

# LEGISLATIVE BILL 297

Approved by the Governor March 25, 2025

Introduced by Ibach, 44.

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the Employment Security Law; to amend section 48-649.03, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2024; to change provisions relating to the combined tax rate; to repeal the original section; and to declare an emergency.

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

**Section 1.** Section 48-649.03, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2024, is amended to read:

48-649.03 (1) Once benefits have been payable from and chargeable to an employer's experience account throughout the preceding four calendar quarters and wages for employment have been paid by the employer in each of the two preceding four-calendar-quarter periods, the employer's combined tax rate shall be calculated according to this section. The combined tax rate shall be based upon the employer's experience rating record and determined from the employer's reserve ratio.

(2) The employer's reserve ratio is the percent obtained by dividing (a) the amount by which the employer's contributions credited from the time the employer first or most recently became an employer, whichever date is later, and up to and including September 30 of the year the rate computation is made, plus any part of the employer's contributions due for that year paid on or before October 31 of such year, exceed the employer's benefits charged during the same period, by (b) the employer's average annual taxable payroll for the sixteen-consecutive-calendar-quarter period ending September 30 of the year in which the rate computation is made. For an employer with less than sixteen consecutive calendar quarters of contribution experience, the employer's average taxable payroll shall be determined based upon the four-calendar-quarter periods for which contributions were payable.

(3) Each eligible experience rated employer shall be assigned to one of twenty rate categories with a corresponding experience factor as follows:

Category	Experience Factor
1	0.00
2	0.25
3	0.40
4	0.45
5	0.50
6	0.60
7	0.65
8	0.70
9	0.80
10	0.90
11	0.95
12	1.00
13	1.05
14	1.10
15	1.20
16	1.35
17	1.55
18	1.80
19	2.15
20	2.60

Eligible experience rated employers shall be assigned to rate categories from highest to lowest according to their experience reserve ratio, with category one assigned to accounts with the highest reserve ratios and category twenty assigned to accounts with the lowest reserve ratios. Each category shall be limited to no more than five percent of the state's total taxable payroll, except that:

(a) Any employer with a portion of its taxable wages falling into two consecutive categories shall be assigned to the lower category;

(b) No employer with a reserve ratio calculated to five decimal places equal to the similarly calculated reserve ratio of another employer shall be assigned to a higher rate than the employer to which it has the equal reserve ratio; and

(c) No employer with a positive experience account balance shall be assigned to category twenty.

(4) The state's reserve ratio shall be calculated annually by dividing the amount available to pay benefits in the Unemployment Trust Fund and the State Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund as of September 30, plus any amount of combined tax owed by employers eligible for and electing annual payment status for the four most recent quarters ending on September 30 in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the commissioner, by the state's total wages for contributory employers from the four calendar quarters ending on September 30. For purposes of this section, total wages for contributory employers means all remuneration paid by a contributory an employer in employment. The state's reserve ratio shall be applied to the table in this subsection to determine the yield factor for the upcoming rate year.

State's Reserve Ratio	=	Yield Factor
1.75 percent and above	=	0.50
1.60 percent up to but not including 1.75	=	0.60
1.45 percent up to but not including 1.60	=	0.70
1.30 percent up to but not including 1.45	=	0.75
1.15 percent up to but not including 1.30	=	0.80
1.00 percent up to but not including 1.15	=	0.90
0.85 percent up to but not including 1.00	=	1.00
0.70 percent up to but not including 0.85	=	1.10
0.60 percent up to but not including 0.70	=	1.20
0.50 percent up to but not including 0.60	=	1.25
0.45 percent up to but not including 0.50	=	1.30
0.40 percent up to but not including 0.45	=	1.35
0.35 percent up to but not including 0.40	=	1.40
0.30 percent up to but not including 0.35	=	1.45
Below 0.30 percent	=	1.50

The commissioner may adjust the yield factor determined pursuant to the preceding table to a lower scheduled yield factor if the state's reserve ratio is 0.70 ~~1.00~~ percent or greater. Once the yield factor for the upcoming rate year has been determined, it is multiplied by the amount of unemployment benefits paid from combined tax during the four calendar quarters ending September 30 of the preceding year. The resulting figure is the planned yield for the rate year. The planned yield is divided by the total taxable wages for contributory employers for the four calendar quarters ending September 30 of the previous year and carried to four decimal places to create the average combined tax rate for the rate year. ~~Beginning January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2029, the final average combined tax rate shall be reduced by five percent.~~

(5) Except in tax year 2025, the The average combined tax rate is assigned to rate category twelve as established in subsection (3) of this section. In tax year 2025 only, the category twelve rate shall be 0.48. Rates for each of the remaining nineteen categories are determined by multiplying the average combined tax rate by the experience factor associated with each category and carried to four decimal places. Employers who are delinquent in filing their combined tax reports as of October 31 of any year shall be assigned to category twenty for the following calendar year unless the delinquency is corrected prior to December 31 of the year of rate calculation.

(6) In addition to required contributions, an employer may make voluntary contributions to the fund to be credited to his or her account. Voluntary contributions by employers may be made up to the amount necessary to qualify

for one rate category reduction. Voluntary contributions received after February 28 shall not be used in rate calculations for the same calendar year.

(7) As used in sections 48-648 to 48-654, the term payroll means the total amount of wages during a calendar year, except as otherwise provided in section 48-654, by which the combined tax was measured.

**Sec. 2.** Original section 48-649.03, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2024, is repealed.

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