

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

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HOUSE BILL 492
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/5/21

Short Title: WC/Psych. Trauma-Related Injuries.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 8, 2021

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT PROVIDING THAT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, FIREFIGHTERS, 911 DISPATCHERS, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES PERSONNEL ARE ENTITLED TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA UNDER SPECIFIED CIRCUMSTANCES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 97-53 reads as rewritten:

"§ 97-53. **Occupational diseases enumerated; when due to exposure to chemicals.**

The following diseases and conditions only shall be deemed to be occupational diseases within the meaning of this Article:

...
(30) Special provisions for employment-related occupational diseases of first responders. – The following provisions apply in determining eligibility of a first responder for compensation benefits under this Article:

a. The term "first responder," as used in this section, means a law enforcement officer, a firefighter, a 911 dispatcher, or an emergency medical technician or paramedic employed by State or local government. The term also includes a volunteer firefighter meeting the requirements of G.S. 58-84-5(3a).

b. For the purposes of this section, posttraumatic stress disorder, as described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Current Edition, published by the American Psychiatric Association, suffered by a first responder is a compensable occupational disease if the first responder is examined and subsequently diagnosed with such disorder by a health care provider who establishes within a reasonable degree of medical certainty that the posttraumatic stress disorder is caused by activities of employment as a first responder.

c. An employing agency of a first responder, including volunteer first responders, shall provide educational training related to mental health awareness, prevention, mitigation, and treatment."

SECTION 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 2021.



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