353G.10 LEAVING FIREFIGHTING SERVICE BEFORE REACHING NORMAL RETIREMENT AGE.

Subdivision 1. **Entitlement to a retirement benefit, to the extent vested.** If a volunteer firefighter separates from active firefighting service before reaching normal retirement age, the volunteer firefighter is entitled to a distribution of the volunteer firefighter's retirement benefit under section 353G.09, subdivision 1a, as follows:

(1) if the volunteer firefighter is covered by the defined contribution plan, the volunteer firefighter is entitled to a distribution of the retirement benefit as soon as practicable after the volunteer firefighter submits an application for a distribution;

(2) if the volunteer firefighter is covered by the lump-sum division of the defined benefit plan, the volunteer firefighter is entitled to a distribution of the volunteer firefighter's retirement benefit after the volunteer firefighter has reached age 50 and as soon as practicable after the volunteer firefighter submits an application for a distribution; and

(3) if the volunteer firefighter is covered by the monthly division of the defined benefit plan, the volunteer firefighter is entitled to begin a distribution of the volunteer firefighter's retirement benefit after the volunteer firefighter has reached age 50 and as soon as practicable after the volunteer firefighter submits an application for a distribution.

Subd. 2. **Application.** No earlier than 30 days after leaving active firefighting service, a volunteer firefighter entitled to a distribution under subdivision 1 must submit an application to the executive director in a manner specified by the executive director.

Subd. 3. **Retirement benefit during period of deferral.** (a) A volunteer firefighter's account in the defined contribution plan must continue to be invested with the rest of the assets of the individual accounts in the volunteer firefighter's fire department account and, until the account is distributed, credited with investment earnings or reduced by investment losses under section 353G.082, subdivision 4, and a deduction taken for an equal share of the administrative expenses under section 353G.082, subdivision 3, paragraph (b), until the volunteer firefighter's account is distributed.

(b) A volunteer firefighter's retirement benefit in the defined benefit plan must be retained in the defined benefit plan without any interest on or increase in the service pension during the period of deferral.

Subd. 4. **Forfeiture of accounts of volunteer firefighters who end service.** (a) The portion of an account or pension benefit that is not vested is forfeited as of the earliest of:

(1) the last day of the calendar year that includes the fifth anniversary of the date on which the volunteer firefighter ended service;

(2) immediately upon receiving a lump-sum payment of the entire vested portion of the account or pension benefit; or

(3) immediately upon receiving the final payment consisting of the entire amount remaining in the account or pension benefit that is vested.

(b) A volunteer firefighter with a zero percent vested interest in the account or pension benefit is deemed to have received a distribution on the last day of service, and the account or pension benefit must immediately be forfeited.

(c) Amounts forfeited remain forfeited and must not be reinstated upon the resumption of service with the fire department or any other fire department covered by the retirement plan.

History: *2009 c 169 art 9 s 19; 2015 c 68 art 8 s 19; 2022 c 65 art 4 s 25; 2023 c 47 art 10 s 9; 2024 c 102 art 3 s 36,45*