AN ACT

Amending the act of December 5, 1936 (2nd Sp.Sess., 1937 P.L.2897, No.1), entitled "An act establishing a system of unemployment compensation to be administered by the Department of Labor and Industry and its existing and newly created agencies with personnel (with certain exceptions) selected on a civil service basis; requiring employers to keep records and make reports, and certain employers to pay contributions based on payrolls to provide moneys for the payment of compensation to certain unemployed persons; providing procedure and administrative details for the determination, payment and collection of such contributions and the payment of such compensation; providing for cooperation with the Federal Government and its agencies; creating certain special funds in the custody of the State Treasurer; and prescribing penalties," in emergency provisions related to COVID-19, providing for exemptions.

Section 1. The act of December 5, 1936 (2nd Sp.Sess., 1937 P.L.2897, No.1), known as the Unemployment Compensation Law, is amended by adding a section to read:

Section 1602.1. Exemptions.

(a) Exemptions.--A claimant shall be exempt from the requirements of section 402(a), shall continue to receive unemployment compensation benefits provided under this act and may refuse work if the claimant:
(1) needs to remain at home to care for a child while schools are closed as a result of a disaster emergency;

(2) has no access to child care due to the closure of child-care facilities as a result of a disaster emergency;

(3) has a child over six years of age and child care is limited to children under six years of age as a result of a disaster emergency;

(4) is employed in a service industry and is paid a wage that fails to meet the cost of child care plus living expenses, which includes the costs of housing, food, health insurance and transportation to the claimant's place of employment, as a result of a disaster emergency;

(5) is at increased risk of contracting COVID-19 because of an underlying medical condition verified by a statement by a physician specifying the underlying medical condition and documenting increased susceptibility to contracting COVID-19;

(6) is over 65 years of age;

(7) lives or cares for vulnerable, at-risk individuals;

or

(8) is on Public Health Emergency Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (Public Law 116-127, 29 U.S.C. §§ 2612(a)(1)(F) and 2620).

(b) Definition.--As used in this section, "disaster emergency" means the proclamation of disaster emergency issued by the Governor on March 6, 2020, published at 50 Pa.B. 1644 (March 21, 2020), and any renewal of the state of disaster emergency.

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.