

By: Landgraf

H.B. No. 1306

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to certain claims for benefits or compensation by a coroner, medical examiner, or death investigator.

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

SECTION 1. Sections 607.001, 607.002, and 607.003, Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

Sec. 607.001. DEFINITIONS [~~DEFINITION~~]. (a) In this chapter, "public safety employee" means a peace officer, fire fighter, detention officer, county jailer, or emergency medical services employee of this state or a political subdivision of this state.

(b) In this subchapter, "death investigation professional" means a coroner, medical examiner, or death investigator employed by a political subdivision of this state.

Sec. 607.002. REIMBURSEMENT. A public safety employee or death investigation professional who is exposed to a contagious disease is entitled to reimbursement from the employing governmental entity for reasonable medical expenses incurred in treatment for the prevention of the disease if:

(1) the disease is not an "ordinary disease of life" as that term is used in the context of a workers' compensation claim;

(2) the exposure to the disease occurs during the course of the employment; and

(3) the employee or professional requires

1 preventative medical treatment because of exposure to the disease.

2       Sec. 607.003. PHYSICIAN OF CHOICE. A public safety  
3 employee or death investigation professional who is exposed to a  
4 disease described by Section 607.002 is entitled to be treated for  
5 the prevention of that disease by the physician of the employee's or  
6 professional's choice.

7       SECTION 2. Section 607.004, Government Code, is amended by  
8 adding Subsection (a-1) to read as follows:

9       (a-1) A death investigation professional is entitled to  
10 preventative immunization for any disease to which the death  
11 investigation professional may be exposed in performing the  
12 professional's duties and for which immunization is possible.

13       SECTION 3. Section 615.003, Government Code, is amended to  
14 read as follows:

15       Sec. 615.003. APPLICABILITY. This chapter applies only to  
16 eligible survivors of the following individuals:

17               (1) an individual:

18                       (A) elected, appointed, or employed as a peace  
19 officer by the state or a political subdivision of the state under  
20 Article 2A.001, Code of Criminal Procedure, or other law; or

21                       (B) employed as a peace officer by a private  
22 institution of higher education, including a private junior  
23 college, that is located in this state under Section 51.212,  
24 Education Code;

25               (2) a paid probation officer appointed by the director  
26 of a community supervision and corrections department who has the  
27 duties set out in Section 76.002 and the qualifications set out in

1 Section 76.005, or who was appointed in accordance with prior law;

2 (3) a parole officer employed by the Texas Department  
3 of Criminal Justice who has the duties set out in Section 508.001  
4 and the qualifications set out in Section 508.113 or in prior law;

5 (4) a paid jailer;

6 (5) a member of an organized police reserve or  
7 auxiliary unit who regularly assists peace officers in enforcing  
8 criminal laws;

9 (6) a member of the class of employees of the  
10 correctional institutions division formally designated as  
11 custodial personnel under Section 615.006 by the Texas Board of  
12 Criminal Justice or its predecessor in function;

13 (7) a jailer or guard of a county jail who is appointed  
14 by the sheriff and who:

15 (A) performs a security, custodial, or  
16 supervisory function over the admittance, confinement, or  
17 discharge of prisoners; and

18 (B) is certified by the Texas Commission on Law  
19 Enforcement;

20 (8) a juvenile correctional employee of the Texas  
21 Juvenile Justice Department;

22 (9) an employee of the Health and Human Services  
23 Commission [~~Department of Aging and Disability Services~~] or  
24 Department of State Health Services who:

25 (A) works at the department's maximum security  
26 unit; or

27 (B) performs on-site services for the Texas

1 Department of Criminal Justice;

2 (10) an individual who is employed by the state or a  
3 political or legal subdivision and is subject to certification by  
4 the Texas Commission on Fire Protection;

5 (11) an individual employed by the state or a  
6 political or legal subdivision whose principal duties are aircraft  
7 crash and rescue fire fighting;

8 (12) a member of an organized volunteer fire-fighting  
9 unit that:

10 (A) renders fire-fighting services without  
11 remuneration; and

12 (B) conducts a minimum of two drills each month,  
13 each two hours long;

14 (13) an individual who:

15 (A) performs emergency medical services or  
16 operates an ambulance;

17 (B) is employed by a political subdivision of the  
18 state or is an emergency medical services volunteer as defined by  
19 Section 773.003, Health and Safety Code; and

20 (C) is qualified as an emergency care attendant  
21 or at a higher level of training under Section 773.046, 773.047,  
22 773.048, 773.049, or 773.0495, Health and Safety Code;

23 (14) an individual who is employed or formally  
24 designated as a chaplain for:

25 (A) an organized volunteer fire-fighting unit or  
26 other fire department of this state or of a political subdivision of  
27 this state;

1 (B) a law enforcement agency of this state or of a  
2 political subdivision of this state; or

3 (C) the Texas Department of Criminal Justice;

4 (15) an individual who is employed by the state or a  
5 political subdivision of the state and who is considered by the  
6 governmental employer to be a trainee for a position otherwise  
7 described by this section;

8 (16) an individual who is employed by the Department  
9 of Public Safety and, as certified by the director, is:

10 (A) deployed into the field in direct support of  
11 a law enforcement operation, including patrol, investigative,  
12 search and rescue, crime scene, on-site communications, or special  
13 operations; and

14 (B) given a special assignment in direct support  
15 of operations relating to organized crime, criminal interdiction,  
16 border security, counterterrorism, intelligence, traffic  
17 enforcement, emergency management, regulatory services, or special  
18 investigations; ~~or~~

19 (17) an individual who is employed by the Parks and  
20 Wildlife Department and, as certified by the executive director of  
21 the Parks and Wildlife Department, is:

22 (A) deployed into the field in direct support of  
23 a law enforcement operation, including patrol, investigative,  
24 search and rescue, crime scene, on-site communications, or special  
25 operations; and

26 (B) given a special assignment in direct support  
27 of operations relating to organized crime, criminal interdiction,

1 border security, counterterrorism, intelligence, traffic  
2 enforcement, emergency management, regulatory services, or special  
3 investigations; or

4 (18) an individual who is employed by a political  
5 subdivision of this state as a coroner, medical examiner, or death  
6 investigator.

7 SECTION 4. Section 504.055, Labor Code, is amended to read  
8 as follows:

9 (a) In this section, "first responder" means:

10 (1) an individual employed by a political subdivision  
11 of this state who is:

12 (A) a peace officer under Article 2A.001, Code of  
13 Criminal Procedure;

14 (B) a person licensed under Chapter 773, Health  
15 and Safety Code, as an emergency care attendant, emergency medical  
16 technician, emergency medical technician-intermediate, emergency  
17 medical technician-paramedic, or licensed paramedic; or

18 (C) a firefighter subject to certification by the  
19 Texas Commission on Fire Protection under Chapter 419, Government  
20 Code, whose principal duties are firefighting and aircraft crash  
21 and rescue; or

22 (D) a death investigation professional, as  
23 defined by Section 607.001, Government Code; or

24 SECTION 5. The changes in law made by this Act apply to a  
25 claim for benefits or compensation pending on or filed on or after  
26 the effective date of this Act. A claim for benefits or  
27 compensation filed before that date, other than a claim pending on

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1 that date, is governed by the law in effect on the date the claim was  
2 made, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

3 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.