



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Department of Public Safety Standards and Training

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**DATE:** May 4, 2015

**TO:** House Committee on Business and Labor  
Paul Holvey, Chair  
Brent Barton, Vice-Chair  
Bill Kennemer, Vice-Chair  
Greg Barreto  
Margaret Doherty  
Sal Esquivel  
Shemia Fagan  
Dallas Heard  
Rob Nosse  
Jim Weidner

**FROM:** Linsay Hale, Professional Standards Division Director

**SUBJECT:** Senate Bill 496

**Background:** The Public Safety Memorial Fund (PSMF) was established in 1999 to provide immediate, temporary financial assistance to the families of public safety officers<sup>1</sup> who suffer a qualifying death or to officers suffering a permanent, total disability in the line of duty.

Current benefits may include:

- A one-time, lump sum payment of \$25,000;
- 12 months of mortgage payments on the residence of the public safety officer;
- Reimbursement for health and dental coverage for all eligible beneficiaries; and
- Undergraduate and graduate level scholarships for all eligible beneficiaries.

Since its inception, the PSMF has assisted the families of more than 40 public safety officers and has awarded nearly \$2 million dollars to eligible beneficiaries. In the current biennium, the PSMF has assisted the families of ten officers tragically killed in the line of duty, paying out \$168,733. Benefit costs per eligible beneficiary start at no less than \$25,000 with on-going benefit costs potentially exceeding \$250,000, depending upon the number and age of eligible dependents.

**Effect of SB 496 on the PSMF:** Currently, an officer qualifies for PSMF consideration if his or her death or permanent, total disability is the direct or proximate result of an enforcement action, emergency response, or public safety training for an enforcement action or emergency response that an officer is

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of PSMF eligibility, "public safety officer" includes corrections officers, career and volunteer fire service professionals, parole and probation officers, police officers, reserve officers, and youth corrections officers.

authorized and obligated to perform, or if the death or permanent, total disability is the result of an act committed against a public safety officer because of their position as a public safety officer.

SB 496 seeks to expand the definition of a qualifying death or disability to include public safety officers who suffer an injury or occupational disease compensable under Oregon's Workers' Compensation laws or comparable program in larger cities. Though it is impossible to predict how many more applications for PSMF benefits would be made, the expectation is that the passage of this legislation would have a minimal impact on the fund.

**Effect of SB 496 on the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST):** The PSMF is administered and staffed by the DPSST, in conjunction with the six-member PSMF Board. Administrative duties include providing education about the fund, processing new and supplemental PSMF applications, and preparing for and facilitating PSMF Board meetings. The administration of the PSMF currently accounts for less than 1% of one full-time employee's duties. Time and materials spent administering the PSMF are charged back to the PSMF. It is not expected that there would be a significant impact on the DPSST.

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