Amendment

General Assembly

January Session, 2019  LCO No. 8127

Offered by:
SEN. KUSHNER, 24th Dist.

To: Subst. Senate Bill No. 164  File No. 362  Cal. No. 202

"AN ACT INCLUDING CERTAIN MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENTS WITHIN THE DEFINITION OF "PERSONAL INJURY" UNDER THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION STATUTES."

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the following in lieu thereof:

2 "Section 1. Subdivision (16) of section 31-275 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

3 (16) (A) "Personal injury" or "injury" includes, in addition to accidental injury that may be definitely located as to the time when and the place where the accident occurred, an injury to an employee that is causally connected with the employee's employment and is the direct result of repetitive trauma or repetitive acts incident to such employment, and occupational disease.

4 (B) "Personal injury" or "injury" shall not be construed to include:

5 (i) An injury to an employee that results from the employee's
voluntary participation in any activity the major purpose of which is
social or recreational, including, but not limited to, athletic events,
parties and picnics, whether or not the employer pays some or all of
the cost of such activity;

(ii) A mental or emotional impairment, unless such impairment (I)
arises from a physical injury or occupational disease, (II) in the case of
a police officer of the Division of State Police within the Department of
Emergency Services and Public Protection, an organized local police
department or a municipal constabulary, arises from such police
officer's use of deadly force or subjection to deadly force in the line of
duty, regardless of whether such police officer is physically injured,
provided such police officer is the subject of an attempt by another
person to cause such police officer serious physical injury or death
through the use of deadly force, and such police officer reasonably
believes such police officer to be the subject of such an attempt, or (III)
in the case of a police officer, parole officer or firefighter, is [diagnosed
as] a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder [by a licensed and
board certified mental health professional, determined by such
professional to be originating from the firefighter witnessing the death
of another firefighter while engaged in the line of duty and not subject
to any other exclusion in this section] as defined in section 2 of this act
that meets all the requirements of section 2 of this act. As used in this
clause, ["police officer" means a member of the Division of State Police
within the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection,
an organized local police department or a municipal constabulary,
"firefighter" means a uniformed member of a municipal paid or
volunteer fire department, and] "in the line of duty" means any action
that a police officer [or firefighter] is obligated or authorized by law,
rule, regulation or written condition of employment service to
perform, or for which the police officer or firefighter is compensated
by the public entity such officer serves;

(iii) A mental or emotional impairment that results from a personnel
action, including, but not limited to, a transfer, promotion, demotion
or termination; or
(iv) Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (B)(i) of this subdivision, "personal injury" or "injury" includes injuries to employees of local or regional boards of education resulting from participation in a school-sponsored activity but does not include any injury incurred while going to or from such activity. As used in this clause, "school-sponsored activity" means any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized by a board of education and includes activities conducted on or off school property and "participation" means acting as a chaperone, advisor, supervisor or instructor at the request of an administrator with supervisory authority over the employee.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2019) (a) As used in this section:

(1) "Firefighter" has the same meaning as provided in section 7-313g of the general statutes;

(2) "In the line of duty" means any action that a police officer, parole officer or firefighter is obligated or authorized by law, rule, regulation or written condition of employment service to perform, or for which the officer or firefighter is compensated by the public entity such officer or firefighter serves, except that, in the case of a volunteer firefighter, such action or service constitutes fire duties, as defined in subsection (b) of section 7-314b of the general statutes;

(3) "Mental health professional" means a board-certified psychiatrist licensed pursuant to chapter 370, of the general statutes or a board-certified psychologist licensed pursuant to chapter 383 of the general statutes, who (A) has successfully completed education and training in trauma therapy, and (B) diagnoses mental conditions within the scope of his or her practice;

(4) "Parole officer" means an employee of the Department of Correction who supervises inmates in the community after their release from prison on parole or under another prison release program;
(5) "Police officer" has the same meaning as provided in section 7-294a of the general statutes, except that "police officer" does not include an officer of a law enforcement unit of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe or the Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut;

(6) "Post-traumatic stress disorder" means a disorder that meets the diagnostic criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder as specified in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders"; and

(7) "Qualifying event" means an event occurring in the line of duty on or after July 1, 2019, in which a police officer, parole officer or firefighter:

(A) Views a deceased minor;

(B) Witnesses the death of a person or an incident involving the death of a person;

(C) Witnesses an injury to a person who subsequently dies before or upon admission at a hospital as a result of the injury;

(D) Has physical contact with and treats an injured person who subsequently dies before or upon admission at a hospital as a result of the injury;

(E) Carries an injured person who subsequently dies before or upon admission at a hospital as a result of the injury; or

(F) Witnesses a physical injury that results in the loss of a member or other body part or a vital body function that results in permanent disfigurement of the victim.

(b) A diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder is compensable as a personal injury as described in subparagraph (B)(ii)(III) of subdivision (16) of section 31-275 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, if a mental health professional examines a police officer, parole officer or firefighter and diagnoses the officer or firefighter with post-traumatic stress disorder.
stress disorder as a direct result of a qualifying event, provided (1) the
post-traumatic stress disorder resulted from the officer or firefighter
acting in the line of duty and, in the case of a firefighter, such
firefighter complied with Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act
standards adopted pursuant to 29 CFR 1910.134 and 29 CFR 1910.156,
(2) a preponderance of the evidence indicates that a qualifying event
was a substantial contributing factor of the disorder, (3) such
qualifying event, and not another event or source of stress, was the
primary cause of the post-traumatic stress disorder, and (4) the post-
traumatic stress disorder did not result from any disciplinary action,
work evaluation, job transfer, layoff, demotion, promotion,
retirement or similar action of the officer or firefighter.

Any such mental health professional shall comply with any workers'
compensation guidelines for approved medical providers, including,
but not limited to, guidelines on release of past or contemporaneous
medical records.

Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 31-294c of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July
1, 2019):

(b) [Whenever] (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this
subsection, whenever liability to pay compensation is contested by the
employer, [he] the employer shall file with the commissioner, on or
before the twenty-eighth day after [he] the employer has received a
written notice of claim, a notice in accord with a form prescribed by
the chairman of the Workers' Compensation Commission stating that
the right to compensation is contested, the name of the claimant, the
name of the employer, the date of the alleged injury or death and the
specific grounds on which the right to compensation is contested. The
employer shall send a copy of the notice to the employee in accordance
with section 31-321. If the employer or [his] the employer's legal
representative fails to file the notice contesting liability on or before the
twenty-eighth day after [he has received] receiving the written notice
of claim, the employer shall commence payment of compensation for
such injury or death on or before the twenty-eighth day after [he has
received] receiving the written notice of claim, but the employer may
contest the employee's right to receive compensation on any grounds
or the extent of [his] the employee's disability within one year from the
receipt of the written notice of claim, provided the employer shall not
be required to commence payment of compensation when the written
notice of claim has not been properly served in accordance with
section 31-321 or when the written notice of claim fails to include a
warning that [(1)] (A) the employer, if [he] the employer has
commenced payment for the alleged injury or death on or before the
twenty-eighth day after receiving a written notice of claim, shall be
precluded from contesting liability unless a notice contesting liability is
filed within one year from the receipt of the written notice of claim,
and [(2)] (B) the employer shall be conclusively presumed to have
accepted the compensability of the alleged injury or death unless the
employer either files a notice contesting liability on or before the
twenty-eighth day after receiving a written notice of claim or
commences payment for the alleged injury or death on or before such
twenty-eighth day. An employer shall be entitled, if [he] the employer
prevails, to reimbursement from the claimant of any compensation
paid by the employer on and after the date the commissioner receives
written notice from the employer or [his] the employer's legal
representative, in accordance with the form prescribed by the
chairman of the Workers' Compensation Commission, stating that the
right to compensation is contested. Notwithstanding the provisions of
this [subsection] subdivision, an employer who fails to contest liability
for an alleged injury or death on or before the twenty-eighth day after
receiving a written notice of claim and who fails to commence
payment for the alleged injury or death on or before such twenty-
eighth day, shall be conclusively presumed to have accepted the
compensability of the alleged injury or death. If an employer has opted
to post an address of where notice of a claim for compensation by an
employee shall be sent, as described in subsection (a) of this section,
the twenty-eight-day period set forth in this [subsection] subdivision
shall begin on the date when such employer receives written notice of
a claim for compensation at such posted address.
(2) Whenever liability to pay compensation for a personal injury described in subparagraph (B)(ii)(III) of subdivision (16) of section 31-275, as amended by this act, is contested by the employer, the employer shall file with the commissioner, on or before the one hundred eightieth day after the employer has received a written notice of claim, a notice in accord with a form prescribed by the chairman of the Workers' Compensation Commission stating that the right to compensation is contested, the name of the claimant, the name of the employer, the date of the alleged injury and the specific grounds on which the right to compensation is contested. The employer shall send a copy of the notice to the employee in accordance with section 31-321.

The employer shall commence payment of compensation for such injury on or before the twenty-eighth day after receiving the written notice of claim, but the employer's payments of benefits are without prejudice to the employer's ability to contest the employee's right to receive compensation on any grounds or the extent of the employee's disability within one hundred eighty days from the receipt of the written notice of claim, provided the employer shall not be required to commence payment of compensation when the written notice of claim has not been properly served in accordance with section 31-321 or when the written notice of claim fails to include a warning that (A) the employer, if the employer has commenced payment for the alleged injury on or before the twenty-eighth day after receiving a written notice of claim, shall be precluded from contesting liability unless a notice contesting liability is filed within one hundred eighty days from the receipt of the written notice of claim, and (B) the employer shall be conclusively presumed to have accepted the compensability of the alleged injury unless the employer commences payment with or without prejudice for the alleged injury on or before such twenty-eighth day and files a notice contesting liability on or before the one hundred eightieth day after receiving a written notice of claim. An employer shall be entitled, if the employer prevails, to reimbursement from the claimant of any compensation paid by the employer on and after the date the commissioner receives written notice from the employer or the employer's legal representative, in accordance with
the form prescribed by the chairman of the Workers' Compensation Commission, stating that the right to compensation is contested. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subdivision, an employer who fails to contest liability for an alleged injury on or before the one hundred eightieth day after receiving a written notice of claim and who fails to commence payment with or without prejudice for the alleged injury on or before such twenty-eighth day, shall be conclusively presumed to have accepted the compensability of the alleged injury. If an employer has opted to post an address of where notice of a claim for compensation by an employee shall be sent, as described in subsection (a) of this section, the twenty-eight-day period set forth in this subdivision shall begin on the date when such employer receives written notice of a claim for compensation at such posted address.

Sec. 4. Section 31-294h of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter, workers' compensation benefits for any [(1)] police officer, as [defined] described in subparagraph (B)(ii)(II) of subdivision (16) of section 31-275, as amended by this act, who suffers a mental or emotional impairment arising from such police officer's use of deadly force or subjection to deadly force in the line of duty, [or (2) firefighter, as defined in subparagraph (B)(ii) of subdivision (16) of section 31-275, who suffers a mental or emotional impairment diagnosed as post-traumatic stress disorder originating from the firefighter witnessing the death of another firefighter while engaged in the line of duty,] shall be limited to treatment by a psychologist or a psychiatrist who is on the approved list of practicing physicians established by the chairman of the Workers' Compensation Commission pursuant to section 31-280.

(b) Workers' compensation benefits for any police officer, parole officer or firefighter for a personal injury described in subparagraph (B)(ii)(III) of subdivision (16) of section 31-275, as amended by this act, shall (1) include medical treatment prescribed by a licensed
psychologist or psychiatrist and temporary total incapacity benefits under section 31-307, and (2) be provided for a maximum of fifty-two weeks from the date of diagnosis. No medical treatment or temporary total incapacity benefits under section 31-307 shall be due beyond three years from the date of the qualifying event that formed the basis for the personal injury. The weekly benefits received by an individual pursuant to this section, when combined with other benefits including, but not limited to, contributory and noncontributory retirement benefits, Social Security benefits, benefits under a long-term or short-term disability plan, but not including payments for medical care, shall not exceed the weekly compensation paid to an officer or a firefighter who is serving in the same position and same department as the officer or firefighter who is receiving benefits. An officer or firefighter receiving benefits pursuant to this subsection shall not be entitled to benefits pursuant to subsection (b) of section 31-308 or section 31-308a.

Sec. 5. (NEW) (Effective October 1, 2019) (a) No law enforcement unit, as defined in section 7-294a of the general statutes, shall discharge, discipline, discriminate against or otherwise penalize a police officer, as defined in section 7-294a of the general statutes, who is employed by such law enforcement unit solely because the police officer seeks or receives mental health care services or surrenders his or her firearm, ammunition or electronic defense weapon used in the performance of the police officer's official duties to such law enforcement unit during the time the police officer receives mental health care services. The provisions of this subsection shall not be applicable to a police officer who (1) seeks or receives mental health care services to avoid disciplinary action by such law enforcement unit, or (2) refuses to submit himself or herself to an examination as provided in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Prior to returning to a police officer his or her surrendered firearm, ammunition or electronic defense weapon used in the performance of the police officer's official duties, such law enforcement unit shall request the police officer to submit himself or herself to an examination by a mental health professional, as defined in section 2 of
this act. The examination shall be performed to determine whether the police officer is ready to report for official duty and shall be paid for by such law enforcement unit.

(c) No civil action may be brought against a law enforcement unit for damages arising from an act or omission of a police officer employed by the unit with respect to the officer’s use of his or her personal firearm, if (1) the officer seeks or receives mental health care services and surrenders to such unit his or her firearm, ammunition or electronic defense weapon used in the performance of the police officer’s official duties, and (2) such act or omission occurs during the time period the officer has surrendered his or her firearm, ammunition or electronic defense weapon or within six months of the date of surrendering his or her firearm, ammunition or electronic defense weapon, whichever is longer.

Sec. 6. Section 53a-217 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2019):

(a) A person is guilty of criminal possession of a firearm, ammunition or an electronic defense weapon when such person possesses a firearm, ammunition or an electronic defense weapon and (1) has been convicted of a felony committed prior to, on or after October 1, 2013, or of a violation of section 21a-279, 53a-58, 53a-61, 53a-61a, 53a-62, 53a-63, 53a-96, 53a-175, 53a-176, 53a-178 or 53a-181d committed on or after October 1, 2013, (2) has been convicted as delinquent for the commission of a serious juvenile offense, as defined in section 46b-120, (3) has been discharged from custody within the preceding twenty years after having been found not guilty of a crime by reason of mental disease or defect pursuant to section 53a-13, (4) knows that such person is subject to (A) a restraining or protective order of a court of this state that has been issued against such person, after notice has been provided to such person, in a case involving the use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against another person, or (B) a foreign order of protection, as defined in section 46b-15a, that has been issued against such person in a case involving the
use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against another person, (5) (A) has been confined on or after October 1, 2013, in a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities, as defined in section 17a-495, within the preceding sixty months by order of a probate court, or with respect to any person who holds a valid permit or certificate that was issued or renewed under the provisions of section 29-28 or 29-36f in effect prior to October 1, 2013, such person has been confined in such hospital within the preceding twelve months, or (B) has been voluntarily admitted on or after October 1, 2013, to a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities, as defined in section 17a-495, within the preceding six months for care and treatment of a psychiatric disability [and not] unless the person (i) was voluntarily admitted solely for being an alcohol-dependent person or a drug-dependent person as those terms are defined in section 17a-680, or (ii) is a police officer who was voluntarily admitted and had his or her firearm, ammunition or electronic defense weapon used in the performance of the police officer's official duties returned in accordance with section 5 of this act, (6) knows that such person is subject to a firearms seizure order issued pursuant to subsection (d) of section 29-38c after notice and an opportunity to be heard has been provided to such person, or (7) is prohibited from shipping, transporting, possessing or receiving a firearm pursuant to 18 USC 922(g)(4). For the purposes of this section, "convicted" means having a judgment of conviction entered by a court of competent jurisdiction, "ammunition" means a loaded cartridge, consisting of a primed case, propellant or projectile, designed for use in any firearm, and a motor vehicle violation for which a sentence to a term of imprisonment of more than one year may be imposed shall be deemed an unclassified felony.

(b) Criminal possession of a firearm, ammunition or an electronic defense weapon is a class C felony, for which two years of the sentence imposed may not be suspended or reduced by the court, and five thousand dollars of the fine imposed may not be remitted or reduced by the court unless the court states on the record its reasons for remitting or reducing such fine.
Sec. 7. Section 53a-217c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2019):

(a) A person is guilty of criminal possession of a pistol or revolver when such person possesses a pistol or revolver, as defined in section 29-27, and (1) has been convicted of a felony committed prior to, on or after October 1, 2013, or of a violation of section 21a-279, 53a-58, 53a-61, 53a-61a, 53a-62, 53a-63, 53a-96, 53a-175, 53a-176, 53a-178 or 53a-181d committed on or after October 1, 1994, (2) has been convicted as delinquent for the commission of a serious juvenile offense, as defined in section 46b-120, (3) has been discharged from custody within the preceding twenty years after having been found not guilty of a crime by reason of mental disease or defect pursuant to section 53a-13, (4) (A) has been confined prior to October 1, 2013, in a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities, as defined in section 17a-495, within the preceding twelve months by order of a probate court, or has been confined on or after October 1, 2013, in a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities, as defined in section 17a-495, within the preceding sixty months by order of a probate court, or, with respect to any person who holds a valid permit or certificate that was issued or renewed under the provisions of section 29-28 or 29-36f in effect prior to October 1, 2013, such person has been confined in such hospital within the preceding twelve months, or (B) has been voluntarily admitted on or after October 1, 2013, to a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities, as defined in section 17a-495, within the preceding six months for care and treatment of a psychiatric disability, [and not] unless the person (i) was voluntarily admitted solely for being an alcohol-dependent person or a drug-dependent person as those terms are defined in section 17a-680, or (ii) is a police officer who was voluntarily admitted and had his or her firearm, ammunition or electronic defense weapon used in the performance of the police officer’s official duties returned in accordance with section 5 of this act, (5) knows that such person is subject to (A) a restraining or protective order of a court of this state that has been issued against such person, after notice has been provided to such person, in a case involving the
use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against another
person, or (B) a foreign order of protection, as defined in section 46b-
15a, that has been issued against such person in a case involving the
use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against another
person, (6) knows that such person is subject to a firearms seizure
order issued pursuant to subsection (d) of section 29-38c after notice
and an opportunity to be heard has been provided to such person, (7)
is prohibited from shipping, transporting, possessing or receiving a
firearm pursuant to 18 USC 922(g)(4), or (8) is an alien illegally or
unlawfully in the United States. For the purposes of this section,
"convicted" means having a judgment of conviction entered by a court
of competent jurisdiction.

(b) Criminal possession of a pistol or revolver is a class C felony, for
which two years of the sentence imposed may not be suspended or
reduced by the court, and five thousand dollars of the fine imposed
may not be remitted or reduced by the court unless the court states on
the record its reasons for remitting or reducing such fine.

Sec. 8. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2019) (a) Not later than January 1,
2020, the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, established
under section 7-294b of the general statutes, the Department of
Correction and the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control shall
develop and promulgate a model critical incident and peer support
policy to support the mental health care and wellness of police officers,
as defined in section 7-294a of the general statutes, parole officers, as
defined in section 2 of this act, and firefighters, as defined in section 2
of this act.

(b) Not later than July 1, 2020, each law enforcement unit as defined
in section 7-294a of the general statutes, the Department of Correction
as employer of parole officers, each municipal or state paid or
volunteer fire department and each municipal entity employing a fire
marshal, deputy fire marshal, fire investigator, fire inspector or other
class of investigator or inspector for whom the State Fire Marshal and
the Codes and Standards Committee, acting jointly, have adopted
minimum standards of qualification pursuant to section 29-298 of the
general statutes, shall (1) adopt and maintain a written policy that
meets or exceeds the standards of the model policy developed
pursuant to subsection (a) of this section; (2) make peer support
available to such officers and firefighters; and (3) refer an officer or
firefighter, as appropriate, seeking mental health care services to a
mental health professional, as defined in section 2 of this act.

Sec. 9. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2019) Each police basic training
program conducted or administered by the Division of State Police
within the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection,
the Police Officer Standards and Training Council established under
section 7-294b of the general statutes or a municipal police department
in this state shall provide, in consultation with the Department of
Mental Health and Addiction Services, resilience and self-care
technique training for a police officer, as defined in section 7-294a of
the general statutes, who begins basic training on or after January 1,
2020.

Sec. 10. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2019) In consultation with the
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Department
of Correction shall provide resilience and self-care technique training
for each parole officer, as defined in section 2 of this act, hired on or

Sec. 11. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2019) In consultation with the
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Commission
on Fire Prevention and Control, the State Fire Marshal and the Codes
and Standards Committee and any other state or municipal entity
providing training to a firefighter, as defined in section 2 of this act,
shall provide resilience and self-care technique training for firefighters
who begin their initial training as a firefighter on or after January 1,
2020."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following
sections:
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