

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 49th Legislature (2003)

HOUSE BILL HB1374

By: Steele

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to the Oklahoma Police Pension and Retirement System; amending 11 O.S. 2001, Section 50-115, as amended by Section 2, Chapter 340, O.S.L. 2002 (11 O.S. Supp. 2002, Section 50-115), which relates to disability benefits; modifying applicability of certain disability standard; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 11 O.S. 2001, Section 50-115, as amended by Section 2, Chapter 340, O.S.L. 2002 (11 O.S. Supp. 2002, Section 50-115), is amended to read as follows:

Section 50-115. A. The State Board is authorized to pay a disability benefit to a member of the System or a pension to the beneficiaries of such member eligible as hereinafter provided, not exceeding the accrued retirement benefit of the member, except as otherwise provided in this article. Such disability benefit shall be payable immediately upon determination of eligibility. Any preexisting condition identified at the time of any initial or subsequent membership shall be used to offset the percentage of impairment to the whole person in determining any disability benefit. Once the initial disability benefit has been awarded by the Board on the basis of the percentage of impairment to the whole person, the member shall have no further recourse to increase the awarded percentage of impairment.

B. In order for any member to be eligible for any disability benefit, or the member's beneficiaries to be eligible for a pension, the member must have complied with any agreement as to contributions

by the member and other members to any funds of the System where said agreement has been made as provided by this article; and the State Board must find:

1. That the member incurred a permanent total disability or a permanent partial disability or died while in, and in consequence of, the performance of duty as an officer; or

2. That such member has served ten (10) years and incurred a permanent total disability or a permanent partial disability or has died from any cause.

C. In the event of the death of any member who has been awarded a disability benefit or is eligible therefor as provided in this article, the member's beneficiary shall be paid the benefit.

D. ~~As~~ Beginning with disability determinations made on or after January 1, 2002, as of the date of determination by the State Board that a member has incurred a permanent in-line disability as a result of physical or mental causes, the member shall be awarded a benefit as follows:

1% to 49% impairment to whole person = 50% of the normal disability benefit

50% to 74% impairment to whole person = 75% of the normal disability benefit

75% to 99% impairment to whole person = 100% of the normal disability benefit.

E. If the participating municipality denies a disabled member the option of continuing employment instead of retiring on a disability pension, then the burden of proof rests with the participating municipality to show cause to the State Board that there is no position as a sworn officer within the police department of that municipality which the member can fill.

F. Upon determination by the State Board that a member is physically or mentally disabled and that the disability is permanent and total and that the member has completed ten (10) years of

credited service and is disabled by any cause, the member shall receive a disability benefit on the basis of the member's accrued retirement benefit.

G. Upon determination by the State Board that a member is physically or mentally disabled and that the disability is permanent and partial and that the member has completed ten (10) years of credited service as a member and is disabled from any cause, the member shall be awarded a disability benefit on the basis of the member's years of credited service as a member and the percentage of impairment to the whole person, as defined by the most current standards of the impairment as outlined in the "American Medical Association's Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment", on the basis of the following table:

1% to 24% impaired = 25% of accrued retirement benefit

25% to 49% impaired = 50% of accrued retirement benefit

50% to 74% impaired = 75% of accrued retirement benefit

75% to 99% impaired = 90% of accrued retirement benefit.

H. Upon determination by the State Board that a member has completed ten (10) years of credited service and dies from any cause, the member's beneficiary shall receive the member's accrued retirement benefit.

I. Before making a finding as to the disability of a member, the State Board shall require that, if the member is able, the member shall make a certificate as to the disability which shall be subscribed and sworn to by the member. It shall also require a certificate as to such disability to be made by some physician licensed to practice in this state as selected by the State Board. The State Board may require other evidence of disability before making the disability benefit. The salary of any such member shall continue while the member is so necessarily confined to such hospital bed or home and necessarily requires medical care or professional nursing on account of such sickness or disability for a

period of not more than six (6) months, after which said period the other provisions of this article may apply. The State Board, in making disability benefits, shall act upon the written request of the member or without such request, if it deem it for the good of the police department. Any disability benefits shall cease when the member receiving same shall be restored to active service at a salary not less than three-fourths (3/4) of the member's average monthly salary.

J. Any member of a police department of any municipality who, in the line of duty, has been exposed to hazardous substances, including but not limited to chemicals used in the manufacture of a controlled dangerous substance or chemicals resulting from the manufacture of a controlled dangerous substance, or to blood-borne pathogens and who is later disabled from a condition that was the result of such exposure and that was not revealed by the physical examination passed by the member upon entry into the System shall be presumed to have incurred such disability while performing the officer's duties unless the contrary is shown by competent evidence. The presumption created by this subsection shall have no application whatever to any workers' compensation claim or claims, and it shall not be applied or be relied upon in any way in workers' compensation proceedings. All compensation or benefits due to any member pursuant to the presumption created by this subsection shall be paid solely by the system.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2003.

SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

49-1-5083 MAH 01/09/03