

Workers' Benefits: Volunteer Emergency Services Provider

Iowa Code 100B.14

A public or private employer cannot terminate an employee who is a volunteer emergency services provider for joining such services or when, with written notification, they are absent due to fulfilling such duties. The employer can request written notification from the volunteer's supervisor for any absent time and deduct from the employee's regular pay for the time absent while fulfilling their duties. An employer can determine if an employee can leave work early for their volunteer duties. The employee must notify the employer as soon as possible for any absence.

Volunteer job protection

1. This section shall be known as the "Volunteer Emergency Services Providers Job Protection Act".
2. For the purposes of this section, "volunteer emergency services provider" means a volunteer fire fighter as defined in section 85.61, a reserve peace officer as defined in section 80D.1A, an emergency medical care provider as defined in section 147A.1, or other personnel having voluntary emergency service duties and who are not paid full-time by the entity for which the services are performed in the local service area, in a mutual aid agreement area, or in a governor-declared state of disaster emergency area.
3. A public or private employer shall not terminate the employment of an employee for joining a volunteer emergency services unit or organization, including but not limited to any municipal, rural, or subscription fire department.
4. If an employee has provided the employee's public or private employer with written notification that the employee is a volunteer emergency services provider, the employer shall not terminate the employment of a volunteer emergency services provider who, because the employee was fulfilling the employee's duties as a volunteer emergency services provider, is absent from or late to work.
5. An employer may deduct from an employee's regular pay an amount of regular pay for the time that an employee

who is a volunteer emergency services provider is absent from work while performing duties as a volunteer emergency services provider.

6. An employer may request that an employee who is a volunteer emergency services provider and who is absent from or late to work while responding to an emergency provide the employer with a written statement from the supervisor or acting supervisor of the volunteer emergency services unit or organization stating that the employee responded to an emergency and stating the date and time of the emergency.

7. An employee who is a volunteer emergency services provider and who may be absent from or late to work while performing duties as a volunteer emergency services provider shall notify the employer as soon as possible that the employee may be absent or late.

8. An employer shall determine whether an employee may leave work to respond to an emergency as part of the employee's volunteer emergency services provider duties.

9. An employee whose employment is terminated in violation of this section may bring a civil action against the employer. The employee may seek reinstatement to the employee's former position, payment of back wages, reinstatement of fringe benefits, and, where seniority rights are granted, reinstatement of seniority rights. If the employee prevails in such an action, the employee shall be entitled to an award of reasonable attorney fees and the costs of the action. An employee must commence such an action within one year after the date of termination of the employee's employment.