

CHAPTER 243--S.F.No. 2403

An act relating to public safety; modifying provision relating to disability of peace officer or firefighter; amending Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 299A.465, subdivision 1.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 299A.465, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **Officer or firefighter disabled in line of duty.** (a) This subdivision applies ~~when a peace officer or firefighter suffers a disabling injury that:~~

~~(1) results in the officer's or firefighter's retirement or separation from service;~~

~~(2) occurs while the officer or firefighter is acting in the course and scope of duties as a peace officer or firefighter, and~~

~~(3) the officer or firefighter has been approved to receive the officer's or firefighter's duty-related disability pension: to any peace officer or firefighter:~~

(1) who the Public Employees Retirement Association determines is eligible to receive a duty disability benefit pursuant to section 353.656; or

(2) who (i) does not qualify to receive disability benefits by operation of the eligibility requirements set forth in section 353.656, subdivision 1, paragraph (b), (ii) retires pursuant to section 353.651, subdivision 4, or (iii) is a member of a local police or salaried firefighters relief association and qualifies for a duty disability benefit under the terms of plans of the relief associations, and the peace officer or firefighter described in item (i), (ii), or (iii) has discontinued public service as a peace officer or firefighter as a result of a disabling injury and has been determined, by the Public Employees Retirement Association, to have otherwise met the duty disability criteria set forth in section 353.01, subdivision 41.

(b) A determination made on behalf of a peace officer or firefighter described in paragraph (a), clause (2), must be at the request of the peace officer or firefighter made for the purposes of this section. Determinations made in accordance with paragraph (a) are binding on the peace officer or firefighter, employer, and state. The determination must be made by the executive director of the Public Employees Retirement Association and is not subject to section 356.96, subdivision 2. Upon making a determination, the executive director shall provide written notice to the peace officer or firefighter and the employer. This notice must include:

(1) a written statement of the reasons for the determination;

(2) a notice that the person may petition for a review of the determination by requesting that a contested case be initiated before the Office of Administrative Hearings, the cost of which must be borne by the peace officer or firefighter and the employer; and

(3) a statement that any person who does not petition for a review within 60 days is precluded from contesting issues determined by the executive director in any other administrative review or court procedure.

If, prior to the contested case hearing, additional information is provided to support the claim for duty disability as defined in section 353.01, subdivision 41, the executive director may reverse the determination without the requested hearing. If a hearing is held before the Office of Administrative Hearings, the determination rendered by the judge conducting the fact-finding hearing is a final decision and order under section 14.62, subdivision 2a, and is binding on the executive director, the peace officer or firefighter, employer, and state. Review of a final determination made by the Office of Administrative Hearings under this section may only be obtained by writ of certiorari to the Minnesota Court of Appeals under sections 14.63 to 14.68. Only the peace officer or firefighter, employer, and state have standing to participate in a judicial review of the decision of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

~~(b)~~ (c) The officer's or firefighter's employer shall continue to provide health coverage for:

(1) the officer or firefighter; and

(2) the officer's or firefighter's dependents if the officer or firefighter was receiving dependent coverage at the time of the injury under the employer's group health plan.

~~(c)~~ (d) The employer is responsible for the continued payment of the employer's contribution for coverage of the officer or firefighter and, if applicable, the officer's or firefighter's dependents. Coverage must continue for the officer or firefighter and, if applicable, the officer's or firefighter's dependents until the officer or firefighter reaches or, if deceased, would have reached the age of 65. However, coverage for dependents does not have to be continued after the person is no longer a dependent.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective July 1, 2008.

Presented to the governor April 23, 2008

Signed by the governor April 25, 2008, 4:11 p.m.