

# Proposed Code Changes



February 1, 2022

**Severe Service Disabilities**

# Proposed Changes

- The Uniformed Retirement System (URS) has two types of service-connected disabilities
- Both require that an injury happen while the member is on duty
- They are service-connected (which pays 40% of salary) and **severe** service-connected (which pays 90% of salary)

# Current Severe Service-Connected Disability Impairments

- There are currently 12 impairments that qualify a member for a severe service-connected disability
- They are:
  1. Loss of **both hands or both feet**;
  2. Loss of **one hand and one foot**;
  3. Loss of **one hand and the sight of one eye**;
  4. Loss of **one foot and the sight of one eye**;
  5. Loss of the **sight of both eyes**;
  6. **Paralysis**, either paraplegia or quadriplegia;
  7. **Cancers** determined to be compensable by the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission which were caused by documented contact with a toxic substance, pursuant to Section 65.2-402(c) of the Virginia Code;
  8. Loss of **speech**;
  9. Loss of **hearing**;
  10. A **mental incapacity** that meets the criteria for disability benefits under the Federal Old-Age Survivors' and Disability Insurance Act;
  11. **Chronic Hepatitis C** determined to be compensable by the Workers' Compensation Commission which was caused by documented exposure to HCV-positive blood or other potentially infectious material (OPIM) in the workplace or during work-related activities, as described in Section 65.2-402.1.(a) of the Virginia Code; or
  12. **Occupational Asthma, Occupational Hypersensitivity Pneumonitis, or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)** determined to be compensable by the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission which was caused by documented exposure to a toxic substance in the workplace or during work-related activities, as described in Section 65.2-402(c) of the Virginia Code, or otherwise determined to be compensable as an injury by accident by the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission. This condition, added on {date} is to be applied retroactively to any service-connected disability applications submitted on or after June 1, 2019.

# Proposed **Additional** Impairment

Staff is recommending the addition of one additional impairment to the current list of 12 impairments, specifically:

Persistent **burn injuries** caused by documented exposure/injury in the workplace or during work related activities, as described in section 65.2-402 (c) of the Virginia Code which render an employee unable to do meaningful work, including those which involve (1) 3rd degree or higher burns over more than 30% of body surface area, and/or (2) extensive and debilitating skin lesions , and/or (3) burns which result in the loss of meaningful use of more than one limb, and/or (4) multisystem injuries (e.g., severe pulmonary burns with loss of diffusion capacity) and/or (5) conditions that may not meet the precise definitions of above clauses 1-5 but are accompanied by one or more of the following: substantial disfigurement, chronic debilitating pain, or other symptoms of a severity which would substantially limit an employee's ability to routinely and efficiently perform community-based work

# Board of Trustees Concurrence

The Uniformed Retirement System Board of Trustees has reviewed the proposed change and supports its inclusion in County Code