

3192

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N   S E N A T E

March 12, 2009

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Introduced by Sen. STAVISKY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Codes

AN ACT to amend the civil practice law and rules, in relation to money judgments in satisfaction of actions brought by employees for unpaid or underpaid wages; to amend the state finance law, in relation to creating the employee wage safety fund; and to require dissemination of certain information by the division of labor standards

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1     Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as  
2     the "wage safety act".  
3     S 2. The civil practice law and rules is amended by adding a new  
4     section 5020-b to read as follows:  
5     S 5020-B. JUDGMENTS; TAXES PAID IN CERTAIN CASES. IN CASES OF MONEY  
6     JUDGMENTS IN SATISFACTION OF ACTIONS BROUGHT BY EMPLOYEES FOR UNPAID OR  
7     UNDERPAID WAGES, THE JUDGMENT DEBTOR SHALL BE REQUIRED TO PAY AN AMOUNT  
8     EQUAL TO TEN PERCENT OF SUCH JUDGMENT INTO THE EMPLOYEE WAGE SAFETY FUND  
9     ESTABLISHED IN SECTION NINETY-NINE-T OF THE STATE FINANCE LAW. MONIES  
10    IN SUCH FUND SHALL BE AVAILABLE TO MAKE FULL OR PARTIAL PAYMENTS ON  
11    JUDGMENTS FOR UNPAID OR UNDERPAID WAGES WHERE SUCH JUDGMENTS REMAIN  
12    UNSATISFIED FOR A PERIOD OF TIME TO BE SPECIFIED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF  
13    LABOR.  
14    S 3. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 99-t to  
15    read as follows:  
16    S 99-T. THE EMPLOYEE WAGE SAFETY FUND. 1. THERE IS HEREBY ESTABLISHED  
17    IN THE JOINT CUSTODY OF THE STATE COMPTROLLER AND THE COMMISSIONER OF  
18    TAXATION AND FINANCE A FUND TO BE KNOWN AS THE "EMPLOYEE WAGE SAFETY  
19    FUND."  
20    2. THE FUND SHALL CONSIST OF THE ADDITIONAL FEE OR SUCH CHARGE ON  
21    MONEY JUDGMENTS ENTERED AGAINST EMPLOYERS ON CLAIMS FOR UNPAID OR UNDER-

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[ ] is old law to be omitted.

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1 PAID WAGES PURSUANT TO SECTION FIVE THOUSAND TWENTY-B OF THE CIVIL PRAC-  
2 TICE LAW AND RULES.

3 3. MONIES FROM THIS FUND SHALL BE PAYABLE TO EMPLOYEES WHO MEET THE  
4 REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN SUBDIVISION FOUR OF THIS SECTION ON THE AUDIT  
5 AND WARRANT OF THE COMPTROLLER BASED ON VOUCHERS CERTIFIED BY THE  
6 COMMISSIONER OF LABOR.

7 4. THE COMMISSIONER OF LABOR SHALL CERTIFY VOUCHERS FOR PAYMENTS SET  
8 FORTH IN SUBDIVISION THREE OF THIS SECTION UPON APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS  
9 BY EMPLOYEES FOR COMPENSATION OR PAYMENTS BY THE FUND FOR UNSATISFIED  
10 MONEY JUDGMENTS WHICH WERE ENTERED AGAINST EMPLOYERS FOR UNPAID OR  
11 UNDERPAID WAGES. THE COMMISSIONER OF LABOR MAY AUTHORIZE FULL OR  
12 PARTIAL PAYMENT ON CLAIMS BASED UPON CRITERIA SET FORTH IN REGULATIONS  
13 TO BE ADOPTED AND IN CONSIDERATION OF THE AMOUNTS AVAILABLE THEREFOR. A  
14 JUDGMENT SHALL BE CONSIDERED UNSATISFIED WHERE THE DIVISION OF LABOR  
15 STANDARDS IS UNABLE, AFTER REASONABLE EFFORTS ARE MADE, TO COLLECT SUCH  
16 JUDGMENT AMOUNT FROM AN EMPLOYER OR FORMER EMPLOYER. AN EMPLOYEE MAKING  
17 A CLAIM THROUGH THE DIVISION SHALL COOPERATE FULLY IN SUCH EFFORTS.

18 S 4. The department of labor, by and through the division of labor  
19 standards shall require all applicants filing a complaint for unpaid  
20 wages with the division to provide either his or her social security  
21 number or, in case of a noncitizen or undocumented immigrant, his or her  
22 tax identification number. The division shall inform each applicant of  
23 his or her duty to report his or her income to the department of taxa-  
24 tion and finance and shall provide him or her with an I-1099 tax form.  
25 The division shall make available to all applicants instruction and  
26 assistance in completing such forms, including but not limited to,  
27 translation of such instructions for non-English speaking individuals or  
28 those with limited English proficiency.

29 S 5. The commissioner of taxation and finance is hereby directed to  
30 implement procedures to provide for the payment or partial payment of  
31 income taxes due on judgments for unpaid or underpaid wages at the time  
32 that the division of labor standards distributes an award to an eligible  
33 employee.

34 S 6. The commissioner of labor is hereby authorized to promulgate any  
35 rules or regulations necessary for the implementation of this act on or  
36 before its effective date.

37 S 7. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to taxable  
38 years beginning on and after January 1, 2009.