§ 82-a. Authorized absence. 1. During the time that a state emergency exists following a declaration of such emergency pursuant to section twenty-eight of the executive law, every public officer or employee of this state may request an authorized absence from his or her duties or service as such public officer or employee while engaged in the actual performance of his or her duties as, (a) a volunteer firefighter, or (b) an enrolled member of a volunteer ambulance service pursuant to article thirty of the public health law.

2. Requests for such authorized absence shall be approved by the appropriate supervisor to the extent that such absence would not interfere with proper conduct of governmental functions.

3. As used in this section, the term public officer or employee shall not include officers or employees of municipalities or other political subdivisions of the state.

4. The entire period of the authorized absence granted pursuant to this section shall be excused leave and shall not be charged against any other leave such public officer or employee is otherwise entitled to, and such authorized absence shall include travel both to and from such duties performed in his or her capacity as a volunteer.

5. As used in this section, the term agency shall mean any department, board, bureau, commission, division, office, council, committee or office of the state, a public benefit corporation or public authority at least one of whose members is appointed by the governor.