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## FISCAL TOPICS

Fiscal Services Division

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# Department of Corrections Survivor Benefits Fund

## Purpose and History

The purpose of the Iowa Department of Corrections (DOC) Survivor Benefits Fund is to cover any costs associated with the continuance of health insurance for families of eligible employees. 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 enacted during the 2021 General Assembly 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 apply retroactively to March 1, 2021.

## Funding

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 deposit in the General Fund. The funds are distributed by the DOC to nonprofit organizations that provide resources to assist surviving families of eligible DOC employees paying for the continuance of accident or health care coverage.

## Related Statutes

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

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## More Information

Department of Corrections: [doc.iowa.gov/](http://doc.iowa.gov/)

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