

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2026 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Community Affairs

CS/CS/SB 984 — Firefighter Cancer Benefits

by Appropriations Committee; Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee; and Senators DiCeglie, Smith, and Arrington

Current law provides special disability and death benefits to firefighters who are diagnosed with certain cancers. To qualify, a firefighter must:

- Be employed full time as a firefighter (or Florida-certified fire investigator);
- Have been employed by the same employer for at least 5 continuous years;
- Not have used tobacco products in the preceding 5 years; and
- Have not been employed in any other position within the preceding 5 years that is proven to create a higher risk for cancer.

Firefighters who die as a result of cancer, or circumstances arising out of the treatment of cancer, are provided death benefits. If the firefighter participated in an employer-sponsored retirement plan, the plan must consider the firefighter to have died in the line of duty. If the firefighter did not participate in an employer-sponsored retirement plan, the employer must provide a death benefit to the firefighter's beneficiary equal to at least 42 percent of the firefighter's annual salary for at least 10 years. In addition, the beneficiary is entitled to a one-time payment of \$75,000.

The bill requires that the payment of the \$75,000 firefighter cancer death benefit to a firefighter's beneficiary be made available for 1 year after terminating employment, provided the former firefighter otherwise met the criteria at the time of termination of employment and was not subsequently employed as a firefighter.

The bill includes a legislative determination that the bill fulfills an important state interest.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2026.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 109-0