

LEGISLATIVE BILL 829

Approved by the Governor April 12, 2010

Introduced by Rogert, 16.

FOR AN ACT relating to the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act; to amend section 48-106, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2009; to change certain notice requirements relating to coverage under the act; to repeal the original section; and to declare an emergency.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 48-106, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2009, is amended to read:

48-106 (1) The Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act shall apply to the State of Nebraska, to every governmental agency created by the state, and, except as provided in this section, to every resident employer in this state and nonresident employer performing work in this state who employs one or more employees in the regular trade, business, profession, or vocation of such employer.

(2) The act shall not apply to:

(a) A railroad company engaged in interstate or foreign commerce;
 (b) Service performed by a worker who is a household domestic servant in a private residence;

(c) Service performed by a worker when performed for an employer who is engaged in an agricultural operation and employs only related employees;

(d) Service performed by a worker when performed for an employer who is engaged in an agricultural operation and employs unrelated employees unless such service is performed for an employer who during any calendar year employs ten or more unrelated, full-time employees, whether in one or more locations, on each working day for thirteen calendar weeks, whether or not such weeks are consecutive. The act shall apply to an employer thirty days after the thirteenth such week; and

(e) Service performed by a person who is engaged in an agricultural operation, or performed by his or her related employees, when the service performed is (i) occasional and (ii) for another person who is engaged in an agricultural operation who has provided or will provide reciprocal or similar service.

(3) If the employer is the state or any governmental agency created by the state, the exemption from the act under subdivision (2)(d) of this section does not apply.

(4) If the act applies to an employer because the employer meets the requirements of subdivision (2)(d) of this section, all unrelated employees shall be covered under the act and such employees' wages shall be considered for premium purposes.

(5) If an employer to whom the act applies because the employer meets the requirements of subdivision (2)(d) of this section subsequently does not employ ten or more unrelated, full-time employees, such employer shall continue to provide workers' compensation insurance coverage for the employees for the remainder of the calendar year and for the next full calendar year. When the required coverage period has expired, such employer may elect to return to exempt status by (a) posting, continuously in a conspicuous place at the employment locations of the employees for a period of at least ninety days, a written or printed notice stating that the employer will no longer carry workers' compensation insurance for the employees and the date such insurance will cease and (b) thereafter no longer carrying a policy of workers' compensation insurance. Failure to provide notice in accordance with this subsection voids an employer's attempt to return to exempt status.

(6) An employer who is exempt from the act under subsection (2) of this section may elect to bring the employees of such employer under the act. Such election is made by the employer obtaining a policy of workers' compensation insurance covering such employees. Such policy shall be obtained from a corporation, association, or organization authorized and licensed to transact the business of workers' compensation insurance in this state. If such an exempt employer procures a policy of workers' compensation insurance which is in full force and effect at the time of an accident to an employee of such employer, such procurement is conclusive proof of the employer's and employee's election to be bound by the act. Such an exempt employer who has procured a policy of workers' compensation insurance may elect to return to exempt status by (a) posting, continuously in a conspicuous place at the employment locations of the employees for a period of at least ninety days, a written or printed notice stating that the employer will no

longer carry workers' compensation insurance for the employees and the date such insurance will cease and (b) thereafter no longer carrying a policy of workers' compensation insurance. Failure to provide notice in accordance with this subsection voids an employer's attempt to return to exempt status.

(7) Every employer exempted under subdivision (2)(d) of this section who does not elect to provide workers' compensation insurance under subsection (6) of this section shall give all unrelated employees at the time of hiring or at any time more than thirty calendar days prior to the time of injury the following written notice which shall be signed by the unrelated employee and retained by the employer: "In this employment you will not be covered by the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act and you will not be compensated under the act if you are injured on the job or suffer an occupational disease. You should plan accordingly." Failure to provide the notice required by this subsection subjects an employer to liability under and inclusion in the act for all unrelated employees on the basis of failure to give such notice, any unrelated employee to whom such notice was not given.

(8) An exclusion from coverage in any health, accident, or other insurance policy covering a person employed by an employer who is exempt from the act under this section which provides that coverage under the health, accident, or other insurance policy does not apply if such person is entitled to workers' compensation coverage is void as to such person if such employer has not elected to bring the employees of such employer within the act as provided in subsection (6) of this section.

(9) For purposes of this section:

(a) Agricultural operation means (i) the cultivation of land for the production of agricultural crops, fruit, or other horticultural products or (ii) the ownership, keeping, or feeding of animals for the production of livestock or livestock products;

(b) Full-time employee means a person who is employed to work one-half or more of the regularly scheduled hours during each pay period; and

(c) Related employee means a spouse of an employer and an employee related to the employer within the third degree by blood or marriage. Relationship by blood or marriage within the third degree includes parents, grandparents, great grandparents, children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, and spouses of the same. If the employer is a partnership, limited liability company, or corporation in which all of the partners, members, or shareholders are related within the third degree by blood or marriage, then related employee means any employee related to any such partner, member, or shareholder within the third degree by blood or marriage.

Sec. 2. Original section 48-106, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2009, is repealed.

Sec. 3. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when passed and approved according to law.