



Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement

To: Members of the 2026 Work Group on Duty Disability and the Public Safety Officer's Benefit Account

From: Representative Terry Stier (edited by LCPR Staff)

Date: June 24, 2026

Subject: Proposed Framework for Consideration by the Work Group

Note from LCPR Staff: Representative Terry Stier offered an amendment at the last meeting of the LCPR during the 2026 legislative session that establishes the Work Group on Duty Disability and the Public Safety Officer's Benefit Account. The amendment requires the Work Group to recommend legislation that would reform duty disability for members of the PERA Police & Fire Plan and ensure that duty disabled members and retirees have access to affordable health insurance coverage. The amendment was adopted by the Commission and included in the 2026 Omnibus Pension and Retirement bill.

The overall goal of legislation recommended by the Work Group is to provide state-covered health insurance to police officers and firefighters from age 55 to 65 and fix the duty disability system.

The legislation will include the following provisions:

- Employees will contribute 3% of their salary into a fund. The fund will be started with the remaining balance of the Public Safety Officer's Benefit Account (as of April 17, 2026, the Account had approximately \$41 million). There is no dollar limit on funds contributed, so as earnings increase, contributions increase as well.
- All disability claims will fall under the military model based on percentages (the "military model" is the Schedule for Rating Disabilities, published by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, [38 CFR Part 4](#)). The VA assigns a rating from 0% to 100%, in increments of 10%. Ratings reflect how much the condition impairs your ability to function and work. For example:
 - 0% – Service connected, but no compensable impairment
 - 10–30% – Mild to moderate symptoms
 - 50–70% – Significant impairment
 - 100% – Total occupational and social impairment
- Total and permanent disability will fall under a different statute than duty disability.

- Retain the statute as in effect in 2025: 5 years of health insurance coverage, which is paid for by the city or county. No legal challenges are allowed.
- Retain the years of service / age percentage in statute: 30 years of service and age 55 – 100% (same as a trooper) then the percentage lowers with less years of service.
- Have a minimum age to qualify for state medical insurance coverage. Maybe at age 50, coverage is for 10 years. Same system as the state patrol has.
- We need to identify medical professionals, including psychologists, that are familiar with the military model or develop an outline to be provided to the medical field on how ratings of injuries work.
- The review panel should be tasked with creating a board, with an elected chair and co-chair. The board members can set rules on how frequently they meet and develop and outline a process for reviewing claims.
- Consider whether the board should be initially tasked with finding qualified medical professionals and psychologists and create a list of who is considered “qualified.”
- Example of how the above structure would work:
 - Officer A who has worked for 15 years and files a claim for PTSD would seek a qualified psychologist and be evaluated.
 - Officer A would be required to sign a medical release form and the medical professional must document the appointment without using Officer A’s identifiers, provide a percentage of injury based on the military model standards and submit the report to the board.
 - The board will have the option to approve the application, request further information, or deny the application.
 - A denial of the application will require a secondary appointment with a different medical professional. Same applies and Officer A will have to report to the medical professional that this is a secondary appointment, which the medical professional must add to Officer A’s report.
 - The board will not be held liable for any denial of an application if a majority of the board voted to deny the application.
 - Once approved, Officer A will be paid health insurance from the city or county for the first 5 years.
 - The employee must continue to pay the 3% contribution for health insurance coverage until they are moved from city/county coverage to state medical.