
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 331 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY BOSCOLA, COSTA, BROWNE AND BREWSTER,
FEBRUARY 15, 2017

REFERRED TO VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,
FEBRUARY 15, 2017

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Municipal Firefighter Education and Training
2 Program; providing for powers and duties of the State Fire
3 Commissioner; and prescribing penalties.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Municipal
8 Firefighter Education and Training Program Act.

9 Section 2. Definitions.

10 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
11 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
12 context clearly indicates otherwise:

13 "Commissioner." The State Fire Commissioner appointed under
14 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 73 Subch. F (relating to State Fire
15 Commissioner).

16 "Municipal firefighter." A full-time employee of a city,
17 borough, town or township fire department assigned to
18 firefighting duties.

1 "School." A training school or academy that offers
2 Pennsylvania State Fire Academy certified courses.
3 Section 3. Municipal Firefighter Education and Training
4 Program.

5 The Office of the State Fire Commissioner shall establish a
6 Municipal Firefighter Education and Training Program in
7 accordance with the provisions of this act. The administration
8 of this program shall be the responsibility of the Office of the
9 State Fire Commissioner. The commissioner, in consultation with
10 the Fire Safety Advisory Committee established under 35 Pa.C.S.
11 Ch. 73 Subch. F (relating to State Fire Commissioner), shall
12 develop basic course criteria and guidelines for the program.
13 The parameters developed by the commissioner shall be consistent
14 with established standards.

15 Section 4. Municipal firefighter training mandatory and
16 penalties.

17 (a) Training.--

18 (1) A political subdivision of the Commonwealth or a
19 group of political subdivisions acting in concert shall train
20 all members of its fire department hired by it after the
21 effective date of this section, under this act.

22 (2) A person hired as a municipal firefighter by a
23 political subdivision or group of political subdivisions
24 acting in concert after the effective date of this section
25 shall be, at the end of one year from the date of the
26 person's employment, ineligible to receive salary,
27 compensation or other consideration or thing of value for the
28 performance of the person's duties as a municipal firefighter
29 unless:

30 (i) The person has met all of the requirements as

1 established by the Office of the State Fire Commissioner.

2 (ii) The person has been duly certified as having
3 met those requirements by the commissioner.

4 (3) Paragraph (2) shall not apply if the municipal
5 firefighter is granted additional time to complete the
6 training by the commissioner.

7 (4) A person hired as a municipal firefighter shall be
8 given a grace period of two years from the effective date of
9 this section before the person becomes ineligible to receive
10 salary, compensation or other consideration of things of
11 value.

12 (b) Penalty.--An official of a political subdivision who
13 orders, authorizes or pays a salary to a person in violation of
14 the provisions of this act commits a summary offense and upon
15 conviction shall be sentenced to pay a fine of \$100 or be
16 imprisoned for a term of not more than 30 days.

17 Section 5. Reimbursement of expenses.

18 (a) Allowable expenses.--

19 (1) The Office of the State Fire Commissioner shall
20 provide reimbursement to each political subdivision of 100%
21 of the allowable tuition and the ordinary and necessary
22 living and travel expenses incurred by the political
23 subdivision's firefighters while attending certified
24 municipal firefighter basic training school, provided the
25 political subdivision adheres to the training standards,
26 employment longevity provisions and program guidelines
27 established by the Office of the State Fire Commissioner.

28 (2) The regular salary of a firefighter while attending
29 school approved under this act shall be paid by the employing
30 political subdivision.

1 (3) Eighty percent of the regular salary of a
2 firefighter while attending school approved under this act
3 shall be reimbursed by the commissioner to the employing
4 political subdivision.

5 (b) Grants.--The commissioner shall provide grants as a
6 reimbursement for actual expenses incurred by political
7 subdivisions for municipal firefighters who have successfully
8 completed the required basic course of instruction established
9 by the Office of the State Fire Commissioner.

10 (c) Application.--A political subdivision of the
11 Commonwealth or a group of political subdivisions acting in
12 concert may make application to the commissioner for funding
13 under this act. The application must be accompanied by a
14 certified copy of a resolution or resolutions adopted by its
15 governing body or bodies providing that, while receiving State
16 funds under this act, the political subdivision or group of
17 political subdivisions acting in concert will adhere to the
18 standards for training established by the commissioner. The
19 application shall contain such information as the commissioner
20 may request.

21 (d) Limitation.--Grants may be awarded on a pro rata basis
22 if the total dollar amount of approved applications exceeds the
23 amount of funds allocated for this program.

24 Section 6. Construction.

25 This act may not be construed to exempt a municipal
26 firefighter from the provisions of the existing civil service or
27 laws relating to tenure.

28 Section 7. Effective date.

29 This act shall take effect in 30 days.