

Worker Dignity

H239 and 257

H239 and 257: lessons from the pandemic

- Workforce Shortage
- Worker retention
- Changes in workplace practices and schedules
- Challenges for working parents
- Instability for women and people of color

h239

This bill proposes to require:

- employers to provide their employees with a reliable work schedule,
- employers to reimburse employees for necessary expenditures that are incurred
- to establish a good cause standard for termination of employment.

Reliable work schedules

- Workers whose jobs include irregular shift schedules, on-call shifts, split shifts, or rotating shifts report a greater degree of conflict between work and family than workers who work a regular or predictable schedule.
- Nationally, 17% of the workforce experiences irregular shift schedules. Most of these workers earn less than \$40,000.00 per year.
- Requiring employers to provide workers with a more reliable and predictable schedule will enhance workers' wellbeing and make Vermont a more attractive place for workers and families to relocate, live, and raise children.

Reimburse for Work from Home Expenses

- The COVID-19 Pandemic has forced many workers to shift to working remotely, and a significant number of newly remote workers have relocated to Vermont during the Pandemic and we know that many will stay.
- Working remotely can create additional flexibility and enhance the wellbeing of workers by eliminating time spent commuting, making workers more available to care for family members, and enhancing work-life balance.
- However, working remotely can also generate significant expenses for workers, including the costs of information technology, Internet access, and office furniture.

Good Cause Termination

- The Vermont statutes offer workers protection from many forms of arbitrary or discriminatory treatment in the workplace. Some Vermont workers enjoy protections from termination for no reason or termination for an arbitrary, capricious, trivial, or pretextual reason pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or contract.
- Other Vermont workers, however, do not enjoy such protections. Those workers are known as “at-will” employees. An “at-will” employee may be discharged for any reason that is not prohibited by law or public policy or for no reason at all.
- “Good cause” can include a variety of legitimate business reasons, including an employee’s failure to perform his or her job duties satisfactorily, disruption to the employer’s operations, or other economic factors.
- The additional job security that a “good cause” standard for dismissal provides will distinguish Vermont from other states and make it a more attractive place for workers and families to relocate, live, and raise children.

Questions?

H257

This bill proposes to require that employers receiving State funds through grants or contracts comply with certain governance, operations, hiring, and employment practices.

H257

- Equal pay provisions
- Reliable work schedules
- Equitable pay ratios
- Good cause
- Non interference in union organizing

Questions?