

## **CHAPTER 351**

**(House Bill 1117)**

AN ACT concerning

### **Workers' Compensation – Benefits for Dependents**

FOR the purpose of clarifying that surviving dependents of certain individuals are eligible to receive the same workers' compensation benefits as the individual received at the time of death; and generally relating to workers' compensation benefits for dependents.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
Article – Labor and Employment  
Section 9–503  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(1999 Replacement Volume and 2006 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

#### **Article – Labor and Employment**

9–503.

(a) A paid firefighter, paid fire fighting instructor, or sworn member of the Office of the State Fire Marshal employed by an airport authority, a county, a fire control district, a municipality, or the State or a volunteer firefighter, volunteer fire fighting instructor, volunteer rescue squad member, or volunteer advanced life support unit member who is a covered employee under § 9–234 of this title is presumed to have an occupational disease that was suffered in the line of duty and is compensable under this title if:

- (1) the individual has heart disease, hypertension, or lung disease;
- (2) the heart disease, hypertension, or lung disease results in partial or total disability or death; and
- (3) in the case of a volunteer firefighter, volunteer fire fighting instructor, volunteer rescue squad member, or volunteer advanced life support unit

member, the individual has met a suitable standard of physical examination before becoming a firefighter, fire fighting instructor, rescue squad member, or advanced life support unit member.

(b) (1) A paid police officer employed by an airport authority, a county, the Maryland–National Capital Park and Planning Commission, a municipality, or the State, a deputy sheriff of Montgomery County, or, subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, a deputy sheriff of Baltimore City, Montgomery County correctional officer, Prince George’s County deputy sheriff, or Prince George’s County correctional officer is presumed to be suffering from an occupational disease that was suffered in the line of duty and is compensable under this title if:

(i) the police officer, deputy sheriff, or correctional officer is suffering from heart disease or hypertension; and

(ii) the heart disease or hypertension results in partial or total disability or death.

(2) (i) A deputy sheriff of Baltimore City, Montgomery County correctional officer, Prince George’s County deputy sheriff, or Prince George’s County correctional officer is entitled to the presumption under this subsection only to the extent that the individual suffers from heart disease or hypertension that is more severe than the individual’s heart disease or hypertension condition existing prior to the individual’s employment as a deputy sheriff of Baltimore City, Montgomery County correctional officer, Prince George’s County deputy sheriff, or Prince George’s County correctional officer.

(ii) To be eligible for the presumption under this subsection, a deputy sheriff of Baltimore City, Montgomery County correctional officer, Prince George’s County deputy sheriff, or Prince George’s County correctional officer, as a condition of employment, shall submit to a medical examination to determine any heart disease or hypertension condition existing prior to the individual’s employment as a deputy sheriff of Baltimore City, Montgomery County correctional officer, Prince George’s County deputy sheriff, or Prince George’s County correctional officer.

(c) A paid firefighter, paid fire fighting instructor, or a sworn member of the Office of the State Fire Marshal employed by an airport authority, a county, a fire control district, a municipality, or the State or a volunteer firefighter, volunteer fire fighting instructor, volunteer rescue squad member, or volunteer advanced life support unit member who is a covered employee under § 9–234 of this title is presumed to be suffering from an occupational disease that was suffered in the line of duty and is compensable under this title if the individual:

(1) has leukemia or pancreatic, prostate, rectal, or throat cancer that is caused by contact with a toxic substance that the individual has encountered in the line of duty;

(2) has completed at least 5 years of service as a firefighter, fire fighting instructor, rescue squad member, or advanced life support unit member or in a combination of those jobs in the department where the individual currently is employed or serves;

(3) is unable to perform the normal duties of a firefighter, fire fighting instructor, rescue squad member, or advanced life support unit member in the department where the individual currently is employed or serves because of the cancer or leukemia disability; and

(4) in the case of a volunteer firefighter, volunteer fire fighting instructor, volunteer rescue squad member, or volunteer advanced life support unit member, has met a suitable standard of physical examination before becoming a firefighter, fire fighting instructor, rescue squad member, or advanced life support unit member.

(d) A paid law enforcement employee of the Department of Natural Resources who is a covered employee under § 9-207 of this title is presumed to have an occupational disease that was suffered in the line of duty and is compensable under this title if the employee:

(1) is suffering from Lyme disease; and

(2) was not suffering from Lyme disease before assignment to a position that regularly places the employee in an outdoor wooded environment.

(e) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, any paid firefighter, paid fire fighting instructor, sworn member of the Office of the State Fire Marshal, paid police officer, paid law enforcement employee of the Department of Natural Resources, deputy sheriff of Montgomery County, deputy sheriff of Baltimore City, Montgomery County correctional officer, deputy sheriff of Prince George's County, or Prince George's County correctional officer who is eligible for benefits under subsection (a), (b), (c), or (d) of this section **OR THE DEPENDENTS OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS** shall receive the benefits in addition to any benefits that the individual **OR THE DEPENDENTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL** is entitled to receive under the retirement system in which the individual was a participant at the time of the claim.

(2) The benefits received under this title shall be adjusted so that the weekly total of those benefits and retirement benefits does not exceed the weekly salary that was paid to the paid law enforcement employee of the Department of Natural Resources, firefighter, fire fighting instructor, sworn member of the Office of the State Fire Marshal, police officer, deputy sheriff, or Prince George's County or Montgomery County correctional officer.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2007.

**Approved by the Governor, May 8, 2007.**