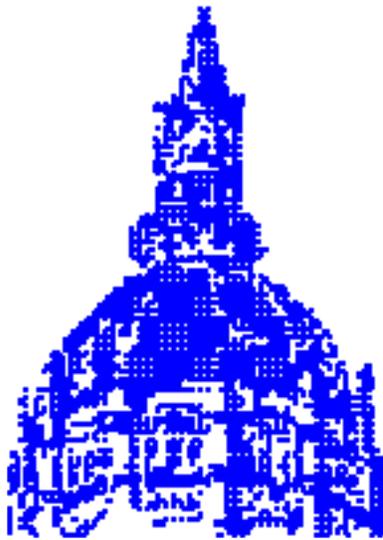


Office of Legislative Research  
Connecticut General Assembly



**OLR ACTS AFFECTING**

**ACTS AFFECTING FIRE FIGHTERS**



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## **NOTICE TO READERS**

This report provides brief highlights of public acts affecting fire fighters enacted during the 2005 regular and June 2005 special sessions.

Not all provisions of the acts are included; readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the Connecticut State Library, the House Clerk's office, or the General Assembly's website (<http://cga.ct.gov/>). Complete summaries of all public acts passed in 2005 will be available in the fall when OLR's *Public Acts Summary* book is published; some are now available on the OLR website (<http://cga.ct.gov/olr/OLRPASumsER.asp>).

## **PAYMENT FOR VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY SERVICES**

A new law requires the state fire administrator, within available funds, to administer a supplemental grant award remittance program to support volunteer fire companies that provide emergency response services on any limited access highway, the section of the Berlin Turnpike from Meriden to Wethersfield, or the section of Route 8 within the Naugatuck State Forest. The fire companies may get direct payment of grant funds or may use the funds as credits for fee-based services the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control provides. They must use credits in the fiscal year in which they get them (**PA 05-3, June Special Session**, effective July 1, 2005).

## **DRIVING RESTRICTIONS**

A new law exempts a 16- or 17-year old licensee from certain passenger and hour restrictions while carrying out his duties as an active member of a volunteer fire company or department (**PA 05-54**, effective October 1, 2005).

## **FLASHING LIGHTS ON FIRE FIGHTER VEHICLES**

Previously, flashing or revolving white lights could be displayed on the motor vehicles of up to four paid fire chiefs and their deputies and assistants and up to four volunteer fire chiefs and their deputies and assistants per municipality. A new law expands this authorization to up

to a total of five paid and five volunteer fire chiefs, deputies, and assistants per fire department (**PA 05-218**, effective upon passage).

## **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATING IN HOMELAND SECURITY DRILLS**

A new law requires the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) to compensate employed members of volunteer organizations, including volunteer fire companies, who participate in any of the organizations' DEMHS-authorized homeland security drills that last more than 24 consecutive hours. The compensation rate must be the same as they would get in their public- or private-sector jobs, less any employer compensation they receive for the drill. Volunteers who die or are disabled or injured in the course of any such drill must get the same workers' compensation benefits that they would have received in the course of their employment in the public or private sector.

Under this new law, a "volunteer organization" is one that (1) provides first responder, rescue, or emergency medical transportation services, or is a volunteer fire company that provides emergency medical or rescue services, as part of its duties and (2) relies exclusively or primarily upon volunteers to provide such services (**PA 05-265**, effective October 1, 2005).

## **MOBILE TELEPHONE USE WHILE DRIVING**

Except under certain circumstances, this new law prohibits (1) a driver from using a mobile telephone to engage in a call while the vehicle is moving unless he uses a hands-free telephone; (2) drivers operating under learners' permits or with licenses issued pursuant to requirements applicable to 16- or 17-year old license applicants from using any mobile telephone while the vehicle is moving, whether or not it has a hands-free accessory. One exception allows a driver at least age 18 to use a hand-held mobile telephone, regardless of the prohibition, if he is a firefighter or authorized emergency vehicle driver performing his official duties within the scope of employment. An authorized emergency vehicle includes a fire department vehicle (**PA 05-159**, effective October 1, 2005).

## **COMMEMORATIVE ROAD NAMES**

This new law designates the road to the Firemen Memorial at Bradley International Airport as "Firefighter Memorial Drive" (**PA 05-210**, effective upon passage).

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