

**§1044. Protection of rights and benefits**

**1. Waiver of rights void; penalty.** Any agreement by an individual to waive, release or commute his rights to benefits or any other rights under this chapter shall be void. Any agreement by an individual in the employ of any person or concern to pay all or any portion of an employer's contributions, required under this chapter from such employer, shall be void. No employer shall directly or indirectly make or require or accept any deduction from wages to finance the employer's contributions required from him, or require or accept any waiver of any right hereunder by any individual in his employ.

Any employer or officer or agent of an employer who violates any provision of this subsection shall, for each offense, be guilty of a Class E crime.

[PL 1979, c. 515, §6 (AMD).]

**2. Limitation of fees; penalty.** No individual claiming benefits shall be charged fees of any kind in any proceeding under this chapter by the commission or its representatives or by any court or any officer thereof unless otherwise provided by Title 5, section 8001 et seq. Any individual claiming benefits in any proceeding before the commission or a court may be represented by counsel or other duly authorized agent; but no such counsel or agents shall either charge or receive for such services more than an amount approved by the commission.

In the event a claimant has retained counsel for the purpose of prosecuting an appeal from a decision of the commission, and the final decision of such court results in a reversal, in whole or in part, of the decision appealed from, the fees for such service shall be paid by the commissioner from his administrative fund.

Any person who violates any provision of this subsection shall be guilty of a Class E crime.

[PL 1979, c. 651, §6 (AMD).]

**3. No assignment of benefits; exemptions.** Any assignment, pledge or encumbrance of any right to benefits which are or may become due or payable under this chapter shall be void. Such rights to benefits shall be exempt from levy, execution, attachment or any other remedy whatsoever provided for the collection of debt. Benefits received by any individual, so long as they are not mingled with other funds of the recipient, shall be exempt from any remedy whatsoever for the collection of all debts except debts incurred for necessities furnished to such individual or his spouse or dependents during the time when such individual was unemployed. No waiver of any exemption provided for in this subsection shall be valid.

**SECTION HISTORY**

PL 1965, c. 294 (AMD). PL 1977, c. 694, §467 (AMD). PL 1979, c. 515, §§6-8 (AMD). PL 1979, c. 579, §5 (AMD). PL 1979, c. 651, §§6,47 (AMD).

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