

Office of Legislative Research
Connecticut General Assembly



OLR ACTS AFFECTING

FIREFIIGHTERS



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NOTICE TO READERS

This report provides brief highlights of new laws affecting firefighters enacted during the 2013 regular session. At the end of each summary, we indicate the public act (PA) number.

Not all provisions of the acts are included here. Complete summaries of all 2013 public acts will be available in the fall when OLR's Public Act Summary book is published; some are already on OLR's webpage:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/OLRPASums.asp>

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AUTHORITY OF FIRE CHIEFS AT CERTAIN STATE FACILITIES

A new law gives the UConn and Southbury Training School fire chiefs, or anyone serving as fire officer-in-charge for these entities, the same authority as their municipal counterparts when responding to a fire, service call, or other emergency in their jurisdiction.

[PA 13-145](#), effective October 1, 2013.

BOOT DRIVES

A new law requires the Office of the State Traffic Administration to issue special event permits allowing a municipality's fire department to collect donations for charity on a state highway, other than a limited access highway. The permits for these charitable fundraisers (also known as boot drives) are valid for one day, and a fire department can get only two per year. The boot drives can be held only at intersections controlled by a traffic control signal or stop sign where the posted speed limit is 30 miles per hour or less.

The law specifies that the permit is an agreement by the municipality to indemnify and hold harmless the state against any financial loss and expense arising out of any claim, demand, suit, or judgment resulting from or related to the issuance of the permit or collection of donations.

[PA 13-93](#), effective October 1, 2013.

FIRE STATION WORK ZONES

A new law allows municipalities to designate fire station work zones and doubles the basic fines for speeding or committing certain other traffic violations in any such conspicuously designated zone where a uniformed firefighter is directing traffic. The municipality may designate a fire station work zone by posting a sign at the (1) beginning of the zone that reads: "FIRE STATION WORK AHEAD FINES DOUBLED" and (2) end of the zone that reads: "END FIRE STATION WORK." As is currently the case for other similarly designated zones, neither the state nor a municipality or their agents or employees are civilly liable for any personal injury or property damage that results from a municipality's failure to post the sign.

[PA 13-200](#), effective October 1, 2013.

INTERFERING WITH AN OFFICER

A new law increases the penalty for interfering with a firefighter or other specified officers from a class A misdemeanor to a class D felony when the interference causes another person's death or serious physical injury. By law, a person commits this crime by obstructing, resisting, hindering, or endangering a peace officer, revenue services special police officer, motor vehicle inspector, or firefighter in the performance of their duties.

[PA 13-300](#), effective October 1, 2013.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Prior law prohibited municipal police and firefighters covered under state (Connecticut Municipal Employees' Retirement System) or local retirement systems from participating in the Social Security system. This new law removes the prohibition for police and fire service performed on or after August 16, 1994.

It allows these employees and their municipal employers to begin a process, which includes a federally required referendum, leading to their participation in Social Security. Under the act, a municipality can request a referendum for police and firefighters with service on or after August 16, 1994 to begin the statutory steps for joining the Social Security system.

[PA 13-153](#), effective upon passage.

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