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Family Leave, and Workers' Comp Rise in 2019

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New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce

Development

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TRENTON – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development announced annual changes in the maximum benefit rates and taxable wage base that took effect on January 1, 2019 for New Jersey's Unemployment Insurance, Temporary Disability Insurance, Family Leave Insurance, and Workers' Compensation programs.

In the new year, the maximum weekly benefit amount for eligible Unemployment Insurance beneficiaries increased to \$696, from \$681. The maximum weekly benefit for state plan Temporary Disability Insurance and Family Leave Insurance claims increased to \$650, from \$637, and the maximum weekly benefit for Workers' Compensation rose to \$921, from \$903.

According to the laws governing these programs, the maximum benefit rates and the taxable wage base are recalculated each year based on the statewide average weekly wage. The benefit rates and taxable wage base for 2019 reflect the \$1,228.25 average weekly wage for 2017, which rose by 2.1 percent from \$1,203.43 in 2016.

The level of wages subject to wage taxes in 2019 increases to \$34,400, from \$33,700 for Unemployment, Temporary Disability, and Family Leave Insurance programs, as well as for the Workforce Development Partnership Program, and the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills.

To qualify for benefits in 2019, a person must either have earned at least \$172 per week for 20 base weeks, or have earned a total of at least \$8,600. Benefit eligibility is calculated based on the minimum wage on October 1 of the prior year. The minimum wage in New Jersey on October 1, 2018 was \$8.60 per hour.

The contribution rate for state and local governments that choose to make contributions, rather than reimbursing the trust fund for unemployment insurance benefits paid to their former employees, remains at 0.7 percent of taxable wages.

The chart below illustrates the changes that took place as of January 1, 2019:

Maximum Benefit Rates and Eligibility Criteria			
		<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
Maximum Unemployment Insurance Weekly Benefit Amount		\$681	\$696
Maximum Temporary Disability Insurance and Family Leave Insurance Weekly Benefit Amount		\$637	\$650
Maximum Workers' Compensation Weekly Benefit Amount		\$903	\$921
Taxable Wage Base		\$33,700	\$34,400
Base Week Amount		\$169	\$172
Alternative Earnings Amount		\$8,500	\$8,600
UI Government Entities Contribution Rate		0.7%	0.7%



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