

(Rpld. 1/1/27)

A. Notwithstanding any other law, this state or a political subdivision of this state shall establish a program to provide peace officers, firefighters and 911 dispatchers who are exposed to any one of the following events while in the course of duty up to twelve visits of licensed counseling, which may be provided through telehealth, paid for by the employer:

1. Visually or audibly witnessing the death or maiming or visually or audibly witnessing the immediate aftermath of such a death or maiming of one or more human beings.
2. Responding to or being directly involved in a criminal investigation of an offense involving a dangerous crime against children as defined in section 13-705.
3. Requiring rescue in the line of duty where one's life was endangered.
4. Using deadly force or being subjected to deadly force in the line of duty, regardless of whether the peace officer or firefighter was physically injured.
5. Witnessing the death of another peace officer or firefighter while engaged in the line of duty.
6. Responding to or being directly involved in an investigation regarding the drowning or near drowning of a child.

B. If the licensed mental health professional determines that the peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher needs additional visits of licensed counseling beyond that which the peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher is entitled to under subsection A of this section and that the additional visits are likely to improve the peace officer's, firefighter's or 911 dispatcher's condition, the employer shall pay for up to an additional twenty-four visits, if the visits occur within one year after the first visit pursuant to this section.

C. An employer may not require a peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher who is receiving treatment pursuant to this section to use the peace officer's, firefighter's or 911 dispatcher's accrued paid vacation leave, personal leave or sick leave if the peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher leaves work to attend a treatment visit pursuant to this section.

D. If the licensed mental health professional determines that the peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher is not fit for duty while the peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher is receiving treatment pursuant to this section, the employer shall ensure that the peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher has no loss of pay and benefits for up to thirty calendar days per incident after the date the licensed mental health professional determines that the employee is not fit for duty if all of the following apply:

1. The peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher is unable to work light duty or the employer does not offer a light duty option.
2. The peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher has exhausted the peace officer's, firefighter's or 911 dispatcher's sick leave, vacation leave or other leave that is provided as part of the peace officer's, firefighter's or 911 dispatcher's benefits package.

3. If the employer offers short-term disability benefits, the employer offered and the peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher elected short-term disability benefits, but the peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher is not eligible to receive short-term disability benefits.

4. The employer does not have a supplemental program that provides pay and benefits after the occurrence of an injury. For the purposes of this paragraph, supplemental program that provides pay and benefits after the occurrence of an injury does not include a supplemental benefits plan established pursuant to section 38-961.

E. An employer shall allow a peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher to select the peace officer's, firefighter's or 911 dispatcher's own licensed mental health professional, except that if a licensed mental health professional declines to provide counseling pursuant to this section, the employer is not required to secure the services of that licensed mental health professional. The employer shall pay the licensed mental health professional pursuant to the schedule of fees that is fixed by the industrial commission of Arizona pursuant to section 23-908.

F. Payment by the employer for licensed counseling pursuant to this section does not create a presumption that a claim is compensable under section 23-1043.01, subsection B.

G. For each program established pursuant to this section, this state and each political subdivision of this state shall compile the following data for peace officers, firefighters and 911 dispatchers:

1. For each category of persons, the total number of persons who have participated in the program.
2. For each category of persons, the average number of visits per person.
3. For each category of persons, the average number of months that a person participated in the program.
4. For each category of persons, the average number of days that a person who participated in the program missed work.
5. For each category of persons, the total number of persons who participated in the program and who subsequently filed a workers' compensation claim and the number of those claims that were approved and the number of those claims that were denied.
6. For each category of persons, of the total number of persons who have participated in the program, the percentage of persons who received additional visits under subsection B of this section.
7. For each category of persons, the total number of persons who were deemed not fit for duty by a licensed mental health professional pursuant to subsection D of this section.
8. For each employer, the total amount of work missed by each category of persons who participated in the program and how missed work was provided for by the employer or through employee benefits.

H. On or before September 1 of each year, this state and each political subdivision of this state shall submit the data collected pursuant to subsection G of this section to the department of administration. On or before October 1 of each year, the department of administration shall compile the data into a report and submit the report to the governor, the president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, the chairperson of the senate health and human services committee, or its successor committee, the chairperson of the house of representatives health and human services committee, or its successor committee, the chairperson of the senate military affairs, public safety and border security committee, or its successor committee, and the chairperson of the house of representatives military affairs and public safety committee, or its successor committee, and shall provide a copy of this report to the secretary of state. Subsection G of this section and this subsection do not authorize this state or a political subdivision of this state to compile and report data that is protected under the health insurance portability and accountability act of 1996 (P.L. 104-191; 110 Stat. 1936).

I. This section does not apply to a state employer that provides a program to its peace officers, firefighters and 911 dispatchers that is characterized by all of the following:

1. The program is paid for by the employer.
2. The program provides licensed counseling for any issue. For licensed counseling related to trauma experienced while in the line of duty, the licensed counseling is provided on the request of the peace officer, firefighter or 911 dispatcher and is in person.
3. The program offers at least twelve visits per year and will offer additional visits if the licensed mental health professional determines that additional visits are necessary.

J. For the purposes of this section:

1. "Licensed counseling" means counseling provided by a licensed mental health professional.
2. "Licensed mental health professional" means a licensed individual who specializes in trauma and crisis, who uses evidence-based treatment options and who is one of the following:
  - (a) A psychiatrist who is licensed pursuant to title 32, chapter 13 or 17.
  - (b) A psychologist who is licensed pursuant to title 32, chapter 19.1.
  - (c) A mental health professional who is licensed pursuant to title 32, chapter 33 and who holds either a master's or doctoral degree related to the mental health profession.
  - (d) A mental health nurse practitioner or a psychiatric clinical nurse specialist who is licensed pursuant to title 32, chapter 15.
3. "911 dispatcher" means a 911 dispatcher in a primary or secondary public safety answering point.
4. "Peace officers" includes constables and deputy constables.