



## Important Notice for Pennsylvania Firefighters About New Cancer Law

The **Pennsylvania Firefighter Cancer Coalition** is a joint initiative of the Pennsylvania Professional Fire Fighters Association, IAFF, the Pennsylvania Fire & Emergency Service Institute, and the Office of the Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner, to educate and inform career and volunteer firefighters about their rights related to the risk of job-related cancer faced by firefighters and their families.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's fire service, the Coalition is extremely pleased to announce that on August 29, 2011, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett will sign Act 46 of 2011 – **the Firefighter Cancer Presumption Law** – which designates cancer as an occupational disease for firefighters and extends the limitations period for filing firefighter cancer claims to more than 11 years.

Act 46 of 2011, which became effective on July 7, 2011, is the result of a 25-year effort by career and volunteer firefighters to win much-needed protection for our brothers and sisters and their families. The **Firefighter Cancer Presumption Law** will enable firefighters to receive workers' compensation benefits if they develop cancer and can establish exposure to certain carcinogens at fire or hazmat incidents during their careers.

Here are some important facts about the new law:

- \* The Cancer Presumption Law applies to **any cancer**. Firefighters who have served four or more years will be entitled to a **presumption that their cancer is job-related**, similar to the process used when firefighters suffer from lung cancer, heart disease, or more recently, Hepatitis C.
- \* Firefighter cancer claims may be brought on behalf of any **active or retired, career or volunteer** firefighter who is being treated or has been treated for cancer, **regardless of when their cancer was diagnosed or treated**.
- \* The Cancer Presumption Law extends the period for filing claims to **600 weeks** after separation from service. Firefighters who separated as long ago as **January 2000** may be entitled to benefits.
- \* Firefighter cancer claims may also be brought on behalf of **surviving family members** of firefighters who died as a result of cancer. To qualify for benefits, surviving spouses or dependent children must file a claim **within three years** of the firefighter's death.
- \* Volunteer firefighters must **participate in PennFIRS** reporting to make a cancer claim, and must have passed a **physical exam** before their service that did not reveal the presence of cancer.

Benefits available under Act 46 are **significant** and may include retroactive and prospective salary and benefits, medical care for cancer treatment, and reimbursement for medical costs. **The Firefighter Cancer Coalition recommends that any active or retired career or volunteer firefighter who has battled cancer act quickly to investigate your rights under the new cancer presumption law.** Additionally, if you know a family member of a firefighter who has succumbed to cancer within the last three years, please advise them to do the same.

For information on filing a claim, contact the Firefighter Cancer Coalition's legal counsel at **1-866-413-COMP** today. Your claim will be evaluated by experienced and competent counsel, who will work with you to develop a plan to protect your rights.