
Firefighters to Receive Fire-Related Illness Coverage

McGuinty Government Supports Volunteer And Part-Time Firefighters

NEWS

November 5, 2009

Ontario is making it easier for the province's volunteer and part-time firefighters and fire investigators, who suffer fire-related illnesses, to qualify for benefits under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

The province has established a new regulation which presumes that eight types of cancer – as well as heart injuries within 24 hours of fighting a fire or a training exercise – that are suffered by these workers would be work-related, unless proven otherwise. The same presumptions currently apply to full-time firefighters in Ontario.

The regulation will apply to volunteer and part-time firefighters and fire investigators from the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal who meet certain conditions and to diseases diagnosed or heart injuries sustained on or after Jan. 1, 1960.

QUOTES

"We are committed to ensuring fair treatment for all injured workers. Firefighters place their lives on the line every day to save our homes, our businesses and our lives. This regulation ensures that Ontario's workplace insurance system treats all firefighters and their families fairly, especially during a difficult time."

—Peter Fonseca, Minister of Labour

"The Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs is pleased that the Government of Ontario has extended the regulation to include volunteer and part-time firefighters and fire investigators. The extension recognizes the dangers these fire personnel face in assisting and protecting Ontarians."

—Richard Boyes, President of the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs

"The firefighters of Ontario deserve our eternal gratitude and support for the work they do. Presumptive legislation is one more way to support the men and women who sacrifice even their health to protect ours. It has been an honour to work with all the stakeholders to achieve this milestone. I'm sure firefighters will rest just a little easier after today."

—Dave Levac, Brant MPP

QUICK FACTS

- In Ontario, there are about 11,000 full-time firefighters, 19,000 volunteer firefighters and 220 part-time firefighters. Forty-six fire investigators from the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal are on active duty.
- An amendment to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997, received Royal Assent on May 4, 2007, allowing the government to make regulations affecting Ontario's full-time, part-time and volunteer firefighters and fire investigators.

LEARN MORE

Find out more about the [Workplace Safety and Insurance Act](#)

Explore the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board [website](#)

Emily Bullock, Minister's Office, 416-326-7713
Bruce Skeaff, Ministry of Labour, 416-326-7405

ontario.ca/labour-news
Disponible en français