

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R21891 SGM-D

C.S.S.B. 2099
By: Zaffirini
Natural Resources & Economic Development
4/22/2021
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

One of the most frequently voiced complaints from constituents to legislative offices during the COVID-19 pandemic was the inability of Texans to reach the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) directly via phone or to leave a message requesting assistance with unemployment insurance. Given the large volume of calls the agency received, frustrated Texans reported a history of repeated call attempts and disconnected calls when seeking to file for unemployment benefits, to address problems with their applications, or to have questions answered about their claims.

To address these concerns, C.S.S.B. 2099 would require TWC to provide a mechanism to ensure claimants are able to leave their contact information and receive a return phone call or email response from the agency regarding the status of their unemployment claims. What's more, the bill would require that information regarding this process be displayed prominently on TWC's website.

C.S.S.B. 2099 amends current law relating to methods by which a claimant may check the status of a claim for unemployment compensation benefits filed with the Texas Workforce Commission.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 208, Labor Code, by adding Section 208.005, as follows:

Sec. 208.005. CLAIM STATUS INFORMATION. (a) Requires the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to ensure that a person who files a claim for benefits is able to check the status of the person's claim through one or more convenient telephonic or electronic methods. Requires that each method provide the person with an option to submit the person's contact information to TWC and receive a return phone call or e-mail response from TWC within a reasonable time regarding the status of the person's claim.

(b) Requires TWC to include in a prominent location on TWC's Internet website detailed information regarding the methods available to a claimant for checking the status of a claim for benefits.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2021.