

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

**FILE NUMBER:** H.F. 49

**DATE:** February 19, 1999

**Version:** First engrossment

**Authors:** Ozment and others

**Subject:** Health care coverage for dependents of peace officer's and firefighter's killed in the line of duty

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### Overview

House File 49 amends the law, originally enacted in 1997, that provides for continued health insurance coverage for dependents of a peace officer or firefighter killed in the line of duty. The bill specifies that "dependents" include a spouse who was not covered, but eligible for coverage, at the time of the officer's or firefighter's death, or who later becomes eligible.

- 1 Officer or firefighter killed in line of duty.** Specifies that "dependents" eligible for continued health coverage after a peace officer or firefighter is killed in the line of duty include the spouse if the spouse was not covered as a dependent at the time of the officer's or firefighter's death but was eligible, or later becomes eligible, to be a dependent on the employer's group health plan.
- 2 Effective date.** Section 1 is effective the day after enactment and applies to health coverage on or after that date for dependents of peace officers or firefighters killed on or after November 1, 1997.

See page 2 for definitions.

#### Definitions:

"Peace officer" is defined to mean "an employee or an elected or appointed official of a political subdivision or law enforcement agency who is licensed by the [peace officer standards and training] board, charged with the prevention and detection of crime and the enforcement of the general criminal laws of the state and who has the full power of arrest, and shall also include the Minnesota state patrol, agents of the division of alcohol and gambling enforcement, state conservation officers, and metropolitan transit police officers." It does not include part-time peace officers.

"Firefighter" is defined to mean "one who is regularly entered on the payroll of one of the fire departments, serving on active duty with a designated fire company therein, or having charge of

one or more of the companies and engaged in the hazards of firefighting; and includes all members of the electrical and mechanical divisions of the fire departments who are subject to like hazards." It excludes volunteer firefighters. It also excludes substitutes and persons employed irregularly from time to time.