

By Senator Rodriguez

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to fraud in the reemployment
3 assistance program; providing a short title; creating
4 s. 443.112, F.S.; requiring the Department of Commerce
5 to verify the identity of claimants who apply for
6 reemployment assistance benefits before paying any
7 benefits to them; requiring the department, weekly, to
8 cross-check information with specified sources to
9 verify such claims; prohibiting the payment of
10 reemployment assistance benefits to any claimant who
11 has not been verified; requiring the department to
12 investigate claims associated with other claims that
13 have the same specific identifiers; requiring the
14 department to scrutinize claims filed from foreign
15 Internet protocol addresses before paying benefits on
16 such claims; requiring that any suspected fraudulent
17 claim be referred to the Department of Legal Affairs
18 or the state attorney of the judicial circuit in which
19 the suspected fraudulent claim originated from for
20 further investigation and prosecution; requiring the
21 Department of Commerce to report to the Legislature
22 annually with specific information; requiring such
23 report to be available on the department's website;
24 providing construction; providing an effective date.

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26 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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28 Section 1. This act may be cited as "Protecting the
29 Reemployment Assistance Program from Fraud Act of 2025."

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30 Section 2. Section 443.1112, Florida Statutes, is created
31 to read:

32 443.1112 Program integrity.-

33 (1) The Department of Commerce shall verify the identity of
34 each claimant who applies for reemployment assistance benefits
35 before paying any benefits to that individual.

36 (2) In determining the eligibility of a claim for
37 reemployment benefits, the department shall, on a weekly basis,
38 cross-check the information contained in the claim with the
39 following:

40 (a) The National Association of State Workforce Agencies'
41 Integrity Data Hub;

42 (b) The United States Department of Health and Human
43 Services National Directory of New Hires;

44 (c) The State Directory of New Hires as created in s.
45 409.2576;

46 (d) The Department of Corrections' offender network;

47 (e) The Social Security Administration's Prisoner Update
48 Processing System;

49 (f) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's
50 National Vital Statistics System's National Death Index;

51 (g) The Department of Health's Bureau of Vital Statistics'
52 death records database; and

53 (h) The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' SAVE
54 database.

55 (3) Reemployment assistance benefits administered by the
56 Department of Commerce may not be paid to any claim that has not
57 been subjected to the cross-checks required in subsection (2).

58 (4) The department shall investigate any claim for benefits

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59 associated with a mailing address, bank account, e-mail address,
60 phone number, or Internet protocol address associated with
61 another existing claim for benefits and verify the claim is
62 legitimate and not fraudulent before paying any benefits for
63 that claim. Additionally, the department shall scrutinize any
64 claim filed from a foreign Internet protocol address before
65 paying benefits to that claim.

66 (5) Any suspected fraudulent or attempted fraudulent claim
67 identified by the department shall be referred to the Department
68 of Legal Affairs or the state attorney of the judicial circuit
69 in which the suspected fraudulent claim originated for further
70 investigation and potential prosecution.

71 (6) Annually, the Department of Commerce shall report to
72 the Legislature, and make available on its website, a report
73 identifying the number of fraudulent reemployment assistance
74 claims identified for the year prior, the number of claims not
75 paid due to successful detection of fraudulent intentions, the
76 number of claims and the amount of benefits paid against claims
77 subsequently identified as fraudulent, the amount of fraudulent
78 overpayments recovered, and the number of fraudulent claims
79 referred for investigation and possible prosecution.

80 (7) This section may not be construed as limiting the
81 ability of the department to adopt additional mechanisms and
82 strategies designed to limit waste, fraud, and abuse in the
83 reemployment assistance program.

84 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.