

By the Committees on Appropriations; and Criminal Justice; and Senators DiCeglie, Stewart, Osgood, Powell, Polsky, and Hooper

576-03647-24

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to treatment by a medical specialist;
3 amending s. 112.18, F.S.; authorizing firefighters,
4 law enforcement officers, correctional officers, and
5 correctional probation officers to receive medical
6 treatment by a medical specialist for certain
7 conditions under certain circumstances; requiring
8 firefighters, law enforcement officers, correctional
9 officers, and correctional probation officers to
10 notify certain entities of their selection of a
11 medical specialist; providing requirements for the
12 firefighter's or officer's workers' compensation
13 carrier, self-insured employer, or third-party
14 administrator; requiring that the continuing care and
15 treatment by a medical specialist be reasonable,
16 necessary, and related to the firefighter's or
17 officer's condition and authorized by the workers'
18 compensation carrier, self-insured employer, or third-
19 party administrator; specifying a reimbursement
20 percentage for such treatment; defining the term
21 "medical specialist"; providing an effective date.

22
23 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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25 Section 1. Subsection (3) is added to section 112.18,
26 Florida Statutes, to read:

27 112.18 Firefighters and law enforcement or correctional
28 officers; special provisions relative to disability.-

29 (3) (a) Notwithstanding s. 440.13(2)(c), a firefighter, law

576-03647-24

2024808c2

30 enforcement officer, correctional officer, or correctional
31 probation officer requiring medical treatment for a compensable
32 presumptive condition listed in subsection (1) may be treated by
33 a medical specialist. Except in emergency situations, a
34 firefighter, law enforcement officer, correctional officer, or
35 correctional probation officer entitled to access a medical
36 specialist under this subsection must provide written notice of
37 his or her selection of a medical specialist to the
38 firefighter's or officer's workers' compensation carrier, self-
39 insured employer, or third-party administrator, and the carrier,
40 self-insured employer, or third-party administrator must
41 authorize the selected medical specialist or authorize an
42 alternative medical specialist with the same or greater
43 qualifications. Within 5 business days after receipt of the
44 written notice, the workers' compensation carrier, self-insured
45 employer, or third-party administrator must authorize treatment
46 and schedule an appointment, which must be held within 30 days
47 after receipt of the written notice, with the selected medical
48 specialist or the alternative medical specialist. If the
49 workers' compensation carrier, self-insured employer, or third-
50 party administrator fails to authorize an alternative medical
51 specialist within 5 business days after receipt of the written
52 notice, the medical specialist selected by the firefighter or
53 officer is authorized. The continuing care and treatment by a
54 medical specialist must be reasonable, necessary, and related to
55 tuberculosis, heart disease, or hypertension; be reimbursed at
56 no more than 200 percent of the Medicare rate for a selected
57 medical specialist; and be authorized by the firefighter's or
58 officer's workers' compensation carrier, self-insured employer,

576-03647-24

2024808c2

59 or third-party administrator.

60 (b) For purposes of this subsection, the term "medical
61 specialist" means a physician licensed under chapter 458 or
62 chapter 459 who has board certification in a medical specialty
63 inclusive of care and treatment of tuberculosis, heart disease,
64 or hypertension.

65 Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 2024.