

2023 -- H 5944

LC002027

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

A N A C T

RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- RELIEF OF INJURED AND DECEASED FIRE  
FIGHTERS AND POLICE OFFICERS

Introduced By: Representatives Craven, and Bennett

Date Introduced: March 01, 2023

Referred To: House Municipal Government & Housing

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 45-19 of the General Laws entitled "Relief of Injured and Deceased  
2 Fire Fighters and Police Officers" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **45-19-6.1. Presumption for heart disease and hypertension.**

4 (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law to the contrary, any police  
5 officer, as defined in § 45-19-1, who is unable to perform the duties required thereof because of an  
6 impairment of health caused by heart disease, stroke or hypertension is presumed to have suffered  
7 an in-the-line-of-duty injury/disability, unless the contrary can be proven by clear and convincing  
8 evidence; and the police officer shall be entitled to all benefits provided for in chapters 19, 21, 21.2  
9 and 21.3 of this title.

10 (b) This presumption shall not apply to police hired after July 1, 2023 in the following  
11 situations:

12 (1) If a physical examination was conducted at the time the police officer was hired and  
13 the examination revealed that person was suffering from heart disease or hypertension; or

14 (2) If the police officer had regularly or habitually used tobacco products during the five  
15 (5) years prior to any diagnosis of heart disease or hypertension or suffering a stroke.

16 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- RELIEF OF INJURED AND DECEASED FIRE  
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1           This act would allow a police officer who is unable to perform duties as a result of heart  
2 disease, stroke or hypertension to be presumed to have suffered an in-the-line-of-duty disability,  
3 unless the police officer was hired after July 1, 2023, and there is clear and convincing evidence  
4 that the police officer suffered the condition at the time of hire or regularly used tobacco products  
5 for the five (5) years prior to diagnosis.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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