



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

DEATH BENEFITS

To obtain certified copies of registered personal documents, contact the Mississippi Department of Health, P. O. Box 1700, Jackson, MS 39215, phone (601) 960-7975.

STATE DEATH BENEFITS

In 1999, the governor signed into law a bill that authorizes a **one-time** state death benefit when a law enforcement officer, while engaged in the performance of the officer's law enforcement duties, is accidentally or intentionally killed or receives accidental or intentional bodily injury that results in the loss of the officer's life, provided that the killing is not the result of suicide and that the bodily injury is not intentionally self-inflicted. As of July 2004, this benefit is **\$40,000**.

The payment shall be made to the **beneficiary** that was **designated in writing** by the law enforcement officer, signed by the officer, and delivered to the employer during the officer's lifetime. If no such designation is made then the payment shall be made to the officer's surviving child or children and spouse in equal portions, and if there is no surviving child or spouse, then to the officer's parent or parents. If a beneficiary is not designated and there is no surviving child, spouse or parent, then the payment shall be made to the officer's estate.

For the necessary forms to make a claim for this benefit, the family or the agency should contact the legal department at the Mississippi Department of Public Safety at 601-987-1265.

STATE PENSION BENEFITS

There are pension options that a law enforcement officer **may choose** when setting up his/her pension benefits. The **option chosen** dictates whether the surviving spouse would lose pension upon remarriage and if pension would be reinstated upon divorce.

Members of the Mississippi Highway Patrol Retirement System may obtain additional information by calling or writing: **Ms. Donna Edwards, 429 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201; (601) 359- 3589.**

EDUCATION BENEFITS



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The **Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers and Firemen Scholarship Program** offers scholarships to the **spouses and children** (natural, adopted or stepchildren) of full-time Mississippi law enforcement officers and the spouses and children of full-time Mississippi firemen/firefighters who were fatally injured or totally disabled from injuries which occurred while performing official duties.

Under the program, the amount of assistance available is **tuition plus** the average cost of a dormitory room plus required fees plus applicable course fees. The Scholarship **does not** include books, food, school supplies and materials, school dues or fees for extracurricular activities. Recipients are entitled to **8 semesters** of scholarship assistance; however, children are only entitled to the Scholarship *until the age of 23*.

To be eligible, the surviving spouse or child must be a **current legal Mississippi resident** and be enrolled as a **full-time student** at a **Mississippi state-supported college or university**. There are no service/repayment requirements for this Scholarship. There is no application priority date for this Scholarship Program.

For information and/or an application packet, contact the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, MS 39211-6453, phone 601-432-6570 or toll free in Mississippi 1-800-327-2980, fax 601-432-6527.

HEALTH BENEFITS

State health benefits are administered by **Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Mississippi, Inc. P.O. Box 1043, Jackson, MS 39215; (601) 939- 0494**. Health benefits are **not supplemented by state to surviving spouse, and/or dependent children**. Employee's insurance is paid by the state.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workers' Compensation coverage is compulsory for employers in Mississippi with 5 or more employees.

Compensation for disability or in death cases **shall not exceed 66 2/3%** of the average weekly wage for the state per week, with a **minimum weekly benefit of \$25** except in partial dependency and partial disability cases and a **maximum weekly benefit of \$243.75** for a maximum period of 450 weeks. Total **maximum payable is \$109,687**. There is a **maximum burial allowance of \$2,000**.

An additional sum of **\$250** is payable to widows. Children receive benefits **until age 18 or beyond age 18 if disabled or until age 23 if full-time students**.



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To receive workers' compensation benefits the surviving spouse must take the initiative and file a workers' compensation claim through a workers' compensation attorney to receive any compensation. The determination as to whether the claim will be paid will be determined by the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board.

Contact the Workers' Compensation Commission at 1428 Lakeland Drive, Jackson, MS 39216, telephone (601) 987-4200.

PERSONAL LIFE POLICY - INTESTATE

Descent and Distribution - Surviving spouse takes all if no children or descendants of children, otherwise a child's share.

Other heirs take in following order: (1) Children and descendants of deceased children, per stirpes; (2) parents, brothers, sisters equally, issue of deceased brothers and sisters taking per stirpes; (3) grandparents and uncles and aunts per stirpes; (4) otherwise next of kin in equal degree, computed by the rules of the civil law. There is no representation among collaterals, except among descendants of brothers and sisters. (91-1-3).

PEER SUPPORT

Established in 1984, **Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., (COPS)**, is a national, non-profit organization that works with law enforcement agencies, police organizations, mental health professional, and local peer-support organizations to provide assistance to surviving families of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. COPS has become a "lifeline" to police survivors nationwide. **Contact the COPS National Office or visit www.nationalcops.org/chap.htm for information on a chapter in your area.**

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

The **Mississippi State Troopers Association** provides death benefits in addition to the above outlined benefits. The member's beneficiary receives **\$5,000** resulting from death caused by accident or natural causes.

The state police memorial is located at **Mississippi Department of Public Safety, 1900 East Woodrow Wilson Drive, Jackson, MS 39216.**

Southern States Police Benevolent Association, Inc.



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The PBA member's beneficiary will receive their base salary for one if year they are killed accidentally or intentionally while performing their law enforcement duties (maximum payout: \$60,000). The beneficiary will receive \$5,000 if it is not an occupational death or if you are a retired or reserve member. Any active Southern States PBA member in good standing and dues current will receive this benefit. **Contact: Southern States Police Benevolent Association, Inc., 1900 Brannan Road, McDonough, GA 30253-4310, telephone 1-800-233-3506, or visit www.sspba.org.**

