

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2022 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Community Affairs

HB 31 — Firefighter Inquiries and Investigations

by Reps. Busatta Cabrera, Casello, and others (SB 264 by Senator Hooper)

The Firefighters’ Bill of Rights provides specific rights when a firefighter is under investigation and subject to interrogation for a reason which could lead to disciplinary action, including reprimand, suspension, or dismissal. There is a similar law for law enforcement and correctional officers known as the Law Enforcement Officers’ Bill of Rights.

The bill amends the Firefighters’ Bill of Rights to expand the rights given to a firefighter during questioning conducted under an informal inquiry. Currently, questioning pursuant to an informal inquiry is not subject to the Firefighters’ Bill of Rights.

The bill requires that an informal inquiry be conducted at a reasonable time and for a reasonable duration, allowing reasonable periods of rest for the firefighter. Additionally, during an informal inquiry or interrogation a firefighter may not be threatened with transfer, suspension, dismissal, or disciplinary action as inducement to answer any questions.

The bill revises the definition of the term “informal inquiry” to exclude certain routine work related discussions such as safety sessions or normal operational fire debriefings.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2022.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 118-0