STATE OF NEW YORK

10591

IN ASSEMBLY

March 13, 2026

Introduced by M. of A. BEEPHAN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Local Governments

AN ACT to amend the general municipal law and the volunteer firefighters' benefit law, in relation to authorizing municipalities to establish a stipend program for volunteer firefighters

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

Section 1. The general municipal law is amended by adding a new section 200-aaa to read as follows:

§ 200-aaa. Stipend program for volunteer firefighters. 1. For purposes of this section:

(a) "fire company" shall have the same meaning as defined in section three of the volunteer firefighters' benefit law.

(b) "stipend program" means the payment of a nominal fee to a volunteer firefighter for the completion of scheduled duty coverage as determined by the authority having jurisdiction.

(c) "volunteer firefighter" shall have the same meaning as defined in section three of the volunteer firefighters' benefit law.

2. The governing board of a city, town, village or fire district, fire protection district, or other authority having jurisdiction may, by local law, ordinance or resolution, establish a stipend program for volunteer firefighters and determine the structure, scheduling, eligibility requirements, and compensation parameters of such program.

3. Any stipend provided pursuant to a stipend program establishment under this section shall not be deemed remuneration or gratuity under the volunteer firefighters' benefit law or any other provision of law and shall not interfere with or impact the volunteer status of volunteer firefighters under the volunteer firefighters' benefit law or any other provision of law.

4. The office of fire prevention and control may issue non-binding guidelines to assist authorities having jurisdiction in the development and administration of stipend programs established pursuant to this section.

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

LBD14797-02-6

§ 2. Paragraph c of subdivision 1 of section 205-g of the general municipal law, as amended by section 3 of part H of chapter 55 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

c. "Line of duty" means the performance by a volunteer firefighter of the duties and activities described in subdivision one of section five of the volunteer firefighters' benefit law and the same such duties and activities performed for a specialized team established pursuant to the provisions of section two hundred nine-bb of this article for which the volunteer firefighter does not receive any remuneration or a gratuity and shall be deemed to include any date of injury as determined by the workers' compensation board pursuant to the provisions of section forty-one of the volunteer firefighters' benefit law. The following shall not be deemed to be remuneration or a gratuity: reimbursement of expenses for meals, lodging and actual and necessary travel; the receipt of a mileage allowance in lieu of travel expense; reimbursement of expenses for registration and tuition fees payable under section seventy-two-g of this chapter, the acceptance of transportation, food, drink, shelter, clothing and similar items while on duty or engaged in such activities; [~~and~~] receipt of a training stipend as outlined in section two hundred-aa of this article**; and receipt of a stipend pursuant to section two hundred-aaa of this article**.

§ 3. Subdivision 3 of section 3 of the volunteer firefighters' benefit law, as amended by section 1 of part H of chapter 55 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

3. "Line of duty" means the performance by a volunteer firefighter as a volunteer firefighter of the duties and activities described in subdivision one of section five of this chapter and the same such duties and activities performed for a specialized team established pursuant to the provisions of section two hundred nine-bb of the general municipal law for which the volunteer firefighter does not receive any remuneration or a gratuity and shall be deemed to include any date of injury as determined by the workers' compensation board pursuant to the provisions of section forty-one of this chapter. The following shall not be deemed to be remuneration or a gratuity: receipt of a training stipend as outlined in section two hundred-aa of the general municipal law; reimbursement of expenses for meals, lodging and actual and necessary travel; the receipt of a mileage allowance in lieu of travel expense; **receipt of a stipend pursuant to section two hundred-aaa of the general municipal law;** reimbursement of expenses for registration and tuition fees payable under section seventy-two-g of the general municipal law, and the acceptance of transportation, food, drink, shelter, clothing and similar items while on duty or engaged in such activities.

§ 4. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date is authorized to be made and completed on or before such date.