

CHAPTER 424A

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER'S RETIREMENT

424A.02 Volunteer firefighters; service pensions.

424A.06 Relief association general fund.

424A.10 State supplemental benefit; volunteer firefighters.

424A.02 VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS; SERVICE PENSIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Authorization.** A relief association, when its articles of incorporation or bylaws so provide, may pay out of the assets of its special fund a service pension to each of its members who: (1) separates from active service with the fire department; (2) reaches age 50; (3) completes at least five years of active service as an active member of the municipal fire department to which the relief association is associated; (4) completes at least five years of active membership with the relief association before separation from active service; and (5) complies with any additional conditions as to age, service, and membership that are prescribed by the bylaws of the relief association. A service pension computed under this section may be prorated monthly for fractional years of service, if the bylaws or articles of incorporation of the relief association so provide. The service pension may be paid whether or not the municipality or nonprofit firefighting corporation to which the relief association is associated qualifies for fire state aid under chapter 69. In the case of a member who has completed at least five years of active service as an active member of the fire department to which the relief association is associated on the date that the relief association is established and incorporated, the requirement that the member complete at least five years of active membership with the relief association before separation from active service may be waived by the board of trustees of the relief association if the member completes at least five years of inactive membership with the relief association before the payment of the service pension. During the period of inactive membership, the member is not entitled to receive disability benefit coverage, is not entitled to receive additional service credit towards computation of a service pension, and is considered to have the status of a person entitled to a deferred service pension under subdivision 7.

No municipality or nonprofit firefighting corporation may delegate the power to take final action in setting a service pension or ancillary benefit amount or level to the board of trustees of the relief association or to approve in advance a service pension or ancillary benefit amount or level equal to the maximum amount or level that this chapter would allow rather than a specific dollar amount or level.

No relief association as defined in section 424A.001, subdivision 4, may pay a service pension or disability benefit to a former member of the relief association if that person has not separated from active service with the fire department to which the relief association is directly associated.

For the purposes of this chapter, "to separate from active service" means to cease to perform fire suppression duties and to cease to supervise fire suppression duties.

[For text of subd 2, see M.S.1992]

Subd. 3. **Flexible service pension maximums.** (a) On or before August 1 of each year as part of the certification of the financial requirements and minimum municipal obligation made pursuant to section 69.772, subdivision 4, or 69.773, subdivision 5, the secretary or some other official of the relief association designated in the bylaws of each relief association shall calculate and certify to the governing body of the applicable qualified municipality the average amount of available financing per active covered firefighter for the most recent three-year period. The amount of available financing shall include any amounts of fire state aid received or receivable by the relief association, any amounts of municipal contributions to the relief association raised from levies on real estate or from other available revenue sources exclusive of fire state aid, and one-

tenth of the amount of assets in excess of the accrued liabilities of the relief association calculated pursuant to sections 69.772, subdivision 2; 69.773, subdivisions 2 and 4; or 69.774, subdivision 2, if any.

(b) The maximum service pension which the relief association has authority to provide for in its bylaws for payment to a member retiring after the calculation date when the minimum age and service requirements specified in subdivision 1 are met must be determined using the table in paragraph (c) or (d), whichever applies.

(c) For a relief association where the governing bylaws provide for a monthly service pension to a retiring member, the maximum monthly service pension amount per month for each year of service credited that may be provided for in the bylaws is the maximum service pension figure corresponding to the average amount of available financing per active covered firefighter:

Minimum Average Amount of Available Financing per Firefighter	Maximum Service Pension Amount Payable per Month for Each Year of Service
\$...	\$.25
42	.50
84	1.00
126	1.50
168	2.00
209	2.50
252	3.00
294	3.50
335	4.00
378	4.50
420	5.00
503	6.00
587	7.00
672	8.00
755	9.00
839	10.00
923	11.00
1007	12.00
1090	13.00
1175	14.00
1259	15.00
1342	16.00
1427	17.00
1510	18.00
1594	19.00
1677	20.00
1762	21.00
1845	22.00
1888	22.50
1929	23.00
2014	24.00
2098	25.00
2183	26.00
2267	27.00
2351	28.00
2436	29.00
2520	30.00
any amount more than 2520	30.00

(d) For a relief association in which the governing bylaws provide for a lump sum service pension to a retiring member, the maximum lump sum service pension amount for each year of service credited that may be provided for in the bylaws is the maximum

service pension figure corresponding to the average amount of available financing per active covered firefighter for the applicable specified period:

Minimum Average Amount of Available Financing per Firefighter	Maximum Lump Sum Service Pension Amount Payable for Each Year of Service
(1) for service pensions payable before January 1, 1994	
\$..	\$ 10
11	20
16	30
23	40
27	50
32	60
43	80
54	100
65	120
77	140
86	160
97	180
108	200
131	240
151	280
173	320
194	360
216	400
239	440
259	480
281	520
302	560
324	600
347	640
367	680
389	720
410	760
432	800
486	900
540	1000
594	1100
648	1200
702	1300
756	1400
810	1500
864	1600
918	1700
972	1800
1026	1900
1080	2000
1134	2100
1188	2200
1242	2300
1296	2400
1350	2500
1404	2600
1458	2700
1512	2800
1566	2900
1620	3000
1672	3100

1726	3200
1753	3250
1780	3300
1820	3375
any amount more than 1820	3375

(2) in addition to the service pension maximum under clause (1), for service pensions payable after December 31, 1993, and before January 1, 1995

1834	3400
1888	3500
any amount more than 1888	3500

(3) in addition to the service pension maximum under clauses (1) and (2), for service pensions payable after December 31, 1994, and before January 1, 1996

1942	3600
1996	3700
2023	3750
any amount more than 2023	3750

(4) in addition to the service pension maximum under clauses (1) to (3), for service pensions payable after December 31, 1995

2050	3800
2104	3900
2158	4000
any amount more than 2158	4000

(e) For a relief association in which the governing bylaws provide for a monthly benefit service pension as an alternative form of service pension payment to a lump sum service pension, the maximum service pension amount for each pension payment type must be determined using the applicable table contained in this subdivision.

(f) If a relief association establishes a service pension in compliance with the applicable maximum contained in paragraph (c) or (d) and the minimum average amount of available financing per active covered firefighter is subsequently reduced because of a reduction in fire state aid or because of an increase in the number of active firefighters, the relief association may continue to provide the prior service pension amount specified in its bylaws, but may not increase the service pension amount until the minimum average amount of available financing per firefighter under the table in paragraph (c) or (d), whichever applies, permits.

(g) No relief association is authorized to provide a service pension in an amount greater than \$30 per month per year of service credit or in an amount greater than \$3,375 lump sum per year of service credit before January 1, 1994, \$3,500 lump sum per year of service credit before January 1, 1995, \$3,750 lump sum per year of service credit before January 1, 1996, and \$4,000 lump sum per year of service credit after December 31, 1995, even if the minimum average amount of available financing per firefighter for a relief association providing a monthly benefit service pension is greater than \$2,240, or, for a relief association providing a lump sum service pension, is greater than \$1,753 before January 1, 1994, \$1,888 before January 1, 1995, \$2,023 before January 1, 1996, or \$2,158 after December 31, 1995.

Subd. 3a. Penalty for paying pension greater than applicable maximum. (a) If a relief association pays a service pension greater than the maximum service pension associated with the applicable average amount of available financing per active covered firefighter under the table in subdivision 3, paragraph (c) or (d), whichever applies, the maximum service pension under subdivision 3, paragraph (f), or the applicable maximum service pension amount specified in subdivision 3, paragraph (g), whichever is less, the state auditor shall:

(1) disqualify the municipality or the nonprofit firefighting corporation associated with the relief association from receiving fire state aid by making the appropriate notification to the municipality and the commissioner of revenue, with the disqualification applicable for the next apportionment and payment of fire state aid; and

(2) recover the amount of the overpaid service pension or pensions from any retired firefighter who received an overpayment.

(b) Fire state aid amounts from disqualified municipalities for the period of disqualifications under paragraph (a), clause (1), must be credited to the amount of fire insurance premium tax proceeds available for the next subsequent fire state aid apportionment.

(c) The amount of any overpaid service pension recovered under paragraph (a), clause (2), must be credited to the amount of fire insurance premium tax proceeds available for the next subsequent fire state aid apportionment.

(d) The determination of the state auditor that a relief association has paid a service pension greater than the applicable maximum must be made on the basis of the information filed by the relief association and the municipality with the state auditor under sections 69.011, subdivision 2, and 69.051, subdivision 1 or 1a, whichever applies, and any other relevant information that comes to the attention of the state auditor. The determination of the state auditor is final. An aggrieved municipality, relief association, or person may appeal the determination under section 480A.06.

[For text of subs 4 to 8a, see M.S.1992]

Subd. 8b. Transfer to individual retirement account. A relief association that is a qualified pension plan under section 401(a) of the federal Internal Revenue Code, as amended, and that provides a lump sum service pension, at the written request of a retiring member, may directly transfer the eligible member's lump sum pension to the member's individual retirement account under section 408(a) of the federal Internal Revenue Code, as amended.

[For text of subs 9 to 13, see M.S.1992]

History: 1993 c 244 art 1 s 1-3; art 3 s 1

424A.06 RELIEF ASSOCIATION GENERAL FUND.

[For text of subs 1 to 3, see M.S.1992]

Subd. 4. Investment of assets of the general fund. The assets of the general fund may be invested in any securities authorized by the bylaws of the relief association and may be certified for investment by the state board of investment in fixed income pools or in a separately managed account at the discretion of the state board of investment as provided in section 11A.14.

History: 1993 c 300 s 13

424A.10 STATE SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFIT; VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS.

[For text of subs 1 and 2, see M.S.1992]

Subd. 3. State reimbursement. By February 15 of each year, the relief association shall apply to the commissioner of revenue for state reimbursement of the amount of supplemental benefits paid under subdivision 2 during the preceding calendar year. By March 15 the commissioner shall reimburse the relief association for the amount of the supplemental benefits paid to qualified recipients. The commissioner of revenue shall prescribe the form of and supporting information that must be supplied as part of the application for state reimbursement. The reimbursement payment must be deposited in the special fund of the relief association. A sum sufficient to make the payments is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of revenue.

[For text of subd 4, see M.S.1992]

History: 1993 c 307 art 9 s 1