

**Subject** Essential employees

**Authors** Virnig and others

**Analyst** Megan Mullenbach

**Date** March 25, 2026

## Summary

This bill includes emergency managers under the definition of “essential employee” for purposes of the Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA).

Under PELRA, essential employees have different labor rights and must not be included in a bargaining unit with nonessential employees. Significantly, essential employees may not strike, and their use of arbitration must be binding arbitration.