the year 1937, after establishing a work record by work as long as eight full weeks, and is unemployed more than two weeks after January 1, if he meets certain requirements, is eligible to draw unemployment compensation.

To be eligible for the benefits, a worker must first have worked at least eight full weeks in 1937, or after January 1, 1937, in covered employment.

The worker should register for work at his nearest Employment Service office as soon as he becomes unemployed, and must register on or as soon after January 1 as possible, which is January 3, since January 1, New Year's Day, and January 2, Sunday, are holidays. At that time the eligible unemployed worker must file his claim for unemployment compensation at the Employment Service office. He is required to report each week for work that may be found for him by the Employment office, if he does not find work himself.

After waiting two weeks, and reporting weekly, the totally unemployed worker is due compensation for the third week. However, it will be the end of the fourth week before he will actually receive his pay for the third week. In other words, his pay will be one week behind, due to the time it takes to get the check written and back to the office. He must report to the office weekly thereafter to show that he is still totally unemployed and to get his weekly check.

The payments for total unem-

ployment amount to one-half the normal wage of the worker, but not more than \$15 a week. The lowest amount is \$5 a week, or three-fourths of his normal wage for the lower wage workers. For example, if a worker draws \$50 a week, or \$40 a week or \$30 a week, he will get only \$15 a week in compensation. If he draws \$20 a week normally, he will get \$10 a week. If he draws \$6 a week normally he will draw \$4.50, and if his usual pay is \$4 a week, he will draw \$3 a week, which is three-fourths of his normal pay.

The length of time the payments will continue depends upon how much credit a worker has, based on his wages while employed. He must have worked eight weeks before he can draw any benefits.

In order to draw this unemployment compensation, however, a worker must be able to work and willing to work. Unemployment compensation is not a sick benefit, and he cannot draw compensation if he is sick. Nor can the worker sit down and refuse to work and still draw weekly payments. The unemployed worker must report for work each week and take suitable work offered him.

In deciding what is suitable work, consideration is given to the degree of risk involved to his health, safety and morals, his physical fitness and previous training, his experience and former earnings, the length of his unemployment and prospects for local work in his customary occupation, and to the distance of available work from his residence. An unemployed worker may refuse a job offered that is vacant because of a strike, lock-out or other labor dispute; if he would be required to join a company union or resign from or refrain from joining any regular labor organization; or, he can refuse a job if the remuneration, hours or other conditions of work are substantially less favorable than those in similar work in the locality.

On the other hand, a worker who is otherwise eligible for compensation, cannot draw it if he is out of work because of a labor dispute at the place of his employment, unless he is not participating in or financing or di-

### Southward Ho!



NEW YORK CITY... No winter resort or cruise wardrobe is complete without a pair of beach or lounge pajamas and these are of the latest. The color scheme is blue and white for the trousers and two shades of tan are used for the jacket and scarf. The fabric is a celanese rayon alpaca.

rectly interested in the labor trouble, or unless he does not belong to the grade or class of workers in which the members are participating in or financing or directly interested in the dispute.

Workers are penalized for periods ranging from one to nine weeks, in addition to the two weeks waiting period, if they are to blame for their unemployment; if they leave work voluntarily without just cause, the penalty is from one to five weeks; if they are discharged for misconduct connected with their work, they are penalized from one to nine weeks; if they refuse to apply for available suitable work or to accept suitable work offered, or to return to customary self-employment, if any, they are penalized from one to five weeks. The penalties are imposed only after investigation by the Unemployment Compensation Commission.

Workers are not eligible for compensation under the act if they work for an employer who has less than eight employees; unless such employer has voluntarily come under the act; if they work for the State of North Car-

olina or for the Federal government, or for subdivisions, agencies or institutions of either; or if they are engaged in agricultural work or domestic service in private homes; if they are employed on ocean vessels; if the services are performed for husband or wife, or by a minor child for its parent; or for certain non-profit educational, religious or benevolent organizations.

In order to qualify for benefit payments a worker must have worked at least eight weeks after January 1, 1937, in covered employment, and thus established a wage record, as reported by the employers each three months. From these quarterly reports, the records in the office of the commission are posted and the worker is given credit for one-sixth of the wages he earns, but not more than \$5 for the quarter. This accumulated amount, one-sixth of his wages, is the reserve against which he is entitled to draw at the rate of one-half his normal wage, but not more than \$15 a week.

If the worker has accumulated a sufficient amount (and it takes work for about a year to accumulate enough) he will be paid for 16 weeks, at the end of which the payments stop. After 52

weeks from the time payments first started, if he still has unused wage credits and remains unemployed, he begins to draw benefits again at the beginning of the second benefit year. This continues until his reserve is used up or until the 16 weeks ends again.

As will be seen, the amount of wage credits accumulated determines how long the payments continue, and the normal wage determines how much the worker will draw each week—one-half the normal wage.

If a worker otherwise qualified for unemployment compensation works only a part of the time, then he is due to draw partial benefits after four weeks waiting period of partial employment. His rate of benefits in such case is an amount equal to the difference between his weekly benefit amount and five-sixths of the pay he gets for the work he does that week. For example, if a worker normally draws \$16 a week, then his unemployment compensation would be \$8 a week. If, however, during the week he works enough to draw \$6 in pay, then he will draw the difference between \$8 a week and five-sixths (\$5) of the \$6 earned, which is \$3 a week. This would give him the

he would get if he did no work. If he should work enough to earn \$2, then he would receive \$5.50 in unemployment compensation, instead of the full \$8, in addition to the \$2 earned, which is \$9.50.

The two weeks waiting period before an unemployed worker can draw compensation do not have to run consecutively. That is, if a worker is laid off for a week in January, another week in February and a third week in March, then the two weeks in January and February are his waiting period and he is due to get compensation for the third week, which is in March, and any later weeks in which he is unemployed. Also, two weeks of partial unemployment count as a full week of unemployment, so that if a worker is out of work four parts of weeks, they count as two full weeks of waiting period.

The first step for the worker when he becomes unemployed is to register at the nearest Employment Service office for work, and, as early in January as possible, reregister and file his claim for unemployment compensation. He is required to report weekly to show that he is still unemployed, and, at the end of the fourth week, to get his check

for compensation for the third week. Then he should report weekly to get later checks, or to get work that may be available.

Main employment offices, are operating in ten larger cities and towns, and 55 others are open in other cities and towns. In about a dozen of these larger towns offices are in separate quarters for white and colored workers. Itinerant service will be provided in 54 other towns, usually the county seats, and in other communities. The 45 offices in larger centers are open all the time. Itinerant service in 54 others and at other points will be provided one or two days each week at specified times for registering workers and receiving claims for compensation. These offices and stations are located so no worker will have to go more than 10 miles to report.

Workers should inform themselves of their rights and duties under the Unemployment Compensation Law. The employer is required to post a public notice in his place of business showing whether or not he is covered by the act and if his employees come under the act. He is also required to inform the worker who becomes unemployed what steps he should take to get his full benefits under the law.

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