

By: Turner

H.B. No. 2927

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to quarantine leave for certain public safety employees.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 607, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter D to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER D. QUARANTINE LEAVE FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES

Sec. 607.151. DEFINITIONS. (a) In this subchapter:

(1) "Detention officer" means an individual employed by the state to ensure the safekeeping of prisoners and the security of a state penal institution in this state.

(2) "Emergency medical technician" means an individual who is:

(A) certified as an emergency medical technician under Chapter 773, Health and Safety Code; and

(B) employed by the state.

(3) "Firefighter" means a paid employee of the state who:

(A) holds a position that requires substantial knowledge of firefighting;

(B) has met the requirements for certification by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection under Chapter 419; and

(C) performs a function listed in Section 143.003(4)(A), Local Government Code.

(4) "Health authority" has the meaning assigned by

1 Section 121.021, Health and Safety Code.

2 (5) "Ordered to quarantine or isolate" means any
3 circumstance in which a person is not permitted to continue working
4 due to:

5 (A) a written or verbal directive by a health
6 authority or the employee's supervisor ordering the person to
7 refrain from reporting to duty after displaying symptoms of a
8 communicable disease; or

9 (B) a written or verbal directive by a health
10 authority or the employee's supervisor ordering the person to
11 refrain from reporting to duty after being exposed to a
12 communicable disease that is a presumptive illness under this
13 chapter.

14 (6) "Peace officer" means an individual described by
15 Article 2.12, Code of Criminal Procedure, who is elected for,
16 employed by, or appointed by the state.

17 (b) Notwithstanding Section 607.001, in this subchapter,
18 "public safety employee" means a detention officer, emergency
19 medical technician, firefighter, or peace officer.

20 Sec. 607.152. PAID QUARANTINE LEAVE FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC
21 SAFETY EMPLOYEES. (a) A state agency that employs public safety
22 employees shall develop and implement a paid quarantine leave
23 policy for public safety employees who are ordered to quarantine or
24 isolate.

25 (b) A paid quarantine leave policy must provide that a
26 public safety employee ordered to quarantine or isolate receive:

27 (1) all employment benefits and compensation,

1 including leave accrual, pension benefits, and health benefit plan
2 benefits for the duration of the leave; and

3 (2) reimbursement for reasonable costs related to the
4 quarantine, including lodging, medical, and transportation.

5 (c) The state agency may not reduce a public safety
6 employee's sick leave balance, vacation leave balance, or other
7 paid leave balance in connection with paid quarantine leave taken
8 in accordance with a policy adopted under this section.

9 SECTION 2. Section 180.008(a), Local Government Code, as
10 added by Chapter 685 (H.B. 2073), Acts of the 87th Legislature,
11 Regular Session, 2021, is amended by adding Subdivision (4-a) to
12 read as follows:

13 (4-a) "Ordered to quarantine or isolate" means any
14 circumstance in which a person is not permitted to continue working
15 due to:

16 (A) a written or verbal directive by a health
17 authority or the employee's supervisor ordering the person to
18 refrain from reporting to duty after displaying symptoms of a
19 communicable disease; or

20 (B) a written or verbal directive by a health
21 authority or the employee's supervisor ordering the person to
22 refrain from reporting to duty after being exposed to a
23 communicable disease that is a presumptive illness under this
24 chapter.

25 SECTION 3. Section 180.008(b), Local Government Code, as
26 added by Chapter 685 (H.B. 2073), Acts of the 87th Legislature,
27 Regular Session, 2021, is amended to read as follows:

1 (b) The governing body of a political subdivision shall
2 develop and implement a paid quarantine leave policy for fire
3 fighters, peace officers, detention officers, and emergency
4 medical technicians who are employed by, appointed by, or elected
5 for the political subdivision and ordered to quarantine or isolate
6 ~~[due to a possible or known exposure to a communicable disease while~~
7 ~~on duty]~~.

8 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
9 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
10 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
11 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
12 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.