

PRESUMPTIVE COVERAGE: A GUIDE FOR FIRE FIGHTERS AND RESCUE WORKERS



This factsheet was developed by the International Association of Fire Fighters and the Firefighter Cancer Support Network.

A presumptive law links a particular occupation with a disease or condition that has been shown to be associated with a hazard in that occupation. As a result of this linkage, if an individual employed in the occupation covered by the presumption contracts a disease or condition that is specified in the presumptive law, then that disease or condition is presumed to have come from that occupation.

With cancer presumption, the burden of proof shifts away from the fire fighter to the employer. However, just because a disease is presumptive does not mean that it is not rebuttable by the jurisdiction.

DETERMINING STATUS

- The IAFF tracks cancer presumption across the U.S. and Canada. To review your state, province, or territory's coverage, visit IAFF.org/presumptive-health.
- Individuals can also utilize state/province/territory legislative websites for specific benefits available for each jurisdiction.
 - Search for the applicable disease or illness(es) on these websites.
 - Carefully review the language that describes what is covered. Disease coverage and benefits vary greatly based on jurisdiction.
- It's important to keep informed of changes in the legislation that impact you and your members.



HOW TO ADVOCATE

BUILD LEGISLATION

- Collaborate with IAFF Science and Research Team for literature review.
 - Identify independent and well-designed research for evidence of occupational causes of diseases.
- Collaborate with IAFF Government Affairs team for model language or similar passed legislation language for the respective disease or illness that needs coverage.
 - Identify comparable jurisdictions that include the illness/disease you are seeking in their presumptive legislation.
- Research, data, and personal stories should all be part of the story to motivate policymakers to push legislation forward.
- Draft hearing testimony or written materials to support expanding presumptions.
- Speak to other IAFF state leaders to learn how they were successful in getting presumptive legislation passed in their states.

BUILD SUPPORT

- Identify potential legislators on both sides of the aisle to sponsor the effort to introduce or change legislation.
- Lobby other legislators and industry stakeholders for support.
 - In some cases, passage of a formal bill may not be required for revisions of existing legislation.
 - Engagement of local and state administrators is also needed for future policy implementation.
- Consider a coordinated media campaign with IAFF branded resources, in consultation with the IAFF Communications Division, to get the word out and build community support.
- Coordinate grassroots advocacy campaigns to get members of your Local involved.