For the latest updates and information related to COVID-19, visit the Kansas COVID-19 Response and Recovery website. covid.ks.gov.

Governor addresses workers compensation for frontline responders

Apr 20, 2020

In an effort to help Kansans who put their health and lives on the line during the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Laura Kelly is directing the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) to evaluate all of its processes and procedures for handling workers compensation claims filed by law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical service providers and health care workers that are reasonably related to the pandemic.

KDOL will draft and submit a temporary regulation and develop or prepare potential legislation designed to create workers compensation coverage for our first responders and healthcare workers who contract COVID-19 while assisting in the State's response to the pandemic. The regulation and proposed legislation will create a presumption that first responders and healthcare workers who contract COVID-19 contracted the disease arising out of, and in the course of their employment. The legislation will be reviewed or developed in time for consideration by the Kansas Legislature at the next possible opportunity, special or regular session, whichever occurs first.

Should any law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical service providers or health care workers who contract COVID-19 while assisting in the State's response to the pandemic be found not covered by workers compensation, the Governor's office will request that the Legislature establish a special fund to satisfy claims incurred during the emergency.

"It is imperative that we stand behind emergency responders, healthcare workers and the many other steadfast Kansans who serve the public each and every day, at risk to their own personal health and safety," the Governor said.

"KDOL stands ready to assist in this expansion of workers compensation coverage for our healthcare workers and emergency responders," Secretary Delía García said. "We are working on the regulation and reviewing Kansas' current work comp statutes now."

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