



PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER BENEFITS PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE PSOB PROGRAM?

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program is a federal program providing death and education benefits to the survivors of U.S. public safety officers killed in the line of duty. In some very limited cases, the PSOB program also covers permanent and total disability.

The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) administers PSOB and is separate from the IAFF Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE PSOB?

Under federal law, eligible public safety officers include:

- A sworn fire fighter or EMS worker employed by a governmental or nonprofit agency
- Cadets or trainees participating in a formal training program or academy
- Retired governmental or nonprofit fire fighters or EMS personnel diagnosed with cancer within 15 years of retiring

WHAT TYPES OF DEATHS DOES THE PSOB PROGRAM COVER?

The PSOB program covers a wide range of traumatic and medical deaths, when injury or illness occurred while the individual was on-duty (either responding to calls or participating in official training). Some of the more commonly covered types of deaths include:

- Traumatic deaths: Flashovers, building collapses, vehicle accidents, falls
- Medical deaths: Occupational cancer, heart attack, stroke
- Behavioral health: Suicide, PTSD

IS THERE A DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR BENEFITS?

Applications must be submitted within three years of a public safety officer's death. This deadline is firm and the DOJ does not provide extensions.

The only exception to this deadline is for occupational cancer deaths that occurred between Jan. 1, 2020, and Dec. 18, 2025, which can now be claimed retroactively. **The deadline to submit a retroactive cancer claim is Dec. 18, 2028.** Any cancer death occurring after Dec. 18,

2025, will have the typical three-year window to file an application for benefits.

WHAT BENEFITS DOES PSOB PROVIDE?

Depending on eligibility, PSOB may provide:

- **DEATH BENEFIT:** A one time, nontaxable federal payment of approximately \$461,656 for eligible line of duty deaths. This amount is indexed to inflation and changes every year.
- **DISABILITY BENEFIT:** A one-time benefit to eligible public safety officers who are permanently and totally disabled due to a catastrophic line-of-duty injury.
- **EDUCATION ASSISTANCE:** Eligible spouses and dependent children may receive support for tuition, room and board, books, supplies, and other education related expenses, with a full time monthly benefit of approximately \$1,574.

HOW LONG DOES THE PSOB PROCESS TAKE?

PSOB claims require an in-depth review. Some claims may involve significant legal complexity, and benefits are not paid until this review is complete. The claim review process often takes 1-3 years.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR PSOB BENEFITS?

PSOB claims are submitted online to the DOJ and require information from both the applicant and the employer. The IAFF can assist families and affiliates in understanding eligibility, navigating the claims process, and identifying available resources.

HOW CAN I CONTACT THE IAFF FOR HELP?

Email psob@iaff.org with any questions about the PSOB program. More information is also available at iaff.org/psob/faq or via the QR code here.

