

RHODE ISLAND

DEATH BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO THE SURVIVING FAMILIES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY



To obtain certified copies of registered personal documents, contact the Bureau of Vital Statistics: Submit written request to 3 Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908. Office: (401) 222-5960. www.health.ri.gov/records

STATE DEATH BENEFITS

§ 45-19-4.3 One time death benefit – Death benefits to family of deceased police officers, correctional officers, and firefighters. – (a) If an active or retired police officer, capitol police officer, correctional officer, firefighter, crash rescue crew person, fire marshal, or deputy fire marshal of any city, town, fire district, or the state of Rhode Island or state sheriff or state deputy sheriff or a correctional officer or member of a volunteer auxiliary fire force or volunteer crash rescue or ambulance corps is killed or dies from injuries received while in the performance of his or her duties, there shall be paid a killed-in-line-of-duty benefit to be administered by the board of police officers and firefighter's relief. The benefit shall be in the sum of forty percent (40%) of the federal death benefits for law enforcement officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty. The benefit shall be paid as follows:

- (1) If there is no surviving child of such officer, to the surviving spouse or domestic partner of such officer;
 - (2) If there is a surviving child or children and a surviving spouse or domestic partner, one-half (1/2) to the surviving child or children of such officer in equal shares and one-half (1/2) to the surviving spouse or domestic partner;
 - (3) If there is no surviving spouse or domestic partner, to the child or children of said officer in equal shares;
 - (4) If there is no surviving spouse, domestic partner, or surviving child, to the individual designated by such officer as beneficiary under such officer's most recently executed life insurance policy; provided, that such individual survived such officer; or
 - (5) If none of the above, to the parent or parents of such officer in equal shares.
- (b) Domestic partners shall certify by affidavit to the board of police officer's and firefighter's relief that the: (1) partners are at least eighteen (18) years of age and mentally competent to contract; (2) partners are not married to anyone; (3) partners are not related by blood to a degree which would prohibit marriage in the state of Rhode Island;

(4) partners reside together and have resided together for at least one year; (5) partners are financially interdependent as evidenced by at least two (2) of the following: (i) domestic partnership agreement or relationship contract; (ii) joint mortgage or joint ownership of primary residence; (iii) two (2) of: (A) joint ownership of motor vehicle; (B) joint checking account; (C) joint credit account; (D) joint lease; and/or (iv) the domestic partner has been designated as a beneficiary for the deceased's will, retirement contract or life insurance.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

§ 45-19-4.1 Tuition to children of police officers dying or disabled as a result of service. – (a) If an active member of the police force of a city or town is killed, dies, or becomes totally and permanently disabled from injuries received while in the performance of his or her duty as a member, or dies of a heart condition or any condition derived from hypertension while still a member, there shall be paid out of the general fund of the state of Rhode Island the charges for the tuition of children of the deceased or totally and permanently disabled police officer and/or the spouse of a police officer killed in the line of duty. The benefits are extended to the children and/or spouse who are attending or may attend the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, or any other college or university operated by the state; provided, that the child has entered the institution while between the ages of sixteen (16) and twenty-one (21); and provided, further, that the aid granted is available to the child and/or spouse for the period of time that may equal the normal time for completing the courses regularly offered by the institution, but in no case more than four (4) years.

(b) For the purpose of this section, the words "police officer" mean and include any member of the state police, any correctional officer within the department of corrections, or the police of any city or town regularly employed at a fixed salary or wage. Furthermore, this excludes auxiliary and volunteer police officers of city, town, or state police. For the purpose of this section, the words "totally and permanently disabled" mean any impairment of mind or body making it impossible for one to follow continuously a gainful occupation.

For more information, please contact www.dlt.ri.gov/policerelief or call (401) 462-8855.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workers' Compensation coverage is compulsory for employers in Rhode Island. Benefit is 75% of employee's wage for surviving spouse only and 80% for spouse with child(ren). Maximum burial allowance is \$5,000. Spouse loses benefits upon remarriage. Children receive benefits until age 18 or beyond age 18 if disabled, or until age 23 if full-time students. To receive workers' compensation benefits the surviving spouse must take the initiative and file a workers' compensation claim through a

workers' compensation attorney to receive any compensation. The determination as to whether the claim will be paid will be determined by the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board.

For information contact The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, Division of Workers Compensation, 1511 Pontiac AVE, Cranston, RI 02920. Office: (401) 462-8110. www.dlt.ri.gov

HEALTH BENEFITS

Health benefits vary depending upon police department benefits. Spouses of state and county officers may elect to continue to participate in the same benefit program in effect at the time of the officer's death. Contact the Benefits Coordinator at your agency.

RETIREMENT/PENSION

Individual cities and municipalities are responsible for providing retirement and pension plans for law enforcement officers. Contact your local agency's Benefits Assistance Officer.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

PEER SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

Established in 1984, Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., (C.O.P.S.), is a national, non-profit organization that works with law enforcement agencies, police organizations, mental health professional, and local peer-support organizations to provide assistance to surviving families of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. C.O.P.S. has become a "lifeline" to police survivors nationwide. **Contact the C.O.P.S. National Office (800) 784-2611 or visit www.nationalcops.org/chap.htm for information on a chapter in your area.**

FUNERAL AND CREMATION BENEFITS

Dignity Memorial funeral, cremation and cemetery providers created the Public Servants Program for emergency service personnel. This program provides dignified and honorable tributes, at no cost, for career and volunteer law enforcement officers who fall in the line of duty. Visit their website for complete information @ www.dignitymemorial.com and look under Public Servants for details. You may also call 800-344-6489 and speak with a representative.

Wilbert Funeral Services, Inc. provides complimentary burial vaults and related services for fallen law enforcement officers. For more information visit www.wilbert.com or call (888) WILBERT.