

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to occupational diseases; revising provisions governing the circumstances when diseases of the lungs are considered to be an occupational disease for certain police officers, firefighters or arson investigators; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

**Legislative Counsel’s Digest:**

Existing law provides for the payment of compensation for temporary or permanent disability or death for diseases of the lungs caused by exposure to heat, smoke, fumes, tear gas or any other noxious gases, arising out of and in the course of employment for certain firefighters, arson investigators and police officers. Existing law also provides that a disease of the lungs is conclusively presumed to have arisen out of and in the course of employment for firefighters, arson investigators and police officers who have been employed in such a full-time continuous, uninterrupted and salaried occupation for 2 or more years before the date of disablement under certain circumstances. (NRS 617.455) **Section 1** of this bill provides that this conclusive presumption for such firefighters, arson investigators and police officers is not conditioned on whether the disease of the lungs was caused by exposure to heat, smoke, fumes, tear gas or any other noxious gas. **Section 2** of this bill provides that this conclusive presumption for such firefighters, arson investigators and police officers applies retroactively to claims filed on or before the effective date of this bill.

EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN  
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**Section 1.** NRS 617.455 is hereby amended to read as follows:

617.455 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, diseases of the lungs, resulting in either temporary or permanent disability or death, are occupational diseases and compensable as such under the provisions of this chapter if , *except as otherwise provided in subsection 5*, caused by exposure to heat, smoke, fumes, tear gas or any other noxious gases, arising out of and in the course of the employment of a person who, for 2 years or more, has been:

(a) Employed in this State in a full-time salaried occupation of fire fighting or the investigation of arson for the benefit or safety of the public;

(b) Acting as a volunteer firefighter in this State and is entitled to the benefits of chapters 616A to 616D, inclusive, of NRS pursuant to the provisions of NRS 616A.145; or



(c) Employed in a full-time salaried occupation as a police officer in this State.

2. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 3, each employee who is to be covered for diseases of the lungs pursuant to the provisions of this section shall submit to a physical examination, including a thorough test of the functioning of his or her lungs and the making of an X-ray film of the employee's lungs, upon employment, upon commencement of the coverage, once every 2 years until the employee is 40 years of age or older and thereafter on an annual basis during his or her employment.

3. Each volunteer firefighter who is to be covered for diseases of the lungs pursuant to the provisions of this section shall submit to:

(a) A physical examination upon employment and upon commencement of the coverage; and

(b) The making of an X-ray film of the volunteer firefighter's lungs once every 3 years after the physical examination that is required upon commencement of the coverage,

↪ until the volunteer firefighter reaches the age of 50 years. Each volunteer firefighter who is 50 years of age or older shall submit to a physical examination once every 2 years during his or her employment. As used in this subsection, "physical examination" includes the making of an X-ray film of the volunteer firefighter's lungs but excludes a thorough test of the functioning of his or her lungs.

4. All physical examinations required pursuant to subsections 2 and 3 must be paid for by the employer.

5. ~~[A]~~ *Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection 1 or any other provision of this chapter, a disease of the lungs is not required to be caused by exposure to heat, smoke, fumes, tear gas or any other noxious gases and is* conclusively presumed to have arisen out of and in the course of the employment of a person who has been employed in a full-time continuous, uninterrupted and salaried occupation as a police officer, firefighter or arson investigator for 2 years or more before the date of disablement if the disease is diagnosed and causes the disablement:

(a) During the course of that employment;

(b) If the person ceases employment before completing 20 years of service as a police officer, firefighter or arson investigator, during the period after separation from employment which is equal to the number of years worked; or



(c) If the person ceases employment after completing 20 years or more of service as a police officer, firefighter or arson investigator, at any time during the person's life.

➤ Service credit which is purchased in a retirement system must not be calculated towards the years of service of a person for the purposes of this section.

6. Frequent or regular use of a tobacco product within 1 year, or a material departure from a physician's prescribed plan of care by a person within 3 months, immediately preceding the filing of a claim for compensation excludes a person who has separated from service from the benefit of the conclusive presumption provided in subsection 5.

7. Failure to correct predisposing conditions which lead to lung disease when so ordered in writing by the examining physician after a physical examination required pursuant to subsection 2 or 3 excludes the employee from the benefits of this section if the correction is within the ability of the employee.

8. A person who is determined to be:

(a) Partially disabled from an occupational disease pursuant to the provisions of this section; and

(b) Incapable of performing, with or without remuneration, work as a firefighter, police officer or arson investigator,

➤ may elect to receive the benefits provided under NRS 616C.440 for a permanent total disability.

9. A person who files a claim for a disease of the lungs specified in this section after he or she retires from employment as a police officer, firefighter or arson investigator is not entitled to receive any compensation for that disease other than medical benefits.

10. The Administrator shall review a claim filed by a claimant pursuant to this section that has been in the appeals process for longer than 6 months to determine the circumstances causing the delay in processing the claim. As used in this subsection, "appeals process" means the period of time that:

(a) Begins on the date on which the claimant first files or submits a request for a hearing or an appeal of a determination regarding the claim; and

(b) Continues until the date on which the claim is adjudicated to a final decision.

11. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, if an employer, insurer or third-party administrator denies a claim that was filed pursuant to this section and the claimant ultimately prevails, the Administrator may order the employer, insurer or



third-party administrator, as applicable, to pay to the claimant a benefit penalty of not more than \$200 for each day from the date on which an appeal is filed until the date on which the claim is adjudicated to a final decision. Such benefit penalty is payable in addition to any benefits to which the claimant is entitled under the claim and any fines and penalties imposed by the Administrator pursuant to NRS 616D.120. If a hearing before a hearing officer is requested pursuant to NRS 616C.315 and held pursuant to NRS 616C.330, the employer, insurer or third-party administrator, as applicable, shall pay to the claimant all medical costs which are associated with the occupational disease and are incurred from the date on which the hearing is requested until the date on which the claim is adjudicated to a final decision. If the employer, insurer or third-party administrator, as applicable, ultimately prevails, the employer, insurer or third-party administrator, as applicable, is entitled to recover the amount paid pursuant to this subsection in accordance with the provisions of NRS 616C.138.

**Sec. 2.** The amendatory provisions of section 1 of this act apply retroactively to claims filed on or before the effective date of this act.

**Sec. 3.** Notwithstanding the provisions of NRS 218D.430 and 218D.435, a committee may vote on this act before the expiration of the period prescribed for the return of a fiscal note in NRS 218D.475. This section applies retroactively from and after November 13, 2025.

**Sec. 4.** The provisions of NRS 354.599 do not apply to any additional expenses of a local government that are related to the provisions of this act.

**Sec. 5.** This act becomes effective upon passage and approval.

