
FISCAL TOPICS

Fiscal Services Division

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Department of Corrections Survivor Benefits Fund

Purpose and History

The Department of Corrections (DOC) Survivor Benefits Fund is established in Iowa Code section [904.321](#). The purpose of the DOC Survivor Benefits Fund is to cover costs associated with the continuance of accident or health care coverage for families of eligible DOC employees killed in the line of duty. The DOC is required to distribute the money within the Fund in the form of grants to nonprofit organizations that provide resources to assist surviving families paying for the continuance of accident or health care coverage under Iowa Code section [509A.13D](#).

Iowa Code section 509A.13D provides health insurance coverage for the surviving spouse and children of eligible employees of the DOC. An "eligible employee" is defined as an employee of the DOC, or an employee of the DOC whose death has been determined by the Department to be the direct and proximate result of a traumatic personal injury incurred in the line of duty. There are several exceptions to eligibility, such as intentional misconduct or gross negligence on the part of the employee.

The State must permit continuation of existing health insurance coverage or reenrollment in previously existing coverage for the surviving spouse and each surviving child of an eligible employee of the DOC. Payment by the State is not required; however, the State may pay for all or part of the cost of the health insurance. If the full cost or a portion of the cost of coverage is not paid by the State, the surviving spouse and each surviving child may elect to continue coverage by paying that remaining portion of the cost.

The DOC Survivor Benefits Fund was created during the 2021 Legislative Session in [HF 861](#) (FY 2022 Justice System Appropriations Act). On March 23, 2021, two DOC employees were killed in the line of duty at Anamosa State Penitentiary. Under HF 861, the health insurance coverage and DOC Survivor Benefits Fund applied retroactively to March 1, 2021.

Funding

The DOC Survivor Benefits Fund consists of moneys transferred to the Fund pursuant to Iowa Code section [99G.39](#) and any other moneys appropriated to or deposited in the Fund. Iowa Code section 99G.39 provides that \$100,000 in Lottery revenues be transferred each fiscal year to the DOC Survivor Benefits Fund prior to the revenues being deposited in the General Fund. Moneys in the Fund are distributed by the DOC to nonprofit organizations that provide resources to assist surviving families of eligible DOC employees killed in the line of duty in paying for the continuance of accident or health care coverage. Moneys in the Fund do not revert but remain available for expenditure for the designated purposes. Interest or earnings on moneys in the Fund are credited to the Fund.

Related Statutes

Iowa Code sections [99G.39](#), [99G.40](#), [509A.13D](#), and [904.321](#)

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More Information

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