

# STATE OF NEW YORK

382

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 6, 2021

Introduced by Sen. KAPLAN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Local Government

AN ACT to amend the volunteer firefighters' benefit law, in relation to providing for temporary payments of benefit pending final determination of claim

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 40 of the volunteer firefighters' benefit law, as  
2 amended by chapter 476 of the laws of 2018, is amended to read as  
3 follows:

4 § 40. [~~Notice~~] Claim assistance unit; notice of injury or death. The  
5 workers' compensation board shall establish a volunteer firefighters'  
6 benefit claim assistance unit. Such unit shall be responsible to initi-  
7 ate contact with any volunteer firefighter who sustains a life threaten-  
8 ing injury, or in the case of death, the surviving dependents of such  
9 volunteer firefighter and shall provide any and all assistance required  
10 to file claims and expedite payment of any and all benefits allowable  
11 under this chapter.

12 Notice of an injury or death for which benefits are to be paid or  
13 provided under this chapter shall be given to the political subdivision  
14 liable for the payment thereof within ninety days after such injury or  
15 death except that such notice need not be given if a claim is filed  
16 pursuant to section forty-one of this [~~chapter~~] article within ninety  
17 days after such injury or death. Either such notice may be given by any  
18 person claiming to be entitled to such benefits [~~or~~], by someone in his  
19 or her behalf or by a claim assistant. The notice shall be in writing,  
20 shall contain the name and address of the volunteer firefighter, and  
21 state in ordinary language the time, place, nature and cause of the  
22 injury and shall be signed by him or her or by a person on his or her  
23 behalf or, in case of death, by any one or more of his or her depen-

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 dents, or by a person on their behalf; or by a claim assistant. The  
2 notice shall be given to the clerk of the board of supervisors of the  
3 county, the comptroller or chief financial officer of the city, the town  
4 clerk of the town, the clerk of the village or the secretary of the fire  
5 district, as the case may be, by delivering it to such officer or by  
6 registered letter properly addressed to such officer.

7 The failure to give notice of injury or notice of death shall be a bar  
8 to any claim under this chapter unless such failure is excused by the  
9 workers' compensation board on any of the following grounds, (1) that  
10 for some sufficient reason the notice could not have been given, (2)  
11 that a member of a body in charge of, or any officer of, the fire  
12 department or fire company had knowledge within such ninety-day period  
13 of the injuries or death, (3) that the political subdivision, or its  
14 insurance carrier had not been prejudiced by a delay in giving such  
15 notice, or (4) that the cause of disablement or death was not known to  
16 be the result of service performed in line of duty as a volunteer fire-  
17 fighter in sufficient time to comply with the provisions of this  
18 section.

19 § 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after  
20 it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amend-  
21 ment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implemen-  
22 tation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and  
23 completed on or before such effective date.