

# VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2002 SESSION

## CHAPTER 150

*An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 9.1 a chapter numbered 8, consisting of sections numbered 9.1-800 through 9.1-803, establishing the Commonwealth Public Safety Medal of Valor Act.*

[S 222]

Approved March 22, 2002

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 9.1 a chapter numbered 8, consisting of sections numbered 9.1-800 through 9.1-803, as follows:**

### CHAPTER 8.

#### COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC SAFETY MEDAL OF VALOR ACT.

§ 9.1-800. *Commonwealth Public Safety Medal of Valor.*

*There is hereby established the Commonwealth Public Safety Medal of Valor. The Governor may award and present the Commonwealth Public Safety Medal of Valor, of appropriate design with ribbons and appurtenances, to a Virginia public safety officer for performance above and beyond the call of duty involving extraordinary valor in the face of grave danger, at great personal risk. The public safety officer shall have exhibited uncommon valor, which clearly distinguishes the officer as performing above and beyond normal job requirements. The Commonwealth Public Safety Medal of Valor shall be the highest award for valor by a public safety officer conferred by the Commonwealth. The Governor may select no more than three recipients for the Commonwealth Public Safety Medal of Valor award each year, unless the Governor determines that extraordinary circumstances warrant the selection of additional recipients.*

§ 9.1-801. *Public safety officer defined.*

*As used in this chapter, the term "public safety officer" includes a law-enforcement officer of this Commonwealth or any of its political subdivisions; a correctional officer as defined in § 53.1-1; a correctional officer employed at a juvenile correctional facility as the term is defined in § 66-25.3; a jail officer; a regional jail or jail farm superintendent; a member of any fire company or department or rescue squad that has been recognized by an ordinance or resolution of the governing body of any county, city or town of this Commonwealth as an integral part of the official safety program of such county, city or town; an arson investigator; a member of the Virginia National Guard or the Virginia State Defense Force while such a member is serving in the Virginia National Guard or the Virginia State Defense Force on official state duty or federal duty under Title 32 of the United States Code; any special agent of the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board; any police agent appointed under the provisions of § 56-353; any regular or special game warden who receives compensation from a county, city or town or from the Commonwealth appointed pursuant to § 29.1-200; any commissioned forest warden appointed pursuant to § 10.1-1135; any member or employee of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission granted the power to arrest pursuant to § 28.2-900; any Department of Emergency Management hazardous materials officer; any nonfirefighter regional hazardous materials emergency response team member; any investigator who is a full-time sworn member of the security division of the State Lottery Department; any full-time sworn member of the enforcement division of the Department of Motor Vehicles meeting the Department of Criminal Justice Services qualifications, when fulfilling duties pursuant to § 46.2-217; any campus police officer appointed under the provisions of Chapter 17 (§ 23-232 et seq.) of Title 23; and any conservation officer of the Department of Conservation and Recreation commissioned pursuant to § 10.1-115.*

§ 9.1-802. *Medal of Valor Review Board.*

*The Medal of Valor Review Board is established as an advisory board, within the meaning of § 2.2-2100, in the executive branch of state government. The Board shall be composed of seven members appointed by the Governor as follows: one police officer, one deputy sheriff, one paid firefighter, one volunteer firefighter, one corrections officer, one volunteer rescue squad member and one citizen member. The Virginia Public Safety Foundation may nominate persons to serve as Board members. The police officer, paid firefighter, corrections officer and citizen member shall serve four-year terms, and the remainder shall serve three-year terms. All terms shall commence July 1, 2002. No member shall serve more than two successive terms. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled for the unexpired term.*

*Each year, the Board shall elect a chairman and a vice-chairman from among its members. A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.*

§ 9.1-803. *Powers and duties of the Board.*

*The Board shall have the power and duty to:*

- 1. Recommend to the Governor any public safety officers to receive the Commonwealth Public Safety Medal of Valor and any lesser awards established pursuant to this chapter;*
- 2. Recommend to the Governor the establishment of public safety officer awards lesser than the Commonwealth Public Safety Medal of Valor Award;*
- 3. Apply for, accept and expend gifts, grants, or donations from public or private sources to enable it to carry out its objectives;*
- 4. Establish criteria for the nomination and selection of public safety officers to receive awards pursuant to this chapter; and*
- 5. Do all things necessary and convenient to carry out the purposes of this chapter.*