

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 979

BY REPRESENTATIVES WILEY, ADAMS, BAGLEY, CARPENTER, COATES, DEWITT, EGAN, FISHER, FREIBERG, HORTON, KERNER, LAFLEUR, LYONS, MACK, MARCELLE, MCFARLAND, OWEN, AND ZERINGUE

LAW ENFORCE/OFFICERS: Increases the benefit paid to survivors of law enforcement officers and firemen

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 40:1665(C)(1) and 1665.2(C)(1), relative to survivor benefits for  
3 certain first responders; to provide for the amount of benefits paid to certain  
4 beneficiaries in certain circumstances; to provide for an effective date; and to  
5 provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 40:1665(C)(1) and 1665.2(C)(1) are hereby amended and reenacted  
8 to read as follows:

9 §1665. Financial security for surviving spouses and children of firemen in certain  
10 cases

11 \* \* \*

12 C.(1) In any case in which a fireman suffers death as a result of an injury  
13 arising out of and in the course of the performance of his official duties as a fireman,  
14 or arising out of any activity while on or off duty, in his capacity as a fireman, in the  
15 protection of life and property, the sum of ~~two~~ three hundred fifty thousand dollars  
16 shall be paid to the surviving spouse of the fireman or, if not survived by a spouse,  
17 the sum of ~~two~~ three hundred fifty thousand dollars shall be paid to the surviving  
18 child or children or, if not survived by a spouse nor a child or children, then the sum  
19 of ~~two~~ three hundred fifty thousand dollars shall be paid to the named beneficiary  
20 listed on the fireman's designation form or, if there is no beneficiary designation  
21 form at the time of the fireman's death, and no surviving spouse nor a child or

1 children, then the sum of ~~two~~ three hundred fifty thousand dollars shall be paid to the  
 2 fireman's estate. Each fireman shall complete a beneficiary designation form. In  
 3 addition, if the fireman is survived by a dependent child or children, the sum of fifty  
 4 thousand dollars shall be paid for each of the dependent children, such sums to be  
 5 paid to the duly appointed and qualified tutor or the legal representative of the child  
 6 or children. Payment shall be made by the state risk manager out of the Self-  
 7 Insurance Fund created in R.S. 39:1533(A).

\* \* \*

9 §1665.2. Financial security for surviving spouses and children of law enforcement  
 10 officers in certain cases

\* \* \*

12 C.(1) In any case in which a law enforcement officer suffers death as a result  
 13 of any injury arising out of and in the course of the performance of his official duties  
 14 as such officer, or arising out of any activity, while on or off duty, in his capacity as  
 15 a law enforcement officer, in the protection of life or property, the sum of ~~two~~ three  
 16 hundred fifty thousand dollars shall be paid to the surviving spouse of each officer  
 17 or, if not survived by a spouse, the sum of ~~two~~ three hundred fifty thousand dollars  
 18 shall be paid to the surviving child or children or, if not survived by a spouse nor a  
 19 child or children, then the sum of ~~two~~ three hundred fifty thousand dollars shall be  
 20 paid to the named beneficiary listed on the officer's beneficiary designation form or,  
 21 if there is no designation form at the time of the officer's death, and no surviving  
 22 spouse nor a child or children, then the sum of ~~two~~ three hundred fifty thousand  
 23 dollars shall be paid to the officer's estate. Each officer shall complete a beneficiary  
 24 designation form. In addition, if the officer is survived by a dependent child or  
 25 children, the sum of fifty thousand dollars shall be paid for each of the dependent  
 26 children, such sums to be paid to the duly appointed and qualified tutor or the legal  
 27 representative of the child or children. Payment shall be made by the state risk  
 28 manager out of the Self-Insurance Fund created in R.S. 39:1533(A).

\* \* \*

1           Section 2. This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2026; if vetoed by the governor  
2 and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on July 1,  
3 2026, or on the day following such approval by the legislature, whichever is later.

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 979 Engrossed

2026 Regular Session

Wiley

**Abstract:** Increases from \$250,000 to \$350,000 the benefits paid by the state to survivors of qualifying firemen and law enforcement officers.

Present law establishes state-paid survivor benefits for firemen and law enforcement officers. Establishes qualifications for these payments.

Present law provides for payment of \$250,000 to a qualifying survivor if certain conditions are met. Proposed law increases this payment to \$350,000.

Effective July 1, 2026.

(Amends R.S. 40:1665(C)(1) and 1665.2(C)(1))