

MICHIGAN

DEATH BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO THE SURVIVING FAMILIES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY



To obtain certified copies of registered personal documents, contact the Bureau of Vital Statistics: Submit written request to 201 Townsend ST, Capitol View BLDG, Lansing, MI 48913. Office: (517) 373-3740. www.michigan.gov/vitalrecords

STATE DEATH BENEFITS

Public Act 46 of 2004, the Public Safety Officers Benefit Act, provides compensation to the dependents of public safety officers who are killed or who are permanently disabled in the line of duty. The state shall pay a benefit of \$25,000 to 1 of the following:

If the deceased public safety officer leaves a surviving spouse, to that surviving spouse.

If the deceased public safety officer does not leave a spouse, to his or her dependents.

If the public safety officer does not leave a surviving spouse or any surviving dependents, payment shall be made to the estate of the deceased public safety officer.

If the public safety officer is permanently and totally disabled, to the spouse, but if there is no spouse, to the dependents, and if there are no dependents, then to the entity providing care to the permanently and totally disabled public safety officer.

The benefit shall be paid in addition to any other benefit that the beneficiary receives due to the death of the public safety officer. This Act is retroactive and is effective October 1, 2003.

PA 46 defines a public safety officer as "any individual serving a public agency in an official capacity, with or without compensation, as a law enforcement officer, a firefighter, rescue squad member, or ambulance crew member. A law enforcement officer includes police, corrections, probation, parole, bailiffs, or other similar court officers.

Line of Duty means either of the following:

Any action which an officer whose primary function is crime control or reduction, enforcement of the criminal law, or suppression of fires is obligated or authorized by rule, regulations, condition of employment or service, or law to perform, including those social, ceremonial, or athletic functions to which the officer is assigned, or for which the officer is compensated, by the public agency he or she serves. For other officers, line of duty means any action the officer is so obligated or authorized to perform in the course of controlling or reducing crime, enforcing the criminal law, or suppressing fires.

Any action which an officially recognized or designated public employee member of a rescue squad or ambulance crew is obligated or authorized by rule, regulation, condition of employment or service, or law to perform.

The Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) division of the Michigan Department of State Police is responsible for the administration of this program. Contact: 106 W. Allegan, STE 600, Lansing, MI 48909. Office: (517) 322-1417. www.michigan.gov/mcoles

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

Public Act 195 of 1996, the Police Officer's and Firefighter's Survivor Tuition Act, provides for the **waiver of tuition** at public community and junior colleges and state universities for the surviving spouse and children of Michigan police officers and fire fighters killed in the line of duty. The program is intended to provide an educational benefit to the spouse and children of police officers and fire fighters who made the ultimate sacrifice for their communities and the citizens of Michigan. Beginning with the academic year 1996/97, tuition is waived for eligible survivors enrolled in classes leading to a certificate or undergraduate degree.

The Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) division of the Michigan Department of State Police is responsible for the administration of this program.

Persons wishing to participate in this program must submit an application **prior to the start of the academic year**. The Act has specific eligibility requirements; therefore, *potential applicants are encouraged to read the following information carefully before applying.* **Contact: Michigan Department of Treasury, Office of Scholarships and Grants, (888) 447-2687.**

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workers' Compensation coverage is compulsory for employers with 3 or more employees in Michigan; however, waivers are allowed. Benefit is 90% of worker's spendable earnings for a spouse or a spouse with child(ren). Burial allowance is \$6000. Children receive benefits until 16, 18 if full-time students, or longer if disabled, notwithstanding the 500-week limit. To receive workers' compensation benefits, the surviving spouse must take the initiative and file a workers' compensation claim. If a claim is disputed, it may be necessary for the spouse to seek the services of a workers' compensation attorney. The initial hearing on disputed claims is before the Board of Magistrates and is subject to review by the workers' compensation Appellate Commission.

For more information contact the Bureau of Workers' Disability Compensation, P.O. Box 30016, Lansing, MI 48909. Office: (888) 396-5041. www.michigan.gov/wca.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Varied, depending upon the individual municipal or county department. Benefits for spouse and children may expire within days of an officer's death.

A Michigan Department of State Police spouse is covered for life; dependent children are covered until age 18; this may be extended beyond age 18 if dependent children remain in student status or have a permanent disability.

Contact: Michigan Department of Civil Service, Capitol Commons Center, 400 S Pine ST, Lansing, MI 48933. (517) 373-3030.

RETIREMENT/PENSION

Individual cities and municipalities are responsible for providing retirement and pension plans for law enforcement officers. Contact your local agency's Benefits Assistance Officer.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

PEER SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

Established in 1984, Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., (C.O.P.S.), is a national, non-profit organization that works with law enforcement agencies, police organizations, mental health professional, and local peer-support organizations to provide assistance to surviving families of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. C.O.P.S. has become a "lifeline" to police survivors nationwide. **Contact the C.O.P.S. National Office (800) 784-2611 or visit www.nationalcops.org/chap.htm for information on a chapter in your area.**

FUNERAL AND CREMATION BENEFITS

Dignity Memorial funeral, cremation and cemetery providers created the Public Servants Program for emergency service personnel. This program provides dignified and honorable tributes, at no cost, for career and volunteer law enforcement officers who fall in the line of duty. Visit their website for complete information @ www.dignitymemorial.com and look under Public Servants for details. You may also call 800-344-6489 and speak with a representative.

Wilbert Funeral Services, Inc. provides complimentary burial vaults and related services for fallen law enforcement officers. For more information visit www.wilbert.com or call (888) WILBERT.