

1953

April 11: Reorganization Plan No. 1 abolished Federal Security Agency and transferred all its powers and functions to Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

May: With approval of Nevada's plan for aid to the blind, all 53 jurisdictions administering such programs.

August 5: Federal Unemployment Tax Act to cover Federal seamen under unemployment insurance.

August 14: Old-age and survivors insurance wage credits of \$160 a month provided for active military service performed after 1953 and before July 1, 1955.

1954

January 1: Old-age and survivors insurance contribution rates increased to 2 percent each for employers and employees.

June 16: Railroad Retirement Act amended to repeal 1951 provision barring dual receipt of benefits under that program and under old-age and survivors insurance if service before 1937 is used in railroad annuity computation.

August 3: Vocational Rehabilitation Act amended to call for cooperation of vocational rehabilitation agencies with State public assistance agencies, the Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance, and other public agencies pro-

viding services related to vocational rehabilitation services.

August 5: Employment Security Administrative Financing Act provided that excess of collections of Federal unemployment tax over employment security administrative expenditures be used to maintain permanent reserve of \$200 million in Federal unemployment account, which will lend funds to States with depleted reserves and return amounts over \$200 million to States for benefit payments or administrative costs.

August 31: Railroad Retirement Act amended to reduce to 60 the eligibility age for survivor benefits for widows, dependent widowers, and parents and to raise the wage base for contributions and benefits to \$350 a month. Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act amended to increase unemployment and sickness benefits.

September 1: Social Security Act amended to extend old-age and survivors insurance coverage to farmers, self-employed members of specified professions, additional farm and domestic employees; on a voluntary group basis, to members of State and local government retirement systems; and, at the election of the individual, to ministers and members of religious orders; raise to \$4,200 the wage base for tax and benefit computation purposes and raise ultimate contribution rates; increase benefits; liberalize the

retirement test; permit a dropout of 4 or 5 years of lowest earnings in computing benefits; and protect benefit rights of disabled persons through a disability freeze provision. Extended to September 30, 1956, the Federal matching formula for public assistance payments and extended for 2 years approval of certain State laws for aid to the blind.

Social Security Act amended by addition of new title XV to provide unemployment insurance benefits for Federal civilian employees financed by Federal funds and paid by State agencies under their own benefit formulas.

Federal Unemployment Tax Act amended to include firms employing 4 or more in 20 weeks, after January 1, 1956. Permitted experience-rating tax reduction to new or newly covered employers after 1 year's experience (instead of 3).

1955

February: Old-age and survivors insurance beneficiaries numbered 7 million

July: First old-age and survivors insurance benefits payable that reflect increases resulting from exclusion of periods of disability from benefit computation under 1954 "freeze" provision.

Nevada's plan for aid to dependent children became effective; all 53 jurisdictions are now administering such programs.

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