

2026 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

Line-of-Duty Act (LODA)

The VPFF urges the Virginia General Assembly to pass legislation to align Line-of-Duty Death benefits between the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act (VWCA) and the Line-of-Duty Act (LODA).

Background:

In 2024, 75% of all firefighter line of duty deaths resulted from occupational cancer. Due to occupational exposures to carcinogens, firefighters have a 9% higher risk of being diagnosed with cancer and a 14% higher risk of dying from cancer than the general population. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has recognized working as a firefighter to be a Group 1 "Carcinogenic Exposure," the same level as tobacco smoking or unprotected exposure to radiation.

In 2022, the General Assembly passed legislation (SB562/HB1042) expanding coverage for occupational cancer under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act (VWCA) from 5 years to 10 years post-exposure, but failed to equally expand coverage for occupational cancer under the Virginia Line-of-Duty Act, which remains at only 5 years. This fails to recognize that latency periods vary by type of cancer or factor in the formation of a tumor being a complex process.

Needed Action:

This legislation is technical in nature and aligns the period of time to file a claim for benefits under the Virginia Line-of-Duty Act for occupational cancer to the same period of time under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act.

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The Virginia Professional Fire Fighters proudly represents nearly 11,000 firefighters, emergency medical providers and communications officers in over 60 localities across the Commonwealth of Virginia.