

Senate Bill 342

By: Senators Jones of the 25th, Mullis of the 53rd, Gooch of the 51st, Kennedy of the 18th and Miller of the 49th

AS PASSED SENATE

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT**

1 To amend Article 2 of Chapter 3 and Article 1 of Chapter 4 of Title 25 of the Official Code
2 of Georgia Annotated, relating to minimum requirements for local fire departments and
3 general provisions relative to firefighter standards and training, respectively, so as to provide
4 for procedures for organization, issuance and revocation of certificates of compliance,
5 requirements, and training and standards of fire departments and volunteer fire departments;
6 to provide for a definition; to establish the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council; to
7 provide for membership, functions, powers, and meetings for such council; to provide for
8 administrative assignment; to provide for qualifications for volunteer firefighters; to provide
9 for basic training and certificates for volunteer firefighters; to amend Code Section 45-9-101
10 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to definitions relative to the temporary
11 disability compensation program, so as to revise a definition; for related matters; to repeal
12 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

13 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

14 **SECTION 1.**

15 Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
16 minimum requirements for local fire departments, is amended by revising Code Section
17 25-3-22, relating to notification and documentation that organization meets requirements and
18 issuance of certificate of compliance, as follows:

19 "25-3-22.

20 (a) In order for a fire department employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters
21 to be legally organized to operate in the State of Georgia, the chief administrative officer
22 of the fire department shall notify and submit all required documentation to the executive
23 director that demonstrates that the organization meets the minimum requirements specified
24 in Code Section 25-3-23 and the rules and regulations of the Georgia Firefighter Standards
25 and Training Council to function as a fire department. If the executive director is satisfied
26 that the fire department meets the minimum requirements contained in Code Section

27 25-3-23 and the rules and regulations of the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training
 28 Council, he or she shall recommend to the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training
 29 Council that a certificate of compliance be issued by the council to the fire department. If
 30 the council issues such certificate of compliance, the fire department shall be authorized
 31 to exercise the general and emergency powers set forth in Code Sections 25-3-1 and
 32 25-3-2.

33 (b) In order for a volunteer fire department to be legally organized to operate in the State
 34 of Georgia, the chief administrative officer of the fire department shall notify and submit
 35 all required documentation to the executive director that demonstrates that the organization
 36 meets the minimum requirements specified in Code Section 25-3-23 and the rules and
 37 regulations of the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council to function as a volunteer fire
 38 department. If the executive director is satisfied that the volunteer fire department meets
 39 the minimum requirements contained in Code Section 25-3-23 and the rules and
 40 regulations of the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, he or she shall recommend to
 41 the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council that a certificate of compliance be issued by
 42 such council to the volunteer fire department. If the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service
 43 Council issues such certificate of compliance, the fire department shall be authorized to
 44 exercise the general and emergency powers set forth in Code Sections 25-3-1 and 25-3-2."

45

SECTION 2.

46 Said article is further amended in Code Section 25-3-23, relating to general requirements,
 47 equipment and clothing, and insurance, by revising subsections (a) and (c) as follows:

48 "(a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (c) of this Code section, in order to be
 49 legally organized:

50 (1) A fire department shall comply with the following requirements:

51 (A) Be established to provide fire and other emergency and nonemergency services in
 52 accordance with standards specified ~~solely~~ by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and
 53 Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time
 54 firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely
 55 utilizing volunteer firefighters, and the applicable local government;

56 (B) Be capable of providing fire protection 24 hours a day, 365 days per year;

57 (C) Be responsible for a defined area of operations depicted on a map located at the fire
 58 station, which area of operations shall have been approved and designated by the
 59 governing authority of the applicable county, municipality, or other political
 60 subdivision in the case of any county, municipal, or volunteer fire department; and

61 (D) Be staffed with a sufficient number of full-time, part-time, or volunteer firefighters
 62 who have successfully completed basic firefighter training as specified by the Georgia

63 Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time
 64 firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for
 65 fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters; and

66 (2) A fire department shall possess the following items of approved equipment and
 67 protective clothing:

68 (A) A minimum of one fully equipped, operable pumper with a capacity of at least 750
 69 GPM at 150 PSI and a tank capacity of a minimum of 250 gallons; provided, however,
 70 that previously approved fire apparatus which does not meet such minimum standards
 71 may be used in lieu of the minimum required pumper until replaced by the local
 72 authority;

73 (B) A minimum of equipment, appliances, adapters, and accessories necessary to
 74 perform and carry out the duties and responsibilities of a fire department set forth in
 75 Code Sections 25-3-1 and 25-3-2 as approved by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and
 76 Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time
 77 firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely
 78 utilizing volunteer firefighters;”

79 (C) A minimum of two approved self-contained breathing apparatus for each pumping
 80 apparatus as approved by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for
 81 fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the
 82 Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer
 83 firefighters; and

84 (D) A minimum issue of sufficient personal protective clothing to permit each member
 85 to perform safely the duties of a firefighter.”

86 "(c)(1) The Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council shall be authorized to
 87 adopt such rules and regulations for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or
 88 part-time firefighters as are reasonable and necessary to implement the provisions of this
 89 Code section and to establish and modify minimum requirements for all fire departments
 90 operating in this state, provided that such requirements are equal to or exceed the
 91 requirements provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section.

92 (2) The Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council shall be authorized to adopt such rules
 93 and regulations for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters as are
 94 reasonable and necessary to implement the provisions of this Code section and to
 95 establish and modify minimum requirements for all volunteer fire departments operating
 96 in this state, provided that such requirements are equal to or exceed the requirements
 97 provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section.”

98

SECTION 3.

99 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 24-3-25, relating to suspension or
 100 revocation of certificate of compliance, hearing by aggrieved departments, and enforcement
 101 of suspensions or revocations, as follows:

102 "25-3-25.

103 (a) The certificate of compliance issued by the ~~council~~ Georgia Firefighter Standards and
 104 Training Council or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council shall be subject to
 105 suspension or revocation by the applicable council at any time it receives satisfactory
 106 evidence that the fire department is not maintaining sufficient personnel, equipment, or
 107 insurance required by Code Section 25-3-23, or the rules and regulations of the Georgia
 108 Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time
 109 firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire
 110 departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters, pursuant to subsection (c) of Code
 111 Section 25-3-23.

112 (b) The chief administrative officer of any fire department aggrieved by a decision of the
 113 ~~council~~ Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments
 114 employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire
 115 Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters, under
 116 subsection (a) of this Code section may, within 30 days of the date of such decision,
 117 request a hearing on the matter before the applicable council. Following a hearing before
 118 the applicable council, the chief administrative officer of the fire department affected shall
 119 be served with a written decision of the applicable council announcing whether the
 120 certificate of compliance shall remain revoked or suspended or whether it shall be
 121 reinstated.

122 (c) The ~~council~~ Georgia Firefighters Standards and Training Council, for fire departments
 123 employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire
 124 Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters, shall not
 125 suspend or revoke any certificate of compliance for failure to meet firefighter training
 126 requirements when such failure was due to unavailability of required training from or
 127 through the Georgia Fire Academy.

128 (d) The ~~council~~ Georgia Firefighters Standards and Training Council, for fire departments
 129 employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire
 130 Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters, may refer
 131 suspensions or revocations to the Attorney General for enforcement. Upon referral from
 132 ~~the~~ a council, the Attorney General may bring a civil action to enjoin any organization
 133 which is not in compliance with the applicable requirements of this chapter from

134 performing any or all firefighting functions until such requirements are met by such
135 organization."

136 **SECTION 4.**

137 Article 1 of Chapter 4 of Title 25 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
138 general provisions relative to firefighter standards and training, is amended in Code Section
139 25-4-2, relating to definitions, by revising paragraph (9) and adding a new paragraph to read
140 as follows:

141 "(9) 'Volunteer' means not employed for compensation by on an hourly or salaried basis,
142 but appointed and regularly enrolled to serve as a firefighter for any municipal, county,
143 state, or private incorporated fire department.

144 (10) 'Volunteer council' means the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council established by
145 Code Section 25-4-3.1."

146 **SECTION 5.**

147 Said article is further amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

148 "25-4-3.1.

149 (a) There is established the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council which shall serve as
150 a division of the council. The volunteer council shall possess all powers, rights, and duties
151 as set forth by this article and shall not be considered an advisory committee as set forth
152 in subsection (e) of Code Section 25-4-3. The volunteer council shall be composed of
153 seven members, all of which shall be members of volunteer fire departments that are
154 otherwise not participants in the paid fire service unless in the capacity as a paid local fire
155 chief in a jurisdiction with all volunteer firefighters. Two members shall be appointed by
156 the Lieutenant Governor. Two members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House
157 of Representatives. The remaining three members shall be appointed by the Governor.

158 (b) The members of the volunteer council appointed by the Governor pursuant to
159 subsection (a) of this Code section shall be appointed at the sole discretion of the Governor;
160 provided, however, that the Governor may consider for such appointments persons
161 suggested for membership thereon as follows:

162 (1) The Association County Commissioners of Georgia may suggest the names of three
163 persons;

164 (2) The Georgia Municipal Association may suggest the names of three persons;

165 (3) The Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs may suggest the names of three persons; and

166 (4) The Executive Board of the Georgia State Firefighters Association may suggest the
167 names of three persons.

168 (c)(1) The first members of the volunteer council appointed pursuant to subsection (a)
169 of this Code section shall be appointed to take office on January 1, 2021. The two
170 members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor shall be appointed for initial terms of one
171 year, the two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall
172 be appointed for initial terms of two years, and the three members appointed by the
173 Governor shall be appointed for initial terms of three years. Thereafter, successors shall
174 be appointed for terms of three years as their respective terms of office expire.

175 (2) All members shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. In the
176 event of a vacancy in the membership of the volunteer council for any reason, including
177 ceasing to meet the qualifications required pursuant subsection (a) of this Code section,
178 the Governor shall fill such vacancy for the unexpired term; provided, however, that a
179 vacancy in those members of the volunteer council appointed by the Lieutenant Governor
180 or the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall be filled for the remainder of the
181 unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment. In order for the
182 Governor to consider the names of persons suggested for membership on the volunteer
183 council pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section, such names must be submitted
184 to the Governor by the respective organizations at least 60 days but not more than 90 days
185 prior to the expiration of the respective terms of office or prior to the appointment of the
186 initial members of the volunteer council who take office on January 1, 2021. The
187 Governor shall be authorized, but not required, to request the appropriate organization
188 designated in subsection (b) of this Code section to suggest the names of three persons
189 for the Governor's consideration in making an appointment to fill a vacancy.

190 (d) At the first regular meeting of the volunteer council held in each odd-numbered year,
191 the volunteer council shall elect a chairperson and such other officers from its own
192 membership as it deems necessary to serve until successors are elected by the volunteer
193 council as provided in this Code section.

194 (e) The volunteer council may, from time to time, designate an advisory committee to
195 assist and advise the volunteer council in carrying out its duties under this article. The
196 members of any such advisory committee shall serve at the pleasure of the volunteer
197 council.

198 (f) Each member of the volunteer council and each member of an advisory committee of
199 the volunteer council, in carrying out their official duties, shall be entitled to receive the
200 same expense and mileage allowance authorized for members of professional licensing
201 boards by subsection (f) of Code Section 43-1-2. The funds for such expenses and
202 allowances shall be paid from funds appropriated or available to the Department of Public
203 Safety."

204

SECTION 6.

205 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 25-4-4, relating to eligibility of
 206 members of the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council for public office, as
 207 follows:

208 "25-4-4.

209 Membership on the council or volunteer council does not constitute public office, and no
 210 member shall be disqualified from holding public office by reason of his or her
 211 membership."

212

SECTION 7.

213 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 25-4-5, relating to administrative
 214 assignment to Department of Public Safety, source of funds, and authority to accept gifts by
 215 the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, as follows:

216 "25-4-5.

217 The council ~~is~~ and volunteer council are assigned to the Department of Public Safety for
 218 administrative purposes. The funds necessary to carry out this chapter shall come from
 219 funds appropriated to and available to the council and volunteer council and from any other
 220 available funds. The council ~~is~~ and volunteer council are authorized to accept and use gifts,
 221 grants, and donations for the purpose of carrying out this chapter. The council ~~is~~ and
 222 volunteer council are also authorized to accept and use property, both real and personal,
 223 and services for the purpose of carrying out this ~~chapter~~ article."

224

SECTION 8.

225 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 25-4-6, relating to meetings,
 226 quorum, and annual report by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, as
 227 follows:

228 "25-4-6.

229 (a) The business of the council shall be conducted in the following manner:

230 (1) The council shall hold at least two regular meetings each year at the call of the
 231 chairperson or upon the written request of six members of the council. Six members of
 232 the council shall constitute a quorum. The council shall adopt such rules for the
 233 transaction of its business as it shall desire and may appoint such committees as it
 234 considers necessary to carry out its business and duties; and

235 (2) The council shall make an annual report of its activities to the Governor and to the
 236 General Assembly and shall include in the report its recommendations for appropriate
 237 legislation. The council shall not be required to distribute copies of the annual report to

238 the members of the General Assembly but shall notify the members of the availability of
 239 the report in the manner which it deems to be most effective and efficient.

240 (b) The business of the volunteer council shall be conducted in the following manner:

241 (1) The volunteer council shall hold at least two regular meetings each year at the call
 242 of the chairperson or upon written request of four members of the volunteer council.

243 Four members of the volunteer council shall constitute a quorum. The volunteer council
 244 shall adopt such rules for the transaction of its business as it shall desire and may appoint
 245 such committees as it considers necessary to carry out its business and duties; and

246 (2) The volunteer council shall make an annual report of its activities to the Governor
 247 and to the General Assembly and shall include in the report its recommendations for
 248 appropriate legislation. The volunteer council shall not be required to distribute copies
 249 of the annual report to the members of the General Assembly but shall notify the
 250 members of the availability of the report in the manner which it deems to be most
 251 effective and efficient."

252 **SECTION 9.**

253 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 25-4-7, relating to functions and
 254 powers of the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, as follows:

255 "25-4-7.

256 (a) The council is vested with the following functions and powers:

257 (1) To promulgate rules and regulations for the administration of the council;

258 (2) To provide rules of procedure for its internal management and control;

259 (3) To enter into contracts or do such things as may be necessary and incidental to the
 260 administration of its authority pursuant to this chapter;

261 (4) To establish uniform minimum standards for the employment and training of
 262 full-time firefighters, part-time firefighters, ~~or volunteer firefighters~~, airport firefighters,
 263 fire and life safety educators, fire inspectors, fire investigators, and other such firefighting
 264 service professionals as determined by the council, including qualifications, certifications,
 265 recertifications, decertifications, and probations for certified individuals and suspensions
 266 for noncertified individuals, and requirements, which are consistent with this chapter;

267 (5) To establish minimum curriculum requirements for schools operated by or for any
 268 employing agency for the specific purpose of training firefighter recruits or full-time
 269 firefighters, part-time firefighters, ~~or volunteer firefighters~~, airport firefighters, fire and
 270 life safety educators, fire inspectors, and fire investigators;

271 (6) To approve institutions and facilities for school operation by or for any employing
 272 agency for the specific purpose of training full-time and part-time firefighters and
 273 full-time and part-time firefighter recruits, including airport firefighters;

- 274 (7) To make or support studies on any aspect of ~~fire-fighting~~ firefighter education and
 275 training or recruitment;
- 276 (8) To make recommendations concerning any matter within its purview;
- 277 (9) To establish basic firefighter training requirements for full-time, part-time, and
 278 ~~contract, and volunteer~~ firefighters, including airport firefighters;
- 279 (10) To certify any person satisfactorily complying with the training program established
 280 in accordance with paragraph (9) of this ~~Code section~~ subsection and the qualifications
 281 for employment covered in this chapter; and
- 282 (11) To issue a certificate to any person who has received training in another state or
 283 who has received training as a federal firefighter by the United States government, when
 284 the council has determined that the training was at least equivalent to that required by the
 285 council for approved firefighter education and training programs in this state and when
 286 the person has satisfactorily complied with all other requirements of this chapter.
- 287 (b) The volunteer council is vested with the following functions and powers:
- 288 (1) To promulgate rules and regulations for the administration of the volunteer council;
 289 (2) To provide rules of procedure for its internal management and control;
 290 (3) To enter into contracts or do such things as may be necessary and incidental to the
 291 administration of its authority pursuant to this chapter;
 292 (4) To establish uniform minimum standards for the training of volunteer firefighters,
 293 including qualifications, certifications, and requirements, which are consistent with this
 294 chapter;
 295 (5) To make or support studies on any aspect of firefighter education and training or
 296 recruitment;
 297 (6) To make recommendations concerning any matter within its purview;
 298 (7) To establish basic firefighter training requirements for volunteer firefighters;
 299 (8) To certify any person satisfactorily complying with the training program established
 300 in accordance with paragraph (7) of this subsection and the qualifications for serving as
 301 a volunteer firefighter covered in this chapter; and
 302 (9) To issue a certificate to any person who has received training in another state or who
 303 has received training as a federal firefighter by the United States government, when the
 304 volunteer council has determined that the training was at least equivalent to that required
 305 by the volunteer council for approved volunteer firefighter education and training
 306 programs in this state and when the person has satisfactorily complied with all other
 307 requirements of this chapter.
- 308 (c) All rules and regulations promulgated by the volunteer council may be overturned by
 309 a two-thirds' vote of the council. In such instance, the rule or regulation shall be returned
 310 to the volunteer council for reconsideration."

311 **SECTION 10.**

312 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 25-4-7.1, relating to appointment
313 and compensation of executive director and assistants, as follows:

314 "25-4-7.1.

315 (a) The council, in conjunction with the volunteer council, shall appoint and establish the
316 compensation of an executive director who shall serve at the pleasure of the council.

317 (b) The executive director may contract for such services and employ such other
318 professional, technical, and clerical personnel as may be necessary and convenient to carry
319 out the purposes of this chapter.

320 (c) The executive director shall provide the same services in support of the volunteer
321 council as provided to the council.

322 (d) The executive director shall bring all issues involving volunteer firefighters and
323 volunteer fire departments to the volunteer council."

324 **SECTION 11.**

325 Said article is further amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

326 "24-5-8.1.

327 (a) Except as otherwise provided in Code Section 25-4-12, any person volunteering at a
328 volunteer fire department as a volunteer firefighter shall, as prescribed by the volunteer
329 council:

330 (1) Be at least 18 years of age;

331 (2) Not have been convicted of, or pleaded guilty to, a felony in any jurisdiction or of a
332 crime which if committed in this state would constitute a felony under the laws of this
333 state within ten years prior to volunteering, provided that a person who has been
334 convicted of a felony more than five but less than ten years prior to volunteering may be
335 registered as a volunteer firefighter when the person has:

336 (A) Successfully completed a training program following the Georgia Fire Academy
337 curriculum and sponsored by the Department of Corrections;

338 (B) Been recommended to a volunteer fire department by the proper authorities at the
339 institution at which the training program was undertaken; and

340 (C) Met all other requirements for a volunteer firefighter as set forth in this chapter.

341 (b) For the purposes of this Code section, a person shall be deemed to have been convicted
342 of a crime if such person shall have pleaded guilty to a charge thereof before a court or
343 federal magistrate or shall have been found guilty thereof by the decision or judgment of
344 a court or federal magistrate or by the verdict of a jury, irrespective of the pronouncement
345 of sentence or the suspension thereof, unless such plea of guilty or such decision, judgment,
346 or verdict shall have been set aside, reversed, or otherwise abrogated by lawful judicial

347 process or unless the person convicted of the crime shall have received a pardon therefor
 348 from the President of the United States or the governor or other pardoning authority in the
 349 jurisdiction where the conviction was had or shall have received a certificate of good
 350 conduct granted by the State Board of Pardons and Paroles pursuant to the provisions of
 351 law to remove a disability under law because of such conviction. Any person convicted
 352 of a felony while he or she is a registered volunteer firefighter shall have his or her
 353 registration revoked.

354 (c)(1) For purposes of making determinations relating to eligibility under this Code
 355 section, a local volunteer fire department shall provide information relative to prospective
 356 volunteers to the local law enforcement agency or other agency having access to the
 357 Georgia Crime Information Center for a search to determine if the prospective volunteer
 358 has been convicted of a felony in Georgia. Such local agency shall be authorized to
 359 obtain conviction data with respect to such prospective volunteers of a local volunteer fire
 360 department as authorized in this subsection. All conviction data received by the local
 361 agency shall not be a public record, shall be privileged, and shall not be disclosed to any
 362 other person or agency except as provided in this subsection and except to any person or
 363 agency which otherwise has a legal right to inspect the file. All such records shall be
 364 maintained by the local agency pursuant to laws regarding such records and the rules and
 365 regulations of the Georgia Crime Information Center, as applicable. As used in this
 366 subsection, 'conviction data' means a record of a finding or verdict of guilty or plea of
 367 guilty or plea of nolo contendere with regard to any crime, regardless of whether an
 368 appeal of the conviction has been sought.

369 (2) The volunteer council shall create a form upon which may be indicated only whether
 370 the prospective volunteer was convicted of a felony or has no felony convictions. The
 371 local agency shall complete such form and shall provide same to the chief of the fire
 372 department which requested information on a prospective volunteer. Such information
 373 may be provided to the volunteer council. The provisions of paragraph (1) of this
 374 subsection relating to privileged information and records of conviction data shall apply
 375 to any information provided by a local agency to a local volunteer fire department."

376 **SECTION 12.**

377 Said article is further amended in Code Section 25-4-9, relating to basic firefighter training
 378 course and transfer of certification, by revising subsection (a) as follows:

379 "(a)(1)(A) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, full-time,
 380 and part-time, ~~and volunteer~~ firefighters, including airport firefighters, shall
 381 successfully complete a basic training course. The council shall determine the course
 382 content, number of hours, and all other matters relative to basic firefighter training,

383 including airport rescue firefighter training for full-time and part-time firefighters.
 384 Upon satisfactory completion of such basic training, a firefighter shall be issued a
 385 certificate of completion evidencing the same. Each firefighter shall be required to
 386 successfully complete such basic training course within 12 months after being
 387 employed or appointed as a firefighter or, in the case of airport firefighters, within such
 388 time period as the council may prescribe by rule or regulation.

389 (B) The volunteer council shall determine the course content, number of hours, and all
 390 other matters relative to basic firefighter training for volunteer firefighters. Each
 391 volunteer firefighter shall be required to complete such basic training course within 18
 392 months after being appointed as volunteer firefighter.

393 (2) Each firefighter who presents to the council, or to the volunteer council in the case
 394 of volunteer firefighters, satisfactory documentation, as determined by the council or
 395 volunteer council, of his or her training as a member of the United States armed forces,
 396 the Georgia National Guard, or the Georgia Air National Guard shall be issued a
 397 certificate of completion by the council or volunteer council."

398 **SECTION 13.**

399 Said article is further amended by revising Cod Section 25-4-10, relating to mandatory
 400 annual training, as follows:

401 "25-4-10.

402 (a) As a condition of continued certification, all full-time and part-time firefighters shall
 403 train, drill, or study at schools, classes, or courses at the local, area, or state level, as
 404 specified by the council. Authorized leaves of absence are expected.

405 (b) As a condition of continued certification, all volunteer firefighters shall train, drill, or
 406 study at schools, classes, or courses at the local, area, or state level, as specified by the
 407 volunteer council. Authorized leaves of absence are expected."

408 **SECTION 14.**

409 Code Section 45-9-101 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to definitions
 410 relative to the temporary disability compensation program, is amended by revising
 411 subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) as follows:

412 "(B) Any individual serving as an officially recognized or designated member of a
 413 legally organized volunteer fire department certified in writing by the Georgia
 414 ~~Firefighter Standards and Training~~ Volunteer Fire Service Council pursuant to Code
 415 Section 25-3-22 who performs any acts or actions while on duty and when responding
 416 to a fire or emergency during any fire or other emergency or while performing duties
 417 intended to protect life and property; or"

418

SECTION 15.

419 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.