



S.B. 223

124th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Sen. Wachtmann

BILL SUMMARY

- Specifies that regular members of lawfully constituted police and fire departments and emergency medical workers who, while working, come into contact with the blood or other body fluid of another person through specified invasive means are eligible to receive compensation and benefits under the Workers' Compensation Law.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Specified contact with body fluid compensable under Workers' Compensation

Under the Workers' Compensation Law (R.C. Chapters 4121., 4123., 4127., and 4131.), employees are eligible for compensation or benefits due to injuries or occupational diseases sustained on the job.¹ Currently, "injury" is defined for purposes of that law to include "any injury, whether caused by external accidental means or accidental in character and result, received in the course of, and arising out of the injured employee's employment."

The definition of "injury," as that term applies to specified types of employees, is modified by the bill. The bill specifies that for regular members of lawfully constituted police and fire departments and emergency medical workers, "injury" includes coming into contact with the blood or other body fluid of another person in the course of and arising out of the peace officer's, firefighter's, or emergency medical worker's employment, through any of the following means:

(1) Splash or spatter in the eye or mouth other than when received in the course of conducting mouth-to-mouth resuscitation;

¹ Depending upon the nature of a claim, workers' compensation benefits may include payment for lost time, wage loss, and the costs of health care and rehabilitation services, as well as death benefits in the case of a claimant's death.

(2) A puncture in the skin;

(3) A cut in the skin or another opening in the skin such as an open sore, wound, lesion, abrasion, or ulcer.

Consequently, under the bill, these types of employees are entitled to workers' compensation benefits when the conditions described immediately above are satisfied.

Under the bill, the term "regular members of lawfully constituted police and fire departments" includes members of police and fire departments of municipal corporations and townships, whether paid or volunteer, and wherever serving within the state or on temporary assignment outside of the state. Additionally, "emergency medical worker" means a first responder, emergency medical technician-basic, emergency medical technician-intermediate, or emergency medical technician-paramedic, certified under the Emergency Medical Services Law (R.C. Chapter 4765.), whether paid or volunteer.

HISTORY

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