

CHAPTER 199

AN ACT providing workers' compensation for certain volunteers and amending R.S.34:15-10, R.S.34:15-43, R.S.34:15-75 and N.J.S.59:1-3.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. R.S.34:15-10 is amended to read as follows:

Employment of minors.

34:15-10. In the employment of minors, this article shall be presumed to apply unless the notice be given by or to the parent or guardian of the minor. If the injured employee at the time of the accident or compensable occupational disease is a minor under 14 years of age employed in violation of the labor law or a minor between 14 and 18 years of age employed, permitted or suffered to work without an employment certificate or special permit if required by law or at an occupation prohibited at the minor's age by law, a compensation or death benefit shall be payable to the employee or his dependents which shall be double the amount payable under the schedules provided in R.S.34:15-12 and R.S.34:15-13.

The possession of such duly issued employment certificate shall be conclusive evidence for an employer that the minor has reached the age certified to therein and no extra compensation shall be payable to any minor engaged in an employment allowed by the law for the age and sex certified to in such certificate. If the certificate presented by the employee as one issued to that person shall have been really issued to another child and the real age of the employee shall be such that employment in any capacity or in the particular capacity the employee was employed by the employer was prohibited and if the employer shall show to the satisfaction of the Division of Workers' Compensation that the employer accepted the certificate in good faith as having been issued to the employee and could not have, despite reasonable diligence, discovered the fraud, in such event no extra compensation shall be paid to the employee illegally employed.

The employer alone and not the insurance carrier shall be liable for the extra compensation or death benefit which is over and above the amount of the compensation or death benefit provided under R.S.34:15-12 or R.S.34:15-13. Any provision in an insurance policy undertaking to relieve an employer from the liability for the extra compensation or extra death benefit shall be void.

Nothing in this chapter contained shall deprive an infant under the age of 18 years of the right or rights now existing to recover damages in a common law or other appropriate action or proceeding for injuries received by reason of the negligence of his or her master.

Nothing in this section regarding the payment of a compensation or death benefit in double the amount payable under the schedules provided in R.S.34:15-12 and R.S.34:15-13 shall apply to: members of a junior firemen's auxiliary established pursuant to N.J.S.40A:14-95; employees, of the age of 18 years or under, employed in summer camps operated by the Boy Scouts of America, the Girl Scouts of America, the Knights of Columbus, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Young Men's Hebrew Association, or any domestic corporation organized solely for religious or charitable purposes; student-learners employed in a cooperative vocational education program approved by the State Board of Education; persons, 18 years of age or younger, participating, under the supervision of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, in volunteer programs in that part of the Palisades Interstate Park located in New Jersey; or persons, 18 years of age or younger, doing volunteer work for the Division of Parks and Forestry, the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust or the New Jersey Historic Trust, as authorized by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection.

2. R.S.34:15-43 is amended to read as follows:

Compensation for injury in line of duty.

34:15-43. Every officer, appointed or elected, and every employee of the State, county, municipality or any board or commission, or any other governing body, including boards of education, and governing bodies of service districts, individuals who are under the general supervision of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission and who work in that part of the Palisades Interstate Park which is located in this State, and also each and every member of a

volunteer fire company doing public fire duty and also each and every active volunteer, first aid or rescue squad worker, including each and every authorized worker who is not a member of the volunteer fire company within which the first aid or rescue squad may have been created, doing public first aid or rescue duty under the control or supervision of any commission, council, or any other governing body of any municipality, any board of fire commissioners of such municipality or of any fire district within the State, or of the board of managers of any State institution, every county fire marshal and assistant county fire marshal, every special, reserve or auxiliary policeman doing volunteer public police duty under the control or supervision of any commission, council or any other governing body of any municipality, every emergency management volunteer doing emergency management service for the State and any person doing volunteer work for the Division of Parks and Forestry, the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust or the New Jersey Historic Trust, as authorized by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, who may be injured in line of duty shall be compensated under and by virtue of the provisions of this article and article 2 of this chapter (R.S.34:15-7 et seq.). No former employee who has been retired on pension by reason of injury or disability shall be entitled under this section to compensation for such injury or disability; provided, however, that such employee, despite retirement, shall, nevertheless, be entitled to the medical, surgical and other treatment and hospital services as set forth in R.S.34:15-15.

Benefits available under this section to emergency management volunteers and volunteers participating in activities of the Division of Parks and Forestry, the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust or the New Jersey Historic Trust, shall not be paid to any claimant who has another single source of injury or death benefits that provides the claimant with an amount of compensation that exceeds the compensation available to the claimant under R.S.34:15-1 et seq.

As used in this section, the terms "doing public fire duty" and "who may be injured in line of duty," as applied to members of volunteer fire companies, county fire marshals or assistant county fire marshals, and the term "doing public first aid or rescue duty," as applied to active volunteer first aid or rescue squad workers, shall be deemed to include participation in any authorized construction, installation, alteration, maintenance or repair work upon the premises, apparatus or other equipment owned or used by the fire company or the first aid or rescue squad, participation in any authorized public drill, showing, exhibition, fund raising activity or parade, and to include also the rendering of assistance in case of fire and, when authorized, in connection with other events affecting the public health or safety, in any political subdivision or territory of another state of the United States or on property ceded to the federal government while such assistance is being rendered and while going to and returning from the place in which it is rendered.

Also, as used in this section, "doing public police duty" and "who may be injured in line of duty" as applied to special, reserve or auxiliary policemen, shall be deemed to include participation in any authorized public drill, showing, exhibition or parade, and to include also the rendering of assistance in connection with other events affecting the public health or safety in the municipality, and also, when authorized, in connection with any such events in any political subdivision or territory of this or any other state of the United States or on property ceded to the federal government while such assistance is being rendered and while going to and returning from the place in which it is rendered.

As used in this section, the terms "doing emergency management service" and "who may be injured in the line of duty" as applied to emergency management volunteers mean participation in any activities authorized pursuant to P.L.1942, c.251 (C.App. A:9-33 et seq.), except that the terms shall not include activities engaged in by a member of an emergency management agency of the United States Government or of another state, whether pursuant to a mutual aid compact or otherwise.

Every member of a volunteer fire company shall be deemed to be doing public fire duty under the control or supervision of any such commission, council, governing body, board of fire commissioners or fire district or board of managers of any State institution within the meaning of this section, if such control or supervision is provided for by statute or by rule or regulation of the board of managers or the superintendent of such State institution, or if the fire company

of which he is a member receives contributions from, or a substantial part of its expenses or equipment are paid for by, the municipality, or board of fire commissioners of the fire district or if such fire company has been or hereafter shall be designated by ordinance as the fire department of the municipality.

Every active volunteer, first aid or rescue squad worker, including every authorized worker who is not a member of the volunteer fire company within which the first aid or rescue squad may have been created, shall be deemed to be doing public first aid or rescue duty under the control or supervision of any such commission, council, governing body, board of fire commissioners or fire district within the meaning of this section if such control or supervision is provided for by statute, or if the first aid or rescue squad of which he is a member or authorized worker receives or is eligible to receive contributions from, or a substantial part of its expenses or equipment are paid for by, the municipality, or board of fire commissioners of the fire district, or if such first aid or rescue squad has been or hereafter shall be designated by ordinance as the first aid or rescue squad of the municipality.

As used in this section and in R.S.34:15-74, the term "authorized worker" shall mean and include, in addition to an active volunteer fireman and an active volunteer first aid or rescue squad worker, any person performing any public fire duty or public first aid or rescue squad duty, as the same are defined in this section, at the request of the chief or acting chief of a fire company or the president or person in charge of a first aid or rescue squad for the time being.

Nothing herein contained shall be construed as affecting or changing in any way the provisions of any statute providing for sick, disability, vacation or other leave for public employees or any provision of any retirement or pension fund provided by law.

3. R.S.34:15-75 is amended to read as follows:

Compensation for injury, death provided for certain volunteers.

34:15-75. Compensation for injury and death, either or both, of any volunteer fireman, county fire marshal, assistant county fire marshal, volunteer first aid or rescue squad worker, volunteer driver of any municipally-owned or operated ambulance, forest fire warden or forest fire fighter employed by the State of New Jersey, member of a board of education, special reserve or auxiliary policeman doing volunteer public police duty under the control or supervision of any commission, council or any other governing body of any municipality, emergency management volunteer doing emergency management service, or any volunteer worker for the Division of Parks and Forestry, the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust or the New Jersey Historic Trust, shall be based upon a weekly salary or compensation conclusively presumed to be received by such person in an amount sufficient to entitle him, or, in the event of his death, his dependents, to receive the maximum compensation by this chapter authorized.

4. N.J.S.59:1-3 is amended to read as follows:

Definitions.

59:1-3. Definitions. As used in this subtitle:

"Employee" includes an officer, employee, or servant, whether or not compensated or part-time, who is authorized to perform any act or service; provided, however, that the term does not include an independent contractor.

"Employment" includes office; position; employment; or service, under the supervision of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, in a volunteer program in that part of the Palisades Interstate Park located in New Jersey, as an emergency management volunteer or as a volunteer doing work for the Division of Parks and Forestry, the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust or the New Jersey Historic Trust, as authorized by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection.

"Enactment" includes a constitutional provision, statute, executive order, ordinance, resolution or regulation.

"Injury" means death, injury to a person, damage to or loss of property or any other injury

that a person may suffer that would be actionable if inflicted by a private person.

"Law" includes enactments and also the decisional law applicable within this State as determined and declared from time to time by the courts of this State and of the United States.

"Public employee" means an employee of a public entity, and includes: a person participating, under the supervision of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, in a volunteer program in that part of the Palisades Interstate Park located in New Jersey; a volunteer doing work for the Division of Parks and Forestry, the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust or the New Jersey Historic Trust, as authorized by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection; and any person retained by the public defender to serve as an arbitrator, mediator, or in such similar capacity. "Public employee" does not include any independent contractors or other individuals, agencies, or entities not established in or employed by the Office of the Public Defender designated to provide protection and advocacy services to indigent mental hospital admittees or persons with a developmental disability as the term is defined in section 3 of P.L.1977, c.82 (C.30:6D-3).

"Public entity" includes the State, and any county, municipality, district, public authority, public agency, and any other political subdivision or public body in the State. "Public entity" does not include any independent contractors or other individuals, agencies, or entities not established in or employed by the Office of the Public Defender designated to provide protection and advocacy services to indigent mental hospital admittees or persons with a developmental disability as the term is defined in section 3 of P.L.1977, c.82 (C.30:6D-3).

"State" shall mean the State and any office, department, division, bureau, board, commission or agency of the State, but shall not include any such entity which is statutorily authorized to sue and be sued. "State" also means the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, but only with respect to employees, property and activities within the State of New Jersey.

"Statute" means an act adopted by the Legislature of this State or by the Congress of the United States.

5. This act shall take effect on the 30th day following enactment.

Approved August 14, 1997.