



H.B. 41

125th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

**Reps. Carmichael, Hollister, Flowers, McGregor, Willamowski, DePiero,
C. Evans, Hughes, Gibbs, Carano, Schaffer, Faber, Collier**

BILL SUMMARY

- Grants firefighters additional credit on civil service examinations.
- Authorizes volunteer firefighters to participate in health care contracts the Department of Administrative Services enters into.
- Provides that volunteer firefighter license plates are to be issued without the payment of any license tax, local motor vehicle tax, or service fee and requires persons issued these license plates to submit annually to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles evidence of their status as an active volunteer firefighter.
- Changes to five years (from three) the duration of the certificate to practice issued to emergency medical service personnel.
- Modifies requirements governing the number of emergency medical service personnel that must be present during emergency runs.
- Requires the State Board of Emergency Medical Services to develop training programs for specified medical personnel and other persons to enable them to participate on emergency runs.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Extra credit for firefighters on civil service examinations

(secs. 124.23, 124.26, and 124.27)

The bill provides that an applicant for a position in the classified civil service who is a firefighter must receive additional credit, in the following

specified percentages, in the applicant's total grade given in a regular examination in which the applicant receives a passing grade: (1) an additional credit of 5%, if the applicant is a firefighter 1a, (2) an additional credit of 10%, if the applicant is an emergency medical technician-basic (EMT-basic) or emergency medical technician-intermediate (EMT-I) and a firefighter Ia, (3) an additional credit of 15%, if the applicant is an EMT-basic or EMT-I and a firefighter II, or (4) an additional credit of 20%, if the applicant is an emergency medical technician-paramedic (paramedic) and a firefighter II.

The bill defines "firefighter" as either a volunteer firefighter (as defined in the law governing the Volunteer Fire Fighters' Dependents Fund) or a full-time firefighter; and "EMT-basic," "EMT-I," and "paramedic" as having the same meanings as in the law governing emergency medical services. "Firefighter Ia" and "firefighter II" are firefighter classifications specified in the Ohio Administrative Code to reflect levels of training.

Current law provides that an applicant for a position in the classified civil service who is eligible for veteran's preference must receive priority on the eligible list (the list of all individuals who have passed the civil service examination) over a nonveteran whose ratings equal that of the veteran. The bill requires that an applicant who is eligible for both veteran's preference under current law and firefighter's preference under the bill receive priority on the eligible list over any veteran who is not a firefighter whose rating is equal to that of the applicant. Further, an applicant who is not eligible for veteran's preference but is eligible for firefighter's preference must receive priority over any nonveteran who is not a firefighter whose rating is equal to that of the applicant.

Firefighter participation in state medical insurance plans

(sec. 124.824)

The bill provides that, if a volunteer firefighter requests coverage, any contract or policy the Department of Administrative Services enters into under existing law to obtain health care coverage for employees paid by warrant of the Auditor of State must provide benefits covering volunteer firefighters, as defined in the law governing the Volunteer Fire Fighters' Dependents Fund. A volunteer firefighter requesting coverage under such a policy or contract is responsible for the entire amount of the premium, costs, and charges of coverage under the policy or contract chosen. The premium, costs, and charges are those that are normally paid by both the state and a state employee for coverage under the policy or contract chosen.

A volunteer firefighter is eligible to obtain coverage even if the volunteer firefighter is already covered by, or eligible to be covered by, another health care



policy, contract, or plan. The Department must determine, or the policy or contract must provide for, the method by which a volunteer firefighter may request coverage, and the manner in which the premium, costs, and coverage under a policy or contract chosen by the volunteer firefighter must be paid.

Volunteer firefighter license plates

(sec. 4503.47)

Current law authorizes a person who is a volunteer firefighter to register and be issued special volunteer firefighter license plates for one passenger car or other vehicle of a class approved by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. The applicant for these license plates must pay the regular license fees, any local motor vehicle tax, and an additional \$10 fee.

The bill provides for the issuance of these plates to a volunteer firefighter without the payment of any license tax, local motor vehicle tax, or deputy registrar service fee. The bill requires the Registrar to send annually a written notice to each person who has been issued these plates informing the person that the person must submit to the Registrar by a specified date written evidence from the chief or fire chief of the person's volunteer fire department attesting to the person's status as an active volunteer firefighter in that department. The notice must explain that, if the Registrar does not receive the written proof by the specified date, the Registrar will cancel the person's certificate of registration and the person will be required to surrender the volunteer firefighter license plate and obtain other license plates.

Emergency medical service certificates to practice

(secs. 4765.30 and 4765.31; Section 6)

Under current law, the certificate to practice issued by the State Board of Emergency Medical Services (EMS Board) to a first responder, EMT-basic, EMT-I, or paramedic is valid for three years. The bill increases the length of the certificate to five years. The bill provides that this change will be implemented as certificates to practice expire on or after the bill's effective date.

Present law requires each first responder, EMT-basic, EMT-I, and paramedic to complete an emergency medical services continuing education program or pass an examination approved by the EMS Board. The bill specifies that the program must be completed or the examination passed prior to the expiration of the individual's certificate to practice.

The bill requires the Board to grant one hour of continuing education credit for each time an individual participates in 20 emergency runs, up to a maximum of five hours of continuing education credit.

Staffing of an ambulance during emergency runs

(sec. 4765.43)

Existing law provides that, during each emergency run, an ambulance equipped for emergency medical services that is operated by an emergency medical service organization that does not utilize any volunteer emergency medical service providers must be staffed by at least two EMTs-basic, EMTs-I, or paramedics. The bill makes this provision also applicable to an ambulance operated by an emergency medical services organization that does not substantially utilize volunteer providers.

Current law also provides that, whenever a patient is being transported, an ambulance equipped for emergency medical services that is operated by an emergency medical service organization that utilizes volunteer emergency medical service providers must be staffed by at least two EMTs-basic, EMTs-I, or paramedics. At all other times during an emergency run, the ambulance must be staffed by at least one EMT-basic, EMT-I, or paramedic. The bill requires instead that, during each emergency run, an ambulance operated by an emergency medical service organization that *substantially* utilizes volunteer emergency medical service providers, must be staffed by *at least one first responder and one EMT-basic, EMT-I, or paramedic*.¹

Training programs for specified medical personnel

(sec. 4765.11)

Current law requires the EMS Board to adopt rules that establish various procedures, standards, requirements, qualifications, and other matters related to emergency medical services. The bill requires the Board to adopt rules that establish all of the following:

- (1) A training program in emergency response for registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, physician assistants, and other persons with a related medical background so that they may participate on emergency runs by assisting or acting in the place of an EMT-basic, EMT-I, or paramedic;

¹ The bill does not specify what is intended by "substantially utilizes" or how it would be determined that an organization substantially utilizes volunteers.

(2) Procedures for approving the services taught in this training program so that those who have completed the training program may perform those services on emergency runs with all the rights and privileges granted by law to an EMT-basic, EMT-I, or paramedic, as applicable;

(3) A training program in emergency response for specific job classifications, including at least one job classification for persons under age 18 who participate with the consent of their parent or legal guardian, that trains persons in these classifications so that they may participate on emergency runs by assisting an EMT-basic, EMT-I, or paramedic;

(4) Procedures for approving the services taught in the training program described in (3) so that persons in those job classifications who have completed the training program may perform those services on emergency runs with the rights and privileges granted by law to a first responder.

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	02-06-03	p. 137

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