

# SENATE, No. 402

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# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

## 208th LEGISLATURE

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INTRODUCED JANUARY 20, 1998

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator ROBERT E. LITTELL**

**District 24 (Sussex, Hunterdon and Morris)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblymen Gregg and Garrett**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires training, expands jurisdiction of fire police.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/30/1998)**

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1 AN ACT concerning fire police and amending R.S.15:8-4.

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

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6 1. R.S.15:8-4 is amended to read as follows:

7 15:8-4. Any duly organized volunteer fire company may provide for  
8 the appointment of certain of its members to perform certain police  
9 duties at fires and fire drills, for a term of office not exceeding five  
10 years from the date of the appointment. **[Such]** The appointed  
11 members shall, before entering upon their duties, qualify by:

12 (1) Successfully completing a basic fire police training course  
13 formulated or approved by the Division of Fire Safety.

14 (2) **[taking]** Taking and subscribing an oath that they will justly,  
15 impartially and faithfully discharge their duties according to the best  
16 of their ability and understanding. **[Said]** The oath shall be  
17 administered by the municipal clerk and subscribed to in duplicate. The  
18 original copy of **[said]** the oath shall be filed with the municipal clerk  
19 and the copy thereof filed with the secretary of the fire company  
20 making **[such]** the appointment.

21 After appointment, a qualified member shall be eligible as a fire  
22 police officer and shall have full power and authority to act as **[such]**  
23 a fire police officer anywhere in the county in which he is appointed or  
24 in any other county in which he is called upon to act.

25 It shall be the duty of a member of the fire police to perform his  
26 duties under the supervision of the fire officer in charge of the fire or  
27 fire drill.

28 The duties of said fire police subject to the supervision aforesaid  
29 shall be to:

30 (1) Protect property and contents.

31 (2) Establish and maintain fire lines.

32 (3) Perform such traffic duties as necessary, from the fire station  
33 to and at the vicinity of the fire, fire drill or other emergency call, or  
34 at any public event where fire police services may be requested to  
35 protect the public, until the arrival of a duly authorized police officer.

36 (4) In the absence of investigating authorities, fire police shall  
37 investigate all causes of fires and preserve all evidence pertaining to  
38 questionable fires and turn evidence over to proper investigating  
39 authorities.

40 (5) Wear the authorized fire police badge on the left breast of the  
41 outermost garment while on duty.

42 Provided, however, nothing herein contained shall give the fire

**EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.**

**Matter underlined thus is new matter.**

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1 police or any of them the right to supersede a duly authorized police  
2 officer.

3 If any person shall unreasonably refuse to obey the orders of the fire  
4 police, ~~such~~ a fire police officer may arrest him and keep him under  
5 arrest until the fire is extinguished or the drill completed. If the  
6 offender is found guilty by a municipal court or Superior Court, he  
7 shall be sentenced to pay a fine not exceeding ~~[\$200.00]~~ \$200 and  
8 costs.

9 (cf: P.L.1991, c.91, s.230)

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11 2. This act shall take effect immediately, but the training  
12 requirement shall apply only to fire police officers initially appointed  
13 on or after the effective date.

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STATEMENT

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18 This bill authorizes fire police to perform traffic duties at public  
19 events where their services may be requested to protect the public.  
20 Currently, fire police are specifically authorized to perform traffic  
21 duties from the fire station to, and at the vicinity of, a fire, fire drill or  
22 other emergency call, such as at the scene of a motor vehicle accident,  
23 downed wires, malfunctioning traffic signals or flooded roads, until the  
24 arrival of a duly authorized police officer. Under the bill, fire police  
25 would also be authorized to provide crowd control services when  
26 requested to do so at public events, including, but not limited to,  
27 parades, fireworks displays, fairs, field days and dedications of fire  
28 apparatus, equipment and buildings.

29 The bill would also require all members of a volunteer fire company  
30 appointed to the fire police to successfully complete a basic fire police  
31 officer training course before commencing their duties. The course  
32 would be required to be formulated or approved by the Division of  
33 Fire Safety in the Department of Community Affairs. A basic fire  
34 police officer training course has been developed by the division and  
35 is currently being offered on a voluntary basis.