



New Mobile App to Provide Documentation for Firefighter Worker's Comp Cancer Claims

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NFORS mobile app, used by firefighters to record daily physical and behavioral health exposures, now to be used by Municipal Risk Pool to document occupational exposures for firefighter cancer claims.

Chantilly, VA. For municipal risk pools, there are two challenges with firefighter occupational cancer claims. First, the undue burden of out-of-pocket costs for the firefighter when a claim is denied and second, firefighter documentation of exposures to support the claim. Now the documentation challenge can be addressed with timely recording of exposures in the National Fire Operations Reporting System (NFORS) Exposure Tracker App.

The Mobile App will allow each firefighter to track incidents year-round. NFORS Exposure Tracker App links the firefighter with incident response data in their department using the NFORS Analytics Module. The App asks relevant exposure questions so that a firefighter can document the nature of the incident, presence of smoke, fire and flames, soot and other information including on scene decontamination and gear cleaning after a call. Rudy Rodriguez, AMRRP President notes that, "With this App, Arizona Municipal Risk Retention Pool (AMRRP) member firefighters will be able to better assemble their exposure data for evaluation during any claim evaluation process."

How it Works

AMRRP will provide its AMRRP member firefighters access to the Firefighter Exposure Tracking App for their phones. This App is made available by the International Public Safety Data Institute (IPSDI) as part of the NFORS Analytics Data system.

After AMRRP is notified of a claim, the primary focus of the claim evaluation process will be records review. Each first responder submits his or her data, including medical information, any previously maintained documentation about the types of incidents in which the first responder had been involved, and the exposure data compiled and stored on the NFORS Firefighter Exposure Tracking App.

Brian Jefferies, President of Arizona Professional Firefighters and a cancer survivor states, "The hope is that this data is never used, but if the need arises, each firefighter will be better prepared."

Every firefighter can even take his or her personal exposure data base into retirement so that data are available should there be a need to document a cancer claim after they leave the job.

Background

Workers' compensation laws were designed to give employees certainty regarding compensation for their work-related claims. Those laws work well when an employee falls off a ladder at work. The claim can be investigated, liability determined, and the employee compensated for work-related claims quickly. That efficiency breaks down for work-related cancer claims. Once a claim is filed, often due to short time frames, many cancer claims must be initially denied based on limited, preliminary investigation in order to allow the claim to be fully evaluated. On-the-job exposure documentation is key to timely claim evaluation.

The NFORS Mobile App, available in app stores works on the iOS and Android platforms. The App helps firefighters, paramedics and officers create a personal and secure Career Diary, capable of logging both physical and mental exposures along with the incident details, in a private, encrypted, and secure online environment.

The NFORS Firefighter Exposure Tracker was developed through a collaborative partnership with the International Associations of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association, International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), UL, NIST, Urban Institute, and other fire service experts. The NFORS Exposure Tracker was funded by the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program and the Ramsey Social Justice Foundation.

For more information about the NFORS Exposure Tracker and NFORS Analytics visit <https://i-psdi.org/nfors-overview.html>

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