**§ 59-b. Promotions of supervisory personnel of the emergency medical service.** 1. The legislature hereby finds and declares that the continued, uninterrupted, adequate and efficient operation of emergency medical services is necessary for the general welfare of the people; that such adequate operation involves and requires personnel with highly specialized ability, skill, training and knowledge, which necessitate that vacancies in the emergency medical services in the positions of Supervising Emergency Medical Service Specialist Level II (Captains), Deputy Chief, Division Chief, and Division Commander, shall be filled as far as practicable by promotion from among persons holding competitive class positions in a lower grade in the department in which the vacancy exists, provided that such lower grade positions are in direct line of promotion, as determined by the department or municipal commission.

2. Promotion shall be based on merit and fitness as determined by competitive examination, due weight being given to seniority. The previous training and experience of the candidates, and performance ratings where available, may be considered and given due weight as factors in determining the relative merit and fitness of candidates for promotion.

3. Any permanent competitive employee holding a provisional or discretionary appointment in the affected supervisory titles of the emergency medical service described in subdivision one of this section shall be given the opportunity to participate in a competitive promotional examination for the next higher level title.

4. Except as provided above, the provisions of this chapter shall apply to employees covered by this section.