WEST VIRGINIA CODE CHAPTER 21 ARTICLE 5

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§21-5-1. Definitions.

NOTE: West Virginia Code §21-5-1 was amended by two bills passed during the 2021 Regular Session of the Legislature. When two acts of the Legislature amend the same section of the Code without express recognition in the bill of the action of the other bill, the Legislative Manager makes no determination as to the appropriate, legal effect of the two acts. Therefore, BOTH versions of this section are set out below.

The later of the two acts, House Bill 2009 (passed on March 19, 2021) amended West Virginia Code §21-5-1 to read as follows:

As used in this article:

(a) The term "firm" includes any partnership, association, joint-stock company, trust, division of a corporation, the administrator or executor of the estate of a deceased individual, or the receiver, trustee, or successor of any of the same, or officer thereof, employing any person.

(b) The term "employee" or "employees" includes any person suffered or permitted to work by a person, firm, or corporation, except those classified as an independent contractor pursuant to §21-5I-4 of this code.

(c) The term "wages" means compensation for labor or services rendered by an employee, whether the amount is determined on a time, task, piece, commission, or other basis of calculation. As used in §21-5-4, §21-5-5, §21-5-8a, §21-5-10, and §21-5-12 of this code, the term "wages" shall also include then accrued fringe benefits capable of calculation and payable directly to an employee: *Provided*, That nothing herein contained shall require fringe benefits to be calculated contrary to any agreement between an employer and his or her employees which does not contradict the provisions of this article.

(d) The term "commissioner" means Commissioner of Labor or his or her designated representative.

(e) The term "railroad company" includes any firm or corporation engaged primarily in the business of transportation by rail.

(f) The term "special agreement" means an arrangement filed with and approved by the commissioner whereby a person, firm, or corporation is permitted upon a compelling showing of good cause to establish regular paydays less frequently than once in every two weeks: *Provided*, That in no event shall the employee be paid in full less frequently than once each calendar month on a regularly established schedule.

(g) The term "deductions" includes amounts required by law to be withheld, and amounts authorized for union, labor organization, or club dues or fees, pension plans, payroll savings plans, credit unions, charities, and any form of insurance offered by an employer: *Provided*, That for a public employee, other than a municipal employee covered by a collective bargaining agreement with a municipality which is in effect on July 1, 2021, the term "deductions" shall not include any amount for union, labor organization, or club dues or fees.

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(h) The term “officer” shall include officers or agents in the management of a corporation or firm who knowingly permit the corporation or firm to violate the provisions of this article.

(i) The term “wages due” shall include at least all wages earned up to and including the twelfth day immediately preceding the regular payday.

(j) The term “construction” means the furnishing of work in the fulfillment of a contract for the construction, alteration, decoration, painting, or improvement of a new or existing building, structure, roadway, or pipeline, or any part thereof, or for the alteration, improvement, or development of real property: *Provided*, That construction performed for the owner or lessee of a single family dwelling or a family farming enterprise is excluded.

(k) The term “minerals” means clay, coal, flagstone, gravel, limestone, manganese, sand, sandstone, shale, iron ore, and any other metallurgical ore.

(l) The term “fringe benefits” means any benefit provided an employee or group of employees by an employer, or which is required by law, and includes regular vacation, graduated vacation, floating vacation, holidays, sick leave, personal leave, production incentive bonuses, sickness and accident benefits, and benefits relating to medical and pension coverage.

(m) The term “employer” means any person, firm, or corporation employing any employee.

(n) The term “doing business in this state” means having employees actively engaged in the intended principal activity of the person, firm, or corporation in West Virginia.

(o) The term “assignment”, as used in §21-5-3 of this code, shall have the same meaning as the term “assignment of earnings” set forth in §46A-2-116(2)(b) of this code.

The earlier of the two acts, Senate Bill 272 (passed on March 11, 2021), amended West Virginia Code §21-5-1 to read as follows:

As used in this article:

(a) The term “firm” includes any partnership, association, joint-stock company, trust, division of a corporation, the administrator or executor of the estate of a deceased individual, or the receiver, trustee, or successor of any of the same, or officer thereof, employing any person.

(b) The term “employee” or “employees” includes any person suffered or permitted to work by a person, firm, or corporation, except those classified as an independent contractor pursuant to §21-5I-4 of this code.

(c) The term “wages” means compensation for labor or services rendered by an employee, whether the amount is determined on a time, task, piece, commission, or other basis of calculation. As used in §21-5-4, §21-5-5, §21-5-8a, §21-5-10, and §21-5-12 of this code, the term “wages” shall also include then accrued fringe benefits capable of calculation and

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payable directly to an employee: *Provided*, That nothing herein contained shall require fringe benefits to be calculated contrary to any agreement between an employer and his or her employees which does not contradict the provisions of this article.

(d) The term "commissioner" means the Commissioner of Labor or his or her designated representative.

(e) The term "railroad company" includes any firm or corporation engaged primarily in the business of transportation by rail.

(f) The term "special agreement" means an arrangement filed with and approved by the commissioner whereby a person, firm, or corporation is permitted upon a compelling showing of good cause to establish regular paydays less frequently than once every two weeks: *Provided*, That in no event shall the employee be paid in full less frequently than once each calendar month on a regularly established schedule.

(g) The term "deductions" includes amounts required by law to be withheld, and amounts authorized for union or club dues, pension plans, payroll savings plans, credit unions, charities, and hospitalization and medical insurance.

(h) The term "officer" shall include officers or agents in the management of a corporation or firm who knowingly permit the corporation or firm to violate the provisions of this article.

(i) The term "wages due" shall include at least all wages earned up to and including the 12th day immediately preceding the regular payday.

(j) The term "construction" means the furnishing of work in the fulfillment of a contract for the construction, alteration, decoration, painting, or improvement of a new or existing building, structure, roadway, or pipeline, or any part thereof, or for the alteration, improvement, or development of real property: *Provided*, That construction performed for the owner or lessee of a single-family dwelling or a family farming enterprise is excluded.

(k) The term "minerals" means clay, coal, flagstone, gravel, limestone, manganese, sand, sandstone, shale, iron ore, and any other metallurgical ore.

(l) The term "fringe benefits" means any benefit provided an employee or group of employees by an employer, or which is required by law, and includes regular vacation, graduated vacation, floating vacation, holidays, sick leave, personal leave, production incentive bonuses, sickness and accident benefits, and benefits relating to medical and pension coverage.

(m) The term "employer" means any person, firm, or corporation employing any employee.

(n) The term "doing business in this state" means having employees actively engaged in the intended principal activity of the person, firm, or corporation in West Virginia.

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§21-5-2. Semimonthly payment of wages by railroads.

Every railroad company, authorized to do business by the laws of this state shall, on or before the first day of each month, pay the employees thereof the wages earned by them during the first half of the preceding month, ending with the fifteenth day thereof; and on or before the fifteenth day of each month, pay the employees thereof the wages earned by them during the last half of the preceding calendar month: Provided, That if, at any time of payment, any employee shall be absent from his regular place of labor, and shall not receive his wages through a duly authorized representative, he shall be entitled to such payment at any time thereafter upon demand upon the proper paymaster at the place where such wages are usually paid and where the next pay is due, and the proper mailing in the United States post office of such payment in time to reach the usual post office of the employee by the time aforesaid, in the usual course of the mails, shall be a compliance with this section.

It shall not be lawful for any railroad company to enter into or make any agreement with any employee for the payment of wages of any such employee otherwise than as provided in this section, except to pay such wages at shorter intervals than herein provided. Every agreement made in violation of this section shall be deemed to be null and void.

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§21-5-3. Payment of wages by employers other than railroads; assignments of wages.

(a) Every person, firm, or corporation doing business in this state, except railroad companies as provided in §21-5-1 *et seq*. of this code, shall settle with its employees at least twice every month in a manner of the person, firm, or corporation's choosing, as set forth in subsection (b) of this section, and with no more than 19 days between settlements, unless otherwise provided by special agreement, and pay them the wages due, less authorized deductions and authorized wage assignments, for their work or services.

(b) Payment required in subsection (a) of this section shall be made by the person, firm, or corporation in one of the following ways:

(1) In lawful money of the United States;

(2) By check or money order;

(3) By deposit or electronic transfer of immediately available funds into an employee's payroll card account in a federally insured depository institution: *Provided*, That an employer who compensates its employees using payroll cards shall provide full written disclosure of any applicable fees associated with the payroll card: *Provided, however*, That if an employer compensates its employees using payroll cards, the employer shall ensure that the employee has the ability to make at least one withdrawal or transfer from the payroll card per pay period without cost or fee to the employee for any amount contained on the card: *Provided further*, That if an employer compensates its employees using payroll cards, the employer shall ensure that the employee has the ability to make in-network withdrawals or transfers from the payroll card without cost or fee to the employee for any amount contained on the card.

(4) By any method of depositing immediately available funds in an employee's demand or time account in a bank, credit union, or savings and loan institution upon the employee's identification of his or her financial institution, the type of account, and the account number: *Provided*, That if an employee does not identify the information necessary to enable a deposit pursuant to this subdivision, the employer may pay the employee by payroll card pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection: *Provided, however*, That nothing herein contained shall be construed in a manner to require any person, firm, or corporation to pay employees by depositing funds in a financial institution.

(c) An employer who chooses to compensate its employees using payroll cards pursuant to the provisions of subsection (b)(3) of this section must also give employees the option of being paid by electronic transfer under the provisions of subsection (b)(4) of this section.

(d) If, at any time of payment, any employee is absent from his or her regular place of labor and does not receive his or her wages through a duly authorized representative, he or she is entitled to payment at any time thereafter upon demand upon the proper paymaster at the

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place where his or her wages are usually paid and where the next pay is due.

(e) Nothing herein contained may affect the right of an employee to assign part of his or her claim against his or her employer except as in subsection (e) of this section.

(f) No assignment of or order for future wages may be valid for a period exceeding one year from the date of the assignment or order. An assignment or order shall be in writing and shall specify thereon the total amount due and collectible by virtue of the same and, unless otherwise provided for in subsection (g) of this section, three-fourths of the periodical earnings or wages of the assignor are all times exempt from such assignment or order and no assignment or order is valid which does not so state upon its face: *Provided*, That no such order or assignment is valid unless the written acceptance of the employer of the assignor to the making thereof is endorsed thereon: *Provided, however*, That nothing herein contained may be construed as affecting the right of a private employer and its employees to agree between themselves as to deductions to be made from the payroll of employees.

(g) If an employee of the state has been overpaid wages, including incremental salary increases pursuant to §5-5-2 of this code, an employee may voluntarily authorize a written assignment or order for future wages to the state to repay the overpayment in an amount not to exceed three-fourths of his or her periodical earnings or wages.

(h) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to interfere with the right of an employee to join, become a member of, contribute to, donate to, or pay dues or fees to a union, labor organization, or club.

(i) For purposes of this article:

(1) “Payroll card” means a card, code, or combination thereof or other means of access to an employee’s payroll card account, by which the employee may initiate electronic fund transfers or use a payroll card to make purchases or payments.

(2) “Payroll card account” means an account in a federally insured depository institution that is directly or indirectly established through an employer and to which electronic fund transfers of the employee’s wages, salary, commissions, or other compensation are made on a recurring basis, whether the account is operated or managed by the employer, a third person payroll processor, a depository institution, or another person.

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§21-5-4. Cash orders; employees separated from payroll before paydays; employer provided property.

(a) In lieu of lawful money of the United States, any person, firm, or corporation may compensate employees for services by cash order which may include checks, direct deposits, payroll cards, or money orders on banks convenient to the place of employment where suitable arrangements have been made for the cashing of the checks by employees or deposit of funds for employees for the full amount of wages.

(b) Whenever a person, firm, or corporation discharges an employee, or whenever an employee quits or resigns from employment, the person, firm or corporation shall pay the employee's wages due for work that the employee performed prior to the separation of employment on or before the next regular payday on which the wages would otherwise be due and payable: *Provided*, That fringe benefits, as defined in section one of this article, that are provided an employee pursuant to an agreement between the employee and employer and that are due, but pursuant to the terms of the agreement, are to be paid at a future date or upon additional conditions which are ascertainable are not subject to this subsection and are not payable on or before the next regular payday, but shall be paid according to the terms of the agreement. For purposes of this section, "business day" means any day other than Saturday, Sunday, or any legal holiday as set forth in §2-2-1 of this code.

(c) Payment under this section may be made in person in any manner permissible under section three of this article, through the regular pay channels or, if requested by the employee, by mail. If the employee requests that payment under this section be made by mail, that payment shall be considered to have been made on the date the mailed payment is postmarked.

(d) When work of any employee is suspended as a result of a labor dispute, or when an employee for any reason whatsoever is laid off, the person, firm or corporation shall pay in full to the employee not later than the next regular payday, either through the regular pay channels or by mail if requested by the employee, wages earned at the time of suspension or layoff.

(e) If a person, firm, or corporation fails to pay an employee wages as required under this section, the person, firm, or corporation, in addition to the amount which was unpaid when due, is liable to the employee for two times that unpaid amount as liquidated damages. This section regulates the timing of wage payments upon separation from employment and not whether overtime pay is due. Liquidated damages that can be awarded under this section are not available to employees claiming they were misclassified as exempt from overtime under state and federal wage and hour laws. Every employee shall have a lien and all other rights and remedies for the protection and enforcement of his or her salary or wages, as he or she would have been entitled to had he or she rendered service therefor in the manner as last employed; except that, for the purpose of liquidated damages, the failure shall not be deemed to continue after the date of the filing of a petition in bankruptcy with respect to the employer if he or she is adjudicated bankrupt upon the petition.

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(f)(1) Notwithstanding any provision in this section to the contrary, if at the time of discharge or resignation, an employee fails to return employer provided property, as set forth by the parties under paragraph (C) of this subsection, the employer may withhold, deduct, or divert an employee's final wages, in an amount not to exceed the replacement cost of the employer provided property that was not returned as set forth under paragraph (C) of this subsection, to recover the replacement cost of the employer provided property, subject to the following:

(A) The employer provided property had been provided to the employee in the course of, and for use in, the employer's business;

(B) The employer provided property has a value in excess of $100;

(C) The employee had signed a written agreement with the employer contemporaneous with the obtaining of the employer provided property, or signed and ratified an agreement if property had been provided prior to the effective date of this provision; and such agreement contained, at a minimum, the following information:

(i) Specific itemization of the employer provided property, with a specified replacement cost;

(ii) Clear statement that such items are to be returned immediately upon discharge or resignation; and

(iii) Clear statement, coupled with the employee's acknowledgement and agreement, that should the employee fail to timely return the specified items, the replacement cost of such items may be recovered by the employer from the employee's final wages;

(D) The employer shall notify the employee in writing at the time of discharge or resignation by personal service, or as soon thereafter as practicable by personal service or via certified mail with return receipt requested, as to the replacement cost of the items and make a demand for return of such employer provided property within a certain date, not to exceed 10 business days of the notification; and

(E) The employer shall relinquish the withheld, deducted, or diverted wages to the employee if the employee returns the employer's property, equipment, supplies, and uniforms in a condition suitable for the age and usage of the items within the deadline specified in paragraph (D) of this subsection: *Provided*, That uniforms returned to the employer within three years of their issuance shall be deemed acceptable in their current condition at the time of separation from employment for purposes of this section: *Provided, however*, That replacement tools are deemed to be the property of the employee and are not subject to the provisions of this section.

(2) Nothing herein precludes an employee from voluntarily consenting in writing to an employer's withholding, deduction, or diversion of a certain amount from the employee's final wages in satisfaction of subsection (1) of this section.

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(3) If an employee objects to the replacement cost amount to be deducted by an employer, and provides such written objection within the deadline specified in paragraph (D), subsection (1) of this subsection, then the employer shall place the controverted amount in an interest bearing escrow account: *Provided*, That if a civil action or equitable relief is not brought by the employee for the claimed amount within three months, the employee shall forfeit the amount in escrow and such money shall revert to the employer.

(4) Nothing in this subsection is intended, nor shall it be construed, to abolish or limit any other remedies available to an employer to recover employer provided property, damages related to employer provided property or any other damages or relief, equitable or otherwise, available under any applicable law.

(5) Notwithstanding any provision in this section to the contrary, this provision shall not apply to employer-employee business relationships that are subject to, and governed by, collective bargaining agreements.

(6) For purposes of this section the following terms mean:

(A) The term “employer provided property” means all property provided by an employer to an employee for use in the employer’s business, including but not limited to, equipment, phone, computer, supplies, or uniforms.

(B) The term “replacement cost” means actual cost paid by an employer for employer provided property, or for the same or similar property, if the original employer provided property no longer exists. In calculating the “replacement cost”, the cost shall include any vendor discounts provided to the employer for such property.

(C) The term “replacement tools” means equipment, other than uniforms, provided by the employer to the employee for use in the course of the employer’s business and to replace equipment provided by the employee that is lost.

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§21-5-4a. Safe Harbor.

(a) An employee, in bringing an action for the underpayment or nonpayment of wages and fringe benefits due upon the employee's separation of employment as contemplated by §21-5-4 of this code, is not entitled to seek liquidated damages or attorney's fees from an employer without first making a written demand, as defined in subsection (c) of this section, to the employer seeking the payment of any alleged underpayment or nonpayment as set forth in this section: *Provided,* That upon separation or with the issuance of the final paycheck, the employer shall notify the employee in writing who the employer's authorized representative is and where to send a written demand by both e-mail and regular mail: *Provided however*, that if the employer fails to provide the required written notice, the employee is not required to comply with the provisions of this section. Upon receiving a written demand, the employer has seven calendar days from receipt to correct the alleged underpayment or nonpayment of the wages and fringe benefits due. If, after seven days, the employer has not corrected the alleged underpayment or nonpayment, or paid all undisputed amounts due to the employee, the employee may seek liquidated damages and attorney's fees. Nothing in this section prohibits the employee from presenting a claim under this article without making a written demand to the employer.

(b) In a class action lawsuit brought under this article for the underpayment or nonpayment of wages and fringe benefits due upon the employees' separation of employment, the employee, prior to the filing of the class action, shall submit a written demand stating it is a demand for all other employees similarly situated for the underpayment or nonpayment of their wages and fringe benefits: *Provided,* That if only the underpayment or nonpayment of wages and fringe benefits of the named employee is corrected, a class action may proceed for the underpayment or nonpayment of wages and fringe benefits still owed to the other members of the class.

(c) For purposes of this section, a "written demand" means any writing, including e-mail, from or on behalf of an employee stating that the employer has not paid all of the wages or fringe benefits which the employee is owed.

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§21-5-5. Coercion of employees to purchase merchandise in payment of wages; sale of merchandise for more than prevailing cash value.

If any corporation, company, firm or person shall coerce or compel, or attempt to coerce or compel, an employee in its, their or his employment to purchase goods or supplies in payment of wages due him or to become due him or otherwise, from any corporation, company, firm or person, such first named corporation, company, firm or person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished as provided in the next preceding section. And if any such corporation, company, firm or person shall, directly or indirectly, sell to any such employee in payment of wages due or to become due him or otherwise, goods or supplies at prices higher than the reasonable or current market value thereof at cash, such corporation, company, firm or person shall be liable to such employee, in a civil action, in double the amount of the charges made and paid for such goods or supplies, in excess of the reasonable or correct value thereof in cash.

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§21-5-5a. Definitions.

As used in sections five-b, five-c and five-d of this article, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

(1) "Employer" means any individual, person, corporation, department, board, bureau, agency, commission, division, office, company, firm, partnership, council or committee of the state government; public benefit corporation, public authority or political subdivision of the state; or other business entity, which employs or seeks to employ an individual or individuals. All provisions of sections five-b, five-c and five-d of this article pertaining to employers shall apply in equal force and effect to their agents and representatives.

(2) "Employee" means an individual employed by an employer.

(3) "Psychophysiological detection of deception instrument" means an instrument used for the detection of deception which records permanently and simultaneously a person's cardiovascular and respiratory patterns and galvanic skin response: Provided, That the instrument may record other physiological changes pertinent to the detection of deception.

(4) "Prospective employee" means an individual seeking or being sought for employment with an employer.

(5) "Psychophysiological detection of deception" means an examination which records permanently and simultaneously a person's cardiovascular and respiratory patterns and galvanic skin response.

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§21-5-5b. Employer limitations on use of detection of deception devices or instruments; exceptions.

No employer may require or request either directly or indirectly, that any employee or prospective employee of the employer submit to a psychophysiological detection of deception examination, lie detector or other similar examination utilizing mechanical or electronic measures of physiological reactions to evaluate truthfulness, and no employer may knowingly allow the results of any examination administered outside this state to be utilized for the purpose of determining whether to employ a prospective employee or to continue the employment of an employee in this state: Provided, That the provisions of this section shall not apply to employees or prospective employees who would have direct access to the manufacture, storage, distribution or sale of any controlled substance listed in schedule I, II, III, IV or V of section eight hundred twelve of title twenty-one of the United States code: Provided, however, That the provisions of this section shall not apply to law-enforcement agencies or to military forces of the state as defined by section one, article one, chapter fifteen of the code: Provided further, That the results of any examination shall be used solely for the purpose of determining whether to employ or to continue to employ any person exempted hereunder and for no other purpose.

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§21-5-5c. License required for psychophysiological detection of deception examiners; qualifications; promulgation of rules governing administration of psychophysiological detection of deception examinations.

(a) No person, firm, or corporation shall administer a psychophysiological detection of deception examination, lie detector, or other similar examination utilizing mechanical or electronic measures of physiological reactions to evaluate truthfulness without holding a current valid license to do so as issued by the Commissioner of Labor. No examination shall be administered by a licensed corporation except by an officer or employee thereof who is also licensed.

(b) A person is qualified to receive a license as an examiner if he or she:

(1) Is at least 21 years of age;

(2) Is a citizen of the United States;

(3) Has not been convicted of a felony: *Provided*, That the commissioner may not disqualify an applicant from initial licensure because of a prior felony conviction that remains unreversed unless that conviction is for a crime that bears a rational nexus to practicing as an examiner. In determining whether a felony conviction bears a rational nexus to the license being sought, the commissioner shall consider at a minimum:

(A) The nature and seriousness of the crime for which the individual was convicted;

(B) The passage of time since the commission of the crime;

(C) The relationship of the crime to the ability, capacity, and fitness required to perform the duties and discharge the responsibilities of an examiner; and

(D) Any evidence of rehabilitation or treatment undertaken by the individual;

(4) Has not been released or discharged with other than honorable conditions from any of the armed services of the United States or that of any other nation;

(5) Has passed an examination conducted by the Commissioner of Labor or under his or her supervision to determine his or her competency to obtain a license to practice as an examiner;

(6) Has satisfactorily completed not less than six months of internship training; and

(7) Has met any other qualifications of education or training established by the Commissioner of Labor in his or her sole discretion which qualifications are to be at least as stringent as those recommended by the American Polygraph Association: *Provided*, That in no case shall a Class I license applicant be required to hold a baccalaureate degree, and in no case shall a Class II license applicant be required to hold an associate degree.

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(c) The Commissioner of Labor may designate and administer any test he or she considers appropriate to those persons applying for a license to administer psychophysiological detection of deception, lie detector, or similar examination. The test shall be designed to ensure that the applicant is thoroughly familiar with the code of ethics of the American Polygraph Association and has been trained in accordance with association rules. The test must also include a rigorous examination of the applicant's knowledge of and familiarity with all aspects of operating psychophysiological detection of deception equipment and administering psychophysiological detection of deception examinations.

(d) The license to administer psychophysiological detection of deception, lie detector, or similar examinations to any person shall be issued for a period of one year. It may be reissued from year to year. The licenses to be issued are:

(1) "Class I license" which authorizes an individual to administer psychophysiological detection of deception examinations for all purposes which are permissible under the provisions of this article and other applicable laws and rules;

(2) "Class II license" which authorizes an individual who is a full-time employee of a law-enforcement agency to administer psychophysiological detection of deception examinations to its employees or prospective employees only.

(e) The Commissioner of Labor shall charge an annual fee to be established by legislative rule. All fees paid pursuant to this section shall be paid to the Commissioner of Labor and deposited in an appropriated special revenue account hereby created in the State Treasury to be known as the Psychophysiological Examiners Fund and expended for the implementation and enforcement of this section. Through June 30, 2019, amounts collected which are found from time to time to exceed funds needed for the purposes set forth in this section may be utilized by the commissioner as needed to meet the division's funding obligations: *Provided*, That beginning July 1, 2019, amounts collected may not be utilized by the commissioner as needed to meet the division's funding obligations. In addition to any other information required, an application for a license shall include the applicant's Social Security number.

(f) The Commissioner of Labor shall propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code governing the administration of psychophysiological detection of deception, lie detector, or similar examination to any person: *Provided*, That all applicable rules in effect on the effective date of §21-5-5a, §21-5-5b, §21-5-5c, and §21-5-5d of this code will remain in effect until amended, withdrawn, revoked, repealed, or replaced. The legislative rules shall include:

(1) The type and amount of training or schooling necessary for a person before which he or she may be licensed to administer or interpret a psychophysiological detection of deception, lie detector, or similar examination;

(2) Testing requirements, including the designation of the test to be administered to persons

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applying for licensure;

(3) Standards of accuracy which shall be met by machines or other devices to be used in psychophysiological detection of deception, lie detector, or similar examination;

(4) The conditions under which a psychophysiological detection of deception, lie detector, or similar examination may be administered;

(5) Fees for licenses, renewals of licenses, and other services provided by the commissioner;

(6) Any other qualifications or requirements, including continuing education, established by the commissioner for the issuance or renewal of licenses; and

(7) Any other purpose to carry out the requirements of §21-5-5a, §21-5-5b, §21-5-5c, and §21-5-5d of this code.

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§21-5-5d. Penalties; cause of action.

(a) It shall be a misdemeanor to administer or interpret a psychophysiological detection of deception, lie detector or similar examination utilizing mechanical or electronic measures of physiological reactions to evaluate truthfulness without having received a valid and current license to do so as issued by the commissioner of labor or in violation of any rule or regulation promulgated by the commissioner under section five-c of this article. Any person convicted of violating section five-c shall be fined not more than $500.

(b) Any person who violates section five-b of this article is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than $500.

(c) Any employee or prospective employee has a right to sue an employer or prospective employer for a violation of the provisions of section five-b of this article. If successful, the employee or prospective employee shall recover threefold the damages sustained by him or her, together with reasonable attorneys' fees, filing fees and reasonable costs of the action. Reasonable costs of the action may include, but shall not be limited to, the expenses of discovery and document reproduction. Damages may include, but shall not be limited to, back pay for the period during which the employee did not work or was denied a job.

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§21-5-6. Refusal to pay wages or redeem orders.

If any person, firm or corporation shall refuse for the period of five days to settle with and pay any of its employees at the intervals of time as provided in section three of this article, or to provide fringe benefits after the same are due, or shall neglect or refuse to redeem any cash orders provided for in this article, within the time specified, if presented, and suit be brought for the amount overdue and unpaid, judgment for the amount of such claim proven to be due and unpaid, with legal interest thereon until paid, shall be rendered in favor of the plaintiff in such action; and, if the employee continues to hold the cash order herein provided for, given for payment of labor, in case of the insolvency of the person, firm or corporation giving same, such employee shall not lose his lien and preference under existing laws.

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§21-5-7. Prime contractor's responsibility for wages and benefits.

(a) Whenever any person, firm, or corporation shall contract with another for the performance of any work which the prime contracting person has undertaken to perform for another, the prime contractor shall become civilly liable to employees engaged in the performance of work under the contract for the payment of wages and fringe benefits relating to such work only, exclusive of attorney's fees, interest, liquidated damages, or any other damages of any kind, as provided in §21-5-4(e) of this code, or other applicable law and/or common law, to the extent that the employer of the employee fails to pay the wages and fringe benefits: for work performed under the contract with the prime contractor. The employer, and its shareholders, owners, directors, and officers shall be personally and civilly liable to the prime contractor for any sums paid under this section, including attorney's fees.

(b) Any individual or entity seeking redress pursuant to subsection (a) of this section must:

(1) Notify the prime contractor, by certified mail, only that wages or fringe benefits have not been paid within 100 days of the date the wages or fringe benefits become payable to the employee; and

(2) Commence the action within one year of the date the employee delivered notice to the prime contractor pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(c) The employer of the employee to whom wages and/or fringe benefits are owed, shall whenever feasible provide, immediately upon request by the employee or the prime contractor, complete payroll records relating to work performed under the contract with the prime contractor.

(d) Whenever the employee to whom wages and/or fringe benefits are due is represented by a union or other plan administrator, the union or other plan administrator, shall whenever feasible, immediately upon notice of a claim hereunder, cooperate with the employee and the prime contractor to identify and quantify the wages and fringe benefits owed for work performed under the contract with the prime contractor. Further, if the union or agents thereof or other plan administrator, including, but not limited to, third party administrators, trustees, administrators, or employees, become aware that an employer is not timely in the payment of wages and/or fringe benefits, the union or other plan administrator shall immediately notify the affected employee and the prime contractor for whom the affected employee provided work.

(e) A prime contractor must notify the owner and the architect prior to the completion of the contract if any subcontractor has not been paid in full.

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§21-5-8. Checkweighman where wages depend on production.

Where the amount of wages paid to any of the persons employed in any manufacturing, mining, or other enterprise employing labor, depends upon the amount produced by weight or measure, the persons so employed may, at their own cost, station or appoint at each place appointed for the weighing or measuring of the products of their labor a checkweighman or measurer, who shall in all cases be appointed by a majority ballot of the workmen employed at the works where he is appointed to act as such checkweighman or measurer.

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§21-5-8a. Deceased employees.

In the event of the death of any employee, wages due him by a person, firm or corporation not in excess of $800 may upon proper demand be paid, in the absence of actual notice of the pendency of probate proceedings, without requiring letters testamentary or of administration in the following order of preference to decedent's: (1) Surviving spouse, (2) children eighteen years of age and over in equal shares, (3) father and mother, or survivor, (4) sisters and brothers, or to the person who pays the funeral expenses. Payments under this section shall release and discharge the person, firm or corporation to the amount of such payment.

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§21-5-9. Notification, posting and records.

Every person, firm and corporation shall:

(1) Notify his employees in writing, at the time of hiring of the rate of pay, and of the day, hour, and place of payment.

(2) Notify his employees in writing, or through a posted notice maintained in a place accessible to his employees of any changes in the arrangements specified above prior to the time of such changes.

(3) Make available to his employees in writing or through a posted notice maintained in a place accessible to his employees, employment practices and policies with regard to vacation pay, sick leave, and comparable matters.

(4) Furnish each employee with an itemized statement of deductions made from his wages for each pay period such deductions are made.

(5) Keep posted in a place accessible to his employees an abstract of this article furnished by the commissioner, and

(6) Make such records of the persons employed by him including wage and hour records, preserve such records for such periods of time, and make such reports therefrom to the commissioner, as the commissioner shall prescribe by regulation as necessary or appropriate for the enforcement of the provisions of this article.

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§21-5-10. Provisions of law may not be waived by agreement.

Except as provided in section thirteen, no provision of this article may in any way be contravened or set aside by private agreement, and the acceptance by an employee of a partial payment of wages shall not constitute a release as to the balance of his claim and any release required as a condition of such payment shall be null and void.

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§21-5-11. Administrative enforcement.

(a) The commissioner shall enforce and administer the provisions of this article in accordance with chapter twenty-nine- a of this code. The commissioner or his authorized representatives are empowered to enter and inspect such places, question such employees, and investigate such facts, conditions, or matters as they may deem appropriate, to determine whether any person, firm or corporation has violated any provision of this article, or any rule or regulation issued hereunder or which may aid in the enforcement of the provisions of this article.

(b) The commissioner or his authorized representatives shall have power to administer oaths and examine witnesses under oath, issue subpoenas, compel the attendance of witnesses, and the production of papers, books, accounts, records, payrolls, documents and testimony, and to take depositions and affidavits in any proceeding before said commissioner.

(c) In case of failure of any person to comply with any subpoena lawfully issued, or on the refusal of any witness to testify to any matter regarding which he may be lawfully interrogated, it shall be the duty of the circuit court, on application by the commissioner, to compel obedience by attachment proceedings for contempt, as in the case of disobedience of the requirements of a subpoena issued from such court or a refusal to testify therein.

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§21-5-12. Employees' remedies.

(a) Any person whose wages have not been paid in accord with this article, or the commissioner or his designated representative, upon the request of such person, may bring any legal action necessary to collect a claim under this article. With the consent of the employee, the commissioner shall have the power to settle and adjust any claim to the same extent as might the employee.

(b) The court in any action brought under this article may, in the event that any judgment is awarded to the plaintiff or plaintiffs, assess costs of the action, including reasonable attorney fees against the defendant. Such attorney fees in the case of actions brought under this section by the commissioner shall be remitted by the commissioner to the treasurer of the state. The commissioner shall not be required to pay the filing fee or other costs or fees of any nature or to file bond or other security of any nature in connection with such action or with proceedings supplementary thereto, or as a condition precedent to the availability to the commissioner of any process in aid of such action or proceedings. The commissioner shall have power to join various claimants in one claim or lien, and in case of suit to join them in one cause of action.

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§21-5-13. Rules and regulations.

The commissioner shall make rules and regulations to the extent necessary to effectuate the purposes of this article, in accordance with the provisions of chapter twenty-nine-a of the Code of West Virginia, as amended.

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§21-5-14. Employer's bond for wages and benefits.

(a) Bond required. — With the exception of those who have been doing business in this state actively and actually engaged in construction work, or the severance, production or transportation of minerals for at least one year next preceding the posting of the bond required by this section, every employer, person, firm or corporation engaged in or about to engage in construction work, or the severance, production or transportation (excluding railroads and water transporters) of minerals, shall, prior to engaging in any construction work, or the severance, production or transportation of minerals, furnish a bond on a form prescribed by the commissioner, payable to the State of West Virginia, with the condition that the person, firm or corporation pay the wages and fringe benefits of his or her or its employees when due. The amount of the bond shall be equal to the total of the employer's gross payroll for four weeks at full capacity or production, plus fifteen percent of the said total of employer's gross payroll for four weeks at full capacity or production. The amount of the bond shall increase or decrease as the employer's payroll increases or decreases: Provided, That the amount of the bond shall not be decreased, except with the commissioner's approval and determination that there are not outstanding claims against the bond: Provided, however, That if the employer, person, firm or corporation meets one of the following, then such employer, person, firm or corporation shall be exempt from the requirements of this subsection:

(1) Has been in business in another state for at least five years;

(2) Has at least $100,000 in assets; or

(3) Is a subsidiary of a parent company that has been in business for at least five years.

(b) Waiver. — The commissioner shall waive the posting of any bond required by subsection (a) of this section upon his or her determination that an employer is of sufficient financial responsibility to pay wages and fringe benefits. The commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations according to the provisions of chapter twenty-nine-a of this code which prescribe standards for the granting of such waivers.

(c) Form of bond; filing in office of circuit clerk. — The bond may include, with the approval of the commissioner, surety bonding, collateral bonding (including cash and securities), letters of credit, establishment of an escrow account or a combination of these methods. The commissioner shall accept an irrevocable letter of credit in lieu of any other bonding requirement. If collateral bonding is used, the employer may deposit cash, or collateral securities or certificates as follows: Bonds of the United States or its possessions, or of the federal land bank, or of the homeowner's loan corporation; full faith and credit general obligation bonds of the State of West Virginia or other states, and of any county, district or municipality of the State of West Virginia or other states; or certificates of deposit in a bank in this state, which certificates shall be in favor of the state. The cash deposit or market value of such securities or certificates shall be equal to or greater than the sum of the bond.

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The commissioner shall, upon receipt of any such deposit of cash, securities or certificates, promptly place the same with the State Treasurer whose duty it shall be to receive and hold the same in the name of the state in trust for the purpose for which such deposit is made. The employer making the deposit shall be entitled from time to time to receive from the State Treasurer, upon the written approval of the commissioner, the whole or any portion of any cash, securities or certificates so deposited, upon depositing with him or her in lieu thereof, cash or other securities or certificates of the classes herein specified having value equal to or greater than the sum of the bond. The commissioner shall cause a copy of the bond to be filed in the office of the clerk of the county commission of the county wherein the person, firm or corporation is doing business to be available for public inspection.

(d) Employee cause of action. — Notwithstanding any other provision in this article, any employee, whose wages and fringe benefits are secured by the bond, as specified in subsection (c) of this section, has a direct cause of action against the bond for wages and fringe benefits that are due and unpaid.

(e) Action of commissioner. — Any employee having wages and fringe benefits unpaid may inform the commissioner of the claim for unpaid wages and fringe benefits and request certification thereof. If the commissioner, upon notice to the employer and investigation, finds that such wages and fringe benefits or a portion thereof are unpaid, he or she shall make demand of such employer for the payment of such wages and fringe benefits. If payment for such wages and fringe benefits is not forthcoming within the time specified by the commissioner, not to exceed thirty days, the commissioner shall certify such claim or portion thereof, and forward the certification to the bonding company or the State Treasurer, who shall provide payment to the affected employee within fourteen days of receipt of such certification. The bonding company, or any person, firm or corporation posting a bond, thereafter shall have the right to proceed against a defaulting employer for that part of the claim the employee paid. The procedure specified herein shall not be construed to preclude other actions by the commissioner or employee to seek enforcement of the provisions of this article by any civil proceedings for the payment of wages and fringe benefits or by criminal proceedings as may be determined appropriate.

(f) Posting and reporting by employer. — With the exception of those exempt under subsection (a) of this section, any employer who is engaged in construction work or the severance, production or transportation (excluding railroad and water transporters) of minerals shall post the following in a place accessible to his or her or its employees:

(1) A copy of the bond or other evidence of surety specifying the number of employees covered as provided under subsection (a) of this section, or notification that the posting of a bond has been waived by the commissioner; and

(2) A copy of the notice in the form prescribed by the commissioner regarding the duties of employers under this section. During the first year that any person, firm or corporation is doing business in this state in construction work, or in the severance, production or transportation of minerals, such person, firm or corporation shall on or before February 1,

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May, August and November of each calendar year file with the department a verified statement of the number of employees, or a copy of the quarterly report filed with the Bureau of Employment Programs showing the accurate number of employees, unless the commissioner waives the filing of the report upon his or her determination that the person, firm or corporation is of sufficient stability that the reporting is unnecessary.

(g) Termination of bond. — The bond may be terminated, with the approval of the commissioner, after an employer submits a statement, under oath or affirmation lawfully administered, to the commissioner that the following has occurred: The employer has ceased doing business and all wages and fringe benefits have been paid, or the employer has been doing business in this state for at least one year and has paid all wages and fringe benefits. The approval of the commissioner will be granted only after the commissioner has determined that the wages and fringe benefits of all employees have been paid. The bond may also be terminated upon a determination by the commissioner that an employer is of sufficient financial responsibility to pay wages and fringe benefits.

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§21-5-14a. Insufficiency of bond; manner of distribution.

In the event that the claim of any employee or group of employees having wages and fringe benefits unpaid is in an amount in excess of the bond required in section fourteen of this article, the manner of distribution and order of priority of claims shall be as follows: Unpaid wages; unpaid fringe benefits; damages or expenses incurred or arising out of actual injury: Provided, That nothing contained in this section shall be construed so as to limit any other cause of action against any person, firm or corporation.

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§21-5-15. Violations; cease and desist orders and appeals therefrom; criminal penalties.

(a) Any person, firm or corporation who knowingly and willfully fails to provide and maintain an adequate bond as required by section fourteen of this article is guilty of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than $200 nor more than $5,000, or imprisoned in the county jail not more than one month, or both fined and imprisoned.

(b) Any person, firm or corporation who knowingly, willfully and fraudulently disposes of or relocates assets with intent to deprive employees of their wages and fringe benefits is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than $5,000 nor more than $60,000, or imprisoned in the state correctional facility not less than one nor more than three years, or both fined and imprisoned.

(c) (1) At any time the commissioner determines that a person, firm or corporation has not provided or maintained an adequate bond, as required by section fourteen of this article, the commissioner shall issue a cease and desist order which is to be issued and posted requiring that said person, firm or corporation either post an adequate bond or cease further operations in this state within a period specified by the commissioner; which period shall be not less than five nor more than fourteen days. The cease and desist order may be issued by the commissioner at his or her own instance or at his or her direction, with or without application to or the approval of any other officer, agent, department or employee of the state or application to any court for approval thereof. Any person, firm or corporation who continues to engage in construction work or the severance, production or transportation of minerals without an approved bond after such specified period shall be guilty of a felony, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than $5,000 nor more than $30,000, or imprisoned in the penitentiary not less than one nor more than three years, or both fined and imprisoned. Any cease and desist order issued by the commissioner pursuant to this subsection may be directed by the commissioner to the sheriff of the county wherein the business activity of which the order is the subject, or to any officer or employee of the department, commanding such sheriff, officer or employee to serve such order upon the business in question within seventy-two hours and to make proper return thereof.

(2) Any other provision of law to the contrary notwithstanding, any person against whom a cease and desist order has been directed shall be entitled to judicial review thereof by filing a verified petition taking an appeal therefrom within fifteen days from the date of service of such order. Such verified petition shall be filed in the circuit court of the county wherein service of the order was completed, at the option of the petitioner, or in the circuit court of Kanawha County, West Virginia. If the appeal is not perfected within such fifteen-day period, the cease and desist order shall be final and shall not thereafter be subject to judicial review. No appeal shall be deemed to have been perfected except upon the filing with the clerk of the circuit court of the county wherein the appeal is taken, of a bond or other security to be approved by the court, in an amount of not less than the amount of the bond otherwise required to be posted under the provisions of section fourteen of this article. The person so

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filing a petition of appeal shall cause a copy of the petition and bond or other posted security to be served upon the commissioner by certified mail, return receipt requested, within seven days after the date upon which the petition for appeal is filed.

(d) Any person who threatens any officer, agent or employee of the department or other person authorized to assist the commissioner in the performance of his or her duties under any provision of section fourteen of this article or of this section or who shall interfere with or attempt to prevent any such officer, agent, employee or other person in the performance of such duties shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined in an amount of not less than $1,000 nor more than $3,000 or imprisoned in the penitentiary not less than one nor more than three years, or both such fine and imprisonment.

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§21-5-16. Contractors and subcontractors to notify commissioner.

Whenever a person, firm or corporation (hereinafter referred to in this section as "the prime contractor") contracts or subcontracts with an employer and such contract or subcontract contemplates the performance of either construction work or the severance, production or transportation (excluding railroads or water transporters) of minerals or any combination of the foregoing, then the prime contractor shall, within ten days next following the execution of such contract or subcontract, notify the commissioner in writing by certified mail, return receipt requested, of such contract, which notice shall include the employee's name, the location of the job site and the employer's principal business location: Provided, That if it is ascertained by the prime contractor from the commissioner that the commissioner has obtained the information required to be included in such notice from another agency of this state, then the filing of such notice by the prime contractor shall not be required. If the prime contractor is a firm, corporation or association, then any and all of the officers of such firm, corporation or association shall be responsible to see to the proper notification required by this section. If any prime contractor fails to give the notice required by this section when required to do so, such prime contractor is guilty of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than $500 nor more than $5,000.

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§21-5-17. Employers prohibited from discharging employees for time lost as volunteer firemen or emergency medical service attendant.

No employer may terminate, or use any disciplinary action against, an employee who is a member of a volunteer fire department or who is an emergency medical service attendant and who, in the line of emergency duty as a volunteer fireman or an emergency medical service attendant, responds to an emergency call prior to the time he or she is due to report for work and which emergency results in a loss of time from his or her employment.

Any time lost from employment as provided in this section may be charged against the employee's regular pay or against the employee's accumulated leave, if any, at the option of the employee.

At the request of an employer, any employee losing time as provided herein shall supply his or her employer with a statement from the chief of the volunteer fire department or the supervisor or other appropriate person in charge of the emergency medical service entity stating that the employee responded to an emergency call and the time thereof.

As used in this section, "emergency" means going to, attending to or coming from: (1) A fire call; (2) a hazardous or toxic materials spill and cleanup; (3) a motor vehicle accident; or (4) any other situation to which his or her fire department or emergency medical service entity has been or later could be dispatched. The term "employer" includes any individual, partnership, association, corporation, business trust or any person or group of persons acting directly or indirectly in the interest of an employer in relation to any employee.

Any employer who willfully and knowingly violates the provisions of this section must reinstate the employee to his or her former position and shall be required to pay the employee all lost wages and benefits, including seniority, for the period between termination and reinstatement. Any action to enforce the provisions of this section must be commenced within a period of one year after the date of violation and the action must be commenced in the circuit court of the county wherein the place of employment is located.

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§21-5-18. Employers prohibited from discharging employees for time lost as emergency medical service personnel.

No employer may terminate an employee who is a member of an emergency medical service and who, in the line of emergency duty as an emergency medical service member, responds to an emergency call prior to the time he is due to report for work and which emergency results in a loss of time from his employment.

Any time lost from employment as provided in this section may be charged against the employee's regular pay.

At the request of an employer, any employee losing time as provided herein shall supply his employer with a statement from the director of health stating that the employee responded to an emergency call and the time thereof.

As used in this section, "emergency" shall mean going to or coming from an actual medical emergency to prevent the imminent loss of life. The term "employer" includes any individual, partnership, association, corporation, business trust or any person or group of persons acting directly or indirectly in the interest of an employer in relation to any employee.

Any employer who willfully and knowingly violates the provisions of this section shall be required to reinstate such employee to his former position and shall be required to pay such employee all lost wages and benefits for the period between termination and reinstatement. Any action to enforce the provisions of this section shall be commenced within a period of one year after the date of violation and such action shall be commenced in the circuit court of the county wherein the place of employment is located.

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