



General Assembly

February Session, 2020

Raised Bill No. 5273

LCO No. 1623



Referred to Committee on LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Introduced by:
(LAB)

AN ACT CONCERNING CALL CENTERS AND NOTICE OF CLOSURES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2020*) (a) For purposes of this
2 section:

3 (1) "Call center" means a facility or other operation through which
4 employees receive telephone calls or electronic communication for the
5 purpose of providing customer assistance or other customer service;

6 (2) "Employer" means a business entity that employs (A) fifty or more
7 employees, excluding part-time employees; or (B) fifty or more
8 employees that in the aggregate work at least fifteen hundred hours per
9 week, excluding overtime hours, for the purpose of staffing a call center;

10 (3) "Part-time employee" means an employee who is employed for an
11 average of fewer than twenty hours per week or who has been
12 employed for fewer than six of the twelve months preceding the date on
13 which notice is required under this section; and

14 (4) "Commissioner" means the Labor Commissioner.

15 (b) A call center employer that intends to relocate a call center, or one
16 or more facilities or operating units within a call center comprising not
17 less than thirty per cent of the call center's or operating unit's total call
18 volume, when compared to the previous twelve-month average call
19 volume of operations or substantially similar operations, from this state
20 to another state or a foreign country shall notify the commissioner at
21 least one hundred days prior to such relocation.

22 (c) A call center employer that violates subdivision (b) of this section
23 shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed ten thousand dollars for
24 each day of such violation, except that the commissioner may reduce
25 such amount for just cause shown.

26 (d) The commissioner shall compile an annual list of each call center
27 employer that relocated a call center, or one or more facilities or
28 operating units within a call center comprising at least thirty per cent of
29 the call center's total volume of operations, from this state to another
30 state or a foreign country. The commissioner shall make such list
31 available to the public and shall prominently display a link to such list
32 on the Labor Department's Internet web site.

33 (e) Except as provided in subsection (g) of this section and
34 notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, a call center
35 employer on the annual list compiled under subsection (d) of this
36 section shall be ineligible for any direct or indirect state grants, state
37 guaranteed loans, state tax benefits or other state financial support for a
38 period of five years from the date such list is published.

39 (f) Except as provided in subsection (g) of this section and
40 notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, a call center
41 employer on the annual list compiled under subsection (d) of this
42 section shall remit the unamortized value of any state grant, guaranteed
43 loan, state tax benefit or other state financial support such call center
44 employer has received in the five-year period prior to the date such call
45 center was placed on such list. Nothing in this section shall be deemed

46 to prevent an employer from receiving any grant to provide training or
47 other employment assistance to individuals who are selected as being
48 in particular need of training or other employment assistance due to the
49 transfer or relocation of the employer's call center, facility or operating
50 units.

51 (g) The commissioner, in consultation with the appropriate agency
52 providing a loan or grant, may waive the remittance requirement under
53 subsection (f) of this section if the employer demonstrates that such
54 requirement would: (1) Threaten state or national security, (2) result in
55 substantial job loss in this state, or (3) harm the environment.

56 (h) The department head of each state agency shall ensure that for all
57 new contracts or new agreements entered into on and after October 1,
58 2020, all state-business-related call center and customer service work is
59 performed by state contractors or other agents or subcontractors entirely
60 within this state, except that, if any such contractor, other agent or
61 subcontractor performs work outside this state and adds customer
62 service employees who will perform work pursuant to such new
63 contracts or agreements, such new employees shall immediately be
64 employed within this state. Businesses subject to a contract or
65 agreement agreed to prior to October 1, 2020, with terms extending
66 beyond October 1, 2022, shall be subject to the provisions of this
67 subsection if the contract or agreement is renewed.

68 (i) No provision of this section shall be construed to permit
69 withholding or denial of payments, compensation or benefits under any
70 other provision of the general statutes, including, but not limited to,
71 state unemployment compensation, disability payments or worker
72 retraining or readjustment funds, to workers employed by employers
73 that relocate from this state to another state or a foreign country.

74 (j) Nothing in this section shall be construed as creating a private
75 cause of action against an employer who has violated, or is alleged to
76 have violated, any provision of this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	New section
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Statement of Purpose:

To discourage employers from closing call centers in this state.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]