

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2024 SESSION

CHAPTER 363

An Act to direct the Department of Fire Programs to convene a work group to identify and analyze options to provide preemptive and ongoing health care to local government employees exposed to toxic materials.

[S 650]

Approved April 2, 2024

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. *§ 1. That the Department of Fire Programs shall convene a work group to identify and analyze options to help ensure that local government employees who respond to emergencies that expose them to toxic materials have appropriate preemptive and ongoing health care and are able to pay any health expenses related to such emergency and its aftereffects that are not covered by relevant health insurance plans. The work group shall consist of representatives from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, the Department of Planning and Budget, the Virginia Retirement System, and the Department of the Treasury; a designee from each of the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, the Virginia State Firefighters Association, and the Virginia State Police Association; and staff of the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations, and may include any other relevant stakeholders.*

The work group shall consider: (i) options for creating and determining eligibility for a grant program to assist local government employee responders, factors that would qualify an event as an emergency for which such grants may be awarded, and what other emergencies in the past 15 years could or should qualify; (ii) a detailed plan for administering grants and moneys to support such grant program; (iii) a review of relevant approaches used in other states and at the federal level for assisting such responders; (iv) identification of the appropriate body to invest and manage the funds; (v) a detailed plan for providing annual cancer screenings for eligible local government employee responders; and (vi) what types of out-of-pocket expenses should be addressed by grant funding. The work group shall report its findings to the General Assembly by November 1, 2024.