
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5175

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senate Labor & Commerce (originally sponsored by Senators Braun, Keiser, Becker, Fortunato, Palumbo, Wilson, L., Rivers, Kuderer, O'Ban, Van De Wege, and Wagoner)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/19.

1 AN ACT Relating to firefighter safety; and adding new sections to
2 chapter 51.04 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 51.04
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) The department must establish best practices to improve
7 safety and health outcomes for firefighters, including best
8 practices:

9 (a) For a proactive health and safety risk management system
10 consisting of a joint employer and employee governance structure to
11 oversee a continuous process of identification, evaluation,
12 monitoring and controlling, and reporting safety and health hazards
13 in the workplace;

14 (b) To reduce firefighter risk of exposure to carcinogens; and

15 (c) To prevent or reduce the risk of injuries and illness with
16 particular focus on causes of compensable workers' compensation
17 claims.

18 (2) Employers of firefighters who implement the best practices
19 provided in subsection (1) of this section may be eligible for a
20 premium discount as determined by the department according to
21 criteria established by the department.

1 (3) The department must consult with firefighters and employers
2 of firefighters in establishing the best practices and criteria for a
3 premium discount under this section.

4 (4) The department may update the best practices established
5 under this section as appropriate.

6 (5) For the purposes of this section, "firefighter" has the same
7 meaning as in RCW 41.26.030(17) (a) through (c).

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 51.04
9 RCW to read as follows:

10 (1) The director is authorized to provide funding of up to two
11 percent of the premiums paid in the prior year from the risk classes
12 for firefighters as defined in RCW 41.26.030(17) (a) through (c) for
13 the purposes of providing funding to employers of firefighters who
14 have limited resources to purchase additional equipment and other
15 gear that may be needed to follow best practices under section 1 of
16 this act. The department may require matching funds from employers.
17 An appropriation is not required for expenditures. Only employers who
18 pay premiums to the state fund as defined in RCW 51.08.175 are
19 eligible for funding under this section.

20 (2) The department may adopt rules if necessary to implement this
21 section.

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