

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1987 SESSION

CHAPTER 584
HOUSE BILL 988

AN ACT TO CREATE A RELIEF FUND FOR RESCUE SQUAD WORKERS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 20-183.7(a) and (a1) are amended by substituting "eighty cents (80¢)" for "seventy-five cents (75¢)".

Sec. 2. G.S. 20-183.7(a1) is amended by substituting "two dollars and twenty cents (\$2.20)" for "two dollars and fifteen cents (\$2.15)".

Sec. 3. G.S. 20-183.7(c) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(3) Five cents (5¢) of the fee for the valid inspection sticker collected pursuant to subsections (a) and (a1) shall be transferred each quarter of the year to the North Carolina Commissioner of Insurance, for the purpose of funding the Rescue Squad Workers' Relief Fund under Article 5 of General Statute Chapter 118."

Sec. 4. General Statute Chapter 118 is amended by rewriting the title to read: "Firemen's and Rescue Squad Workers' Relief and Pension Funds."

Sec. 5. General Statute Chapter 118 is amended by adding a new Article to read:

"Article 5.

"Rescue Squad Workers' Relief Fund.

"§ 118-60. **Definitions.**—As used in this Article:

(1) 'Association' means the North Carolina Association of Rescue and Emergency Medical Services, Inc.

(2) 'Board' means the Board of Trustees of the Fund.

(3) 'EMS' means emergency medical services.

(4) 'Fund' means the Rescue Squad Workers' Relief Fund.

(5) 'Secretary-Treasurer' means the Secretary-Treasurer of the Association.

"§ 118-61. **Rescue Squad Workers' Relief Fund; trustees; disbursement of funds.**—

(a) The money paid into the hands of the Commissioner of Insurance pursuant to G.S. 20-183.7(c)(3) shall be known and remain as the 'Rescue Squad Workers' Relief Fund', and shall be used for the purposes set forth in this Article.

(b) The Executive Committee of the Association shall be the Board of Trustees of the Fund. The Board shall consist of the Commander, Vice-Commander, Secretary-Treasurer, and two immediate past Commanders of the Association. The Commander shall be the Chairman of the Board.

(c) The Commissioner of Insurance shall have exclusive control of the funds realized under the provisions of this Article and G.S. 20-183.7(c), and shall disburse the funds to the Association only for following purposes:

- (1) To safeguard any rescue or EMS worker in active service from financial loss, occasioned by sickness contracted or injury received while in the performance of his or her duties as a rescue or EMS worker.
- (2) To provide a reasonable support for those persons actually dependent upon the services of any rescue or EMS worker who may lose his or her life in the service of his or her town, county, city, or the State, either by accident or from disease contracted or injury received by reason of such service. The amount is to be determined according to the earning capacity of the deceased.
- (3) To award scholarships to children of members, deceased members or retired members in good standing, for the purpose of attending a four year college or university, and for the purpose of attending a two year course of study at a community college or an accredited trade or technical school, any of which is located in the State of North Carolina. Continuation of the payment of educational benefits for children of active members shall be conditioned on the continuance of active membership in the rescue or EMS service by the parent or parents.
- (4) To pay death benefits to those persons who were actually dependent upon any member killed in the line of duty.
- (5) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no expenditures shall be made pursuant to subdivisions (1), (2), (3), and (4) of this subsection unless the Board has certified that such expenditures will not render the Fund actuarially unsound for the purpose of providing the benefits set forth in subdivisions (1), (2), (3), and (4). If, for any reason, funds made available for subdivisions (1), (2), (3), and (4) are insufficient to pay in full any benefit, the benefits pursuant to subdivisions (1), (2), (3), and (4) shall be reduced pro rata for as long as the amount of insufficient funds exists. No claims shall accrue with respect to any amount by which a benefit under subdivisions (1), (2), (3), and (4) has been reduced.

"§ 118-62. Membership eligibility.—(a) Any member of a rescue squad or EMS service who is eligible for membership in the Association and who has attended a minimum of 36 hours of training and meetings in the last calendar year; and each rescue squad or EMS service whose members are eligible for membership in the Association who has filed a roster certifying to the Secretary-Treasurer who certifies to the Commissioner of Insurance by January 1 of each calendar year that all eligible members have met the requirements, shall be eligible for the Fund. Any eligible member who, in the actual discharge of his or her duties as rescue or EMS personnel, is (1) made sick by disease contracted or (2) becomes disabled, shall be entitled to the benefits from the Fund.

(b) Any organized rescue squad or EMS service in North Carolina holding itself ready for duty may, upon compliance with the requirements of the constitution and by-laws of the Association, be eligible for membership in the Fund.

(c) The line of duty entitling one to participate in the Fund shall be so construed as to mean actual rescue or EMS duty only.

"§ 118-63. **Accounting; reports; audits.**—The Board shall keep a correct account of all monies received and disbursed by the Board; and shall annually file a report with the Commissioner of Insurance at such time and in such form prescribed by the Commissioner of Insurance and the State Auditor. The Board shall be bonded by the sum of any money total for which it is responsible. The State Auditor shall annually conduct an audit of the Fund and the Board's administration of the Fund.

"§ 118-64. **Justification of claim.**—The eligibility of the claimant and the justification of each claim shall be certified by the chief or chief officer of the local department before a magistrate, notary public, or other officer authorized to administer oaths, on a form furnished by the Secretary-Treasurer. This form must be accompanied by a certificate of the attending physician on a form also to be furnished by the Secretary-Treasurer. Each person receiving benefits from the Fund shall file an annual justification of claim form with the Secretary-Treasurer stating that the need for the claim still exists.

"§ 118-65. **Application for benefits.**—Applications for benefits from the Fund shall be made to the Secretary-Treasurer under the following conditions and procedure: Within 30 days after the contracting of a disease or the occurrence of accident for which benefits are sought, the chief or chief officer of the local department shall notify the Secretary-Treasurer in writing that the person applying for benefits is a member of the Fund and request the necessary forms from the Secretary-Treasurer's office to be submitted for the benefits.

"§ 118-66. **Administration costs.**—The Association shall withhold three percent (3%) from the money received pursuant to G.S. 20-183.7(c) for the administration of the Fund. The Commissioner of Insurance shall withhold two percent (2%) from the money received pursuant to G.S. 20-183.7(c) for the administration of the Fund."

Sec. 6. Sections 1 through 3 of this act shall become effective September 1, 1987. Sections 4 and 5 shall become effective October 1, 1987. This section is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 9th day of July, 1987.