

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

H.B. 573
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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH50075-LR-98B

Short Title: Give WC for PTSD in First Responders. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Shepard, Torbett, and Saine (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT PROVIDING THAT FIRST RESPONDERS ARE ENTITLED TO BENEFITS
3 UNDER THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT FOR MENTAL OR NERVOUS
4 INJURIES WHETHER OR NOT THE INJURIES ARE ACCOMPANIED BY PHYSICAL
5 INJURIES UNDER SPECIFIED CIRCUMSTANCES.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 97-53 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

8 "(30) Special provisions for employment-related occupational diseases of first
9 responders. - The following rules apply in determining eligibility for
10 compensation under this subdivision:

11 a. The term "first responder," as used in this section, means a law
12 enforcement officer, firefighter, or an emergency medical technician
13 or paramedic employed by State or local government. A volunteer
14 firefighter meeting the requirement of G.S. 58-84-5(3a) is also
15 considered a first responder of the State or local government for
16 purposes of this section.

17 b. For the purposes of this section, posttraumatic stress disorder, as
18 described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental
19 Disorders, Fifth Edition, published by the American Psychiatric
20 Association, suffered by a first responder without other injury is a
21 compensable occupational disease that arises out of employment as a
22 first responder and is due to causes and conditions that are
23 characteristic of and peculiar to a particular trade, occupation, process,
24 or employment if:

25 1. The posttraumatic stress disorder resulted from the first
26 responder acting within the course of his or her employment.

27 2. The first responder is examined and subsequently diagnosed
28 with such disorder by a licensed psychiatrist who is an
29 authorized treating physician due to one or more of the
30 following events:

31 I. Seeing for oneself a deceased minor.

32 II. Directly witnessing the death of a minor.

33 III. Directly witnessing an injury to a minor who
34 subsequently died before or upon arrival at a hospital
35 emergency department.



