

January 2010



**Valley Society for Human Resource Management**

**Saginaw, Bay City and Midland - Michigan**

*Published for Members of the Valley Society for Human Resource Management*

## Understanding Michigan's Unemployment Insurance Provisions



Neil Zechman joined the Michigan Employment Security Commission (now the "Unemployment Insurance Agency" of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth) in 1974 and became the Chief of the Appeals and Interpretative Standards Section (now "Administrative Law and Rules Section") in 1977, the position he still holds. He often visits with groups of employers around the state, through local employer organizations and chambers of commerce, to explain the unemployment compensation system and the administrative law hearing process to interested groups of the public. His office analyzes pending legislation concerning unemployment compensation, and assists in drafting amendments to the law and to the administrative rules. A native of Detroit, Mr. Zechman received BA and MA degrees in English from the University of Michigan, and a law degree and Master of Laws Degree in Labor Law from Wayne State University.

### Summary

Knowledge of Michigan's Unemployment Insurance is one of the required skill sets of HR professionals. Mr Zechman will discuss the applicability of claimant's wages to benefits; how the type of separation can affect those benefits; the qualifying and disqualifying events for benefits; employers' accounts and how employers are charged; the appeal process; and how an employer can prepare for an appeals hearing.

**Date: Tuesday, January 12, 2010**

**Location: Horizons Conference Center**  
6200 State Street  
Saginaw, MI 48603

**Time: LUNCH MEETING**

**11:30 a.m. Networking / Registration**  
**Lunch 11:45, Meeting begins at 12:15**

**Cost:**  
\$20 for members, \$25 for Guests. Student cost is \$10. Cost includes lunch.

**RSVP / Information**

[rsvp@vshrm.org](mailto:rsvp@vshrm.org), or call Sue Slade at (989) 754-4717, Ext. 5503, On-line at [www.vshrm.org](http://www.vshrm.org)

**RSVP**

**Deadline:**

**RSVP: Friday, January 8, 5:00 p.m.**  
There is a \$5.00 charge for late RSVP's received after the deadline

### Cancellation Policy:

*If you made a reservation but are unable to attend a meeting, please cancel prior to noon the Friday before the meeting. You will be billed for the breakfast or luncheon if you do not cancel your reservation.*



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VSHRM P.O. Box 5448 Saginaw, Mi. 48603

# THE RESOURCE

**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Happy 2010!

As I reflect on VSHRM's past year, I am proud of the continued stability of our membership and programming. The persistent recruiting efforts of Wendy Yelsik and Lori Lunger brought some new volunteers and a different set of talents to the Board of Directors this past summer after a challenging start to 2009. I am pleased with our accomplishments, such as joining and partnering with local Chambers of Commerce to network with local businesses, implementing an Access membership database and electronic meeting check-in process, legislative updates during member meetings, our Member Connections committee creating more opportunities for members to network and feel welcome, and continuing to provide valuable programming pre-approved for HR Certification Institute credits just to name a few. In a time when most of us have been asked to do "more" with "less", a huge THANK YOU those who continually give their time and efforts to VSHRM or to other worthwhile causes in your community.

My vision for 2010 is to continue to improve and grow our organization by utilizing the ideas and talents of all of our members and volunteers. My personal challenge in this is helping to bring the great ideas of our volunteers to action, and I will be reflecting on how I can personally have an impact. One overarching goal I have in mind for the remaining 6 months of my Presidency is finding a more consistent way VSHRM can bring its collective knowledge and skills forward to help the communities in which we live and work. I believe we are each individually making an impact, but can we work together as HR professionals to implement programs that will benefit our community?

Your Board of Directors will be asked to reflect on VSHRM's 2009 and set goals for the remainder of the 2009-2010 program year for their area of focus. I look forward to sharing some of these with you in an upcoming edition. As always, please feel free to contact any of us to share your thoughts and ideas.

Here's to a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2010. I encourage each of you to continue to strive for your personal best!

Sincerely,



Gina Kellogg

PS – I look forward to seeing you in January. We will have an exciting announcement for you!

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## Certification

**Make the commitment. Take your HR career to the next level and earn your HR certification.**

**Commitment Counts. Ask Stacey.**

Earning my SPHR credentials from the HR Certification Institute was a very rewarding experience and one of my most important achievements. When I place the SPHR letters behind my name, I am reminded of the unique set of skills I possess and the mastery of those skills that the letters represent. As an HR solution provider working with an array of diverse and dynamic organizations, my SPHR provides my clients with a level of comfort in knowing that they are working with a professional who is credible and knowledgeable in her field. Being certified has allowed me continuous learning opportunities, growth as an HR professional, and the ability to mentor others. I wear my SPHR letters with pride because it validates my commitment to personal and professional development of myself and the HR profession as a whole.

**Stacey Horn-Spirito, SPHR**  
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- **Set you apart from your peers**
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### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

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H.R. Generalist

Dan Segura  
Assoc. Dir. Counseling/Advising  
& Career Services,  
Delta College.

Steven Bryant, PHR  
Learning Service Team,  
Dow Chemical

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#### **MISSION:**

The Valley Society for Human Resource Management (VSHRM) strives to be the principal voice for human resource issues for the Tri-Cities area. It promotes and assists the profession by providing valuable human resource information to area employers, resulting in the highest professional and personal development of their employees.



## **COBRA Subsidy and UI Extension Signed Into Law**

On Saturday, December 19, 2009, the U.S. Senate passed the Fiscal Year 2010 Department of Defense (DOD) Appropriations Act by a vote of 88-10. This federal spending bill included important provisions to both

1. Extend and expand the COBRA subsidy program that was enacted under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and
2. Extend expanded unemployment benefits through February 28, 2010.

The House also passed this same spending bill on December 16, 2009 by a vote of 395-34. President Obama **immediately signed this bill into law** (P.L. No: 111-118) after Senate passage on December 19, 2009.

### **COBRA**

The COBRA subsidy program extension in the [DOD bill](#) will:

- Expand the ARRA's COBRA premium subsidy period from nine to 15 months
- Change the end date for eligibility for the subsidy from December 31, 2009, to February 28, 2010
- Provide a retroactive period of 60 days (commences upon enactment) for payment of premiums for eligible individuals whose subsidy period expired on November 30, 2009
- Require a special notice outlining these changes within 60 days to all eligible individuals on COBRA on or after October 31, 2009, or those who are terminated after this date
- Clarify the original COBRA subsidy program, noting that eligibility and notice are based on the timing of the qualifying event

### **Unemployment Insurance**

The DOD bill also provides an extension and expansion of unemployment insurance benefits. These changes are outlined below.

- The period during which individuals may file applications for Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) is extended from the current end date of December 31, 2009 to February 28, 2010 and the period during which individuals may claim and be paid EUC is extended from May 31, 2010 to July 31, 2010.
- The period during which individuals may qualify for the Federal Additional Compensation (FAC), the extra \$25 weekly benefit amount on state and federal unemployment compensation, is extended from the current end date of January 1, 2010 to February 28, 2010 with weekly payment provided during the phase out period for weeks ending June 30, 2010 to August 31, 2010.
- The period during which 100% federal reimbursement for weeks of regular federal extended benefit payments for states opting to trigger federal extended benefits based on the Total Unemployment Rate is extended from the current end date of January 1, 2010 to February 28, 2010, with the state option to continue the extended period from May 30, 2010 to July 31, 2010.

"If you haven't found something strange during the day, it hasn't been much of a day."  
- John A. Wheeler