

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 574

Introduced by Rountree, 3.

Read first time January 22, 2025

Committee:

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to firefighters; to define terms; to provide
- 2 rights; and to provide requirements for investigations.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 **Section 1.** (1) For purposes of this section:

2 (a) Complaint means a formal written allegation made against a
3 firefighter or a signed written statement made by the officer receiving
4 the complaint;

5 (b) Firefighter means any certified firefighter or emergency
6 personnel, including emergency medical technicians and paramedics;

7 (c) Formal investigation means an investigation ordered by a
8 commanding officer to determine whether disciplinary action, such as
9 removal, suspension, or discharge, is necessary based on a complaint; and

10 (d) Interview means the questioning of a firefighter during a formal
11 investigation that may lead to disciplinary action.

12 (2) When any formal investigation is conducted regarding a
13 firefighter:

14 (a) The formal investigation shall be completed in a reasonable
15 timeframe;

16 (b) A written summary of any complaint about a firefighter shall be
17 given to such firefighter before the firefighter participates in an
18 interview;

19 (c) Any firefighter may have legal representation or a union
20 representative present at any hearing, interview, or disciplinary
21 proceeding regarding such firefighter;

22 (d) Any interview shall be recorded using an audio recording device;

23 (e) A written notice of the outcome of the formal investigation
24 regarding a firefighter shall be sent to such firefighter;

25 (f) All complaints, statements, and interview recordings shall
26 remain confidential, unless disclosure is required by law or written
27 consent is given by the firefighter who is the subject of such
28 information;

29 (g) A firefighter may seek damages, including compensation for
30 attorney's fees and other costs, for false complaints filed against the
31 firefighter;

1 (h) A firefighter may challenge any disciplinary action against him
2 or her through an established grievance procedure, including union or
3 legal channels; and

4 (i) No firefighter shall be compelled to submit to a polygraph
5 examination.

6 (3) Each firefighter shall have the right to work in safe conditions
7 and shall have access to appropriate training, equipment, and support.

8 (4) Each firefighter shall have access to mental health services to
9 address job-related stress and trauma.

10 (5) The personal information of each firefighter shall remain
11 confidential, unless disclosure is required by law or written consent is
12 given by such firefighter.

13 (6) Any firefighter may engage in political activity or file for any
14 elective office while off-duty.

15 (7) Any firefighter may request access to his or her personnel and
16 training records at any time.