



Commission on Unemployment Compensation

October 20, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Senate Room 311 / C, General Assembly Building

<https://studies.virginiageneralassembly.gov/studies/157>

The IBC Commission on Unemployment Compensation (the Commission) met in Richmond with Senator Adam P. Ebbin, chair, presiding.¹ The meeting began with introductions and an overview of the agenda, followed by presentations and discussion. Materials presented at the meeting are accessible through the [Commission's meetings webpage](#).

Presentation: Virginia Employment Commission

Demetrios "Mitch" Melis, VEC Commissioner

Commissioner Melis began the presentation by providing an overview of the VEC's goals in recent years, including stabilizing workloads to achieve operational balance, transform the VEC into a reliable and accessible agency, and implement methods for institutional resilience, including by adding the position of a Chief Risk Office. The VEC is now in the top 20 state employment agencies nationwide, exceeding the Department of Labor standards in a number of metrics, such as average timely benefit payments and appeals decisions. The VEC has eliminated all backlogs, including those associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The VEC has worked on modernizing operations, improving their website and analytical tools to better serve Virginians. The VEC has also successfully implemented the ID.me platform to enable faster and more secure claim filing. Commissioner Melis shared a number of standards from the Department of Labor to show that the VEC is now meeting or exceeding those standards. Standards presented include first payment timeliness, decision timeliness, average age of appeals, and the timing of appeals decisions. The customer contact center has also improved its operations by better managing incoming calls and implementing a callback feature. At the request of the Commission, the VEC also provided information related to the administrative fee established January 1, 2025 designed to support technology modernization and critical staffing. The VEC is projected to collect \$16M in revenue from this fee. The VEC also provided data comparing previous measures of claim processing timeliness with the progress made in recent months. Finally, the VEC shared information regarding federal workers unemployment claims, which numbers do not include federal contractors or reflect official unemployment number totals, but provide context regarding unemployment for federal workers and the large number of claims that have been initiated since the first of October due to the federal government shutdown.

Discussion: Adjustments to Weekly Benefits Work Group

Delegate Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, Work Group Chair

Delegate Bennett-Parker reviewed the work of the Adjustments to Weekly Benefits Work Group thus far, and recapped the Work Group's meeting on September 18, 2025. During that meeting,

¹ **Members Present:** Senator Adam Ebbin (chair), Delegate Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, Senator Christie New Craig, Senator Bill DeSteph, Delegate Destiny Levere Bolling, Doris Crouse Mays

the Work Group went over its legislative authority, heard from the VEC about an Overview of Virginia's Unemployment Insurance System from Ashley Ervin, the VEC Policy and Legislative Affairs Director, and also heard a presentation comparing Virginia's unemployment system and weekly benefit amounts with those of other states, presented by Flannery O'Rourke from the National Employment Law Project. The Work Group discussed what kind of calculations would be required to accurately model indexing the weekly benefit amount in Virginia, whether it is tied to the average weekly wage, consumer price index, or other statewide economic metric.

For more information, see the [*Commission's website*](#) or contact the Division of Legislative Services staff:

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