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Fiscal Note

Drafting Number:	LLS 24-0666	Date:	February 6, 2024
Prime Sponsors:	Sen. Rodriguez	Bill Status:	Senate Local Govt. & Housing
		Fiscal Analyst:	Josh Abram 303-866-3561 josh.abram@coleg.gov

Bill Topic: **FIREFIGHTER HEART BENEFITS TRUST**

Summary of	<input type="checkbox"/> State Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> State Transfer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Government
Fiscal Impact:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure	<input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund	<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Public Entity

The bill requires that all government employers of firefighters participate in a multiple employer health trust that provides benefits for a heart or circulatory health issue. The bill may change the expenditures of some local governments that employ firefighters.

Appropriation Summary: No appropriation is required.

Fiscal Note Status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Summary of Legislation

The bill requires that government employers of firefighters participate in a multiple employer health trust that provides benefits for a heart or circulatory health issue. The bill removes the option of an employer to provide these benefits through accident insurance or self-insurance.

Background

Under current law, the state and local governments participate in two multiple employer health benefit trusts, one that provides behavioral health benefits, and another that provides heart, circulatory system, and cancer health benefits. Public employers of firefighters, including local governments, special districts, and the Division of Fire Prevention and Control in the Department of Public Safety pay contributions into the trusts in order to provide health benefits to their firefighters.

The Colorado Firefighter Heart and Cancer Benefit Trust offers both a heart and cancer benefit program. The heart program provides payments for qualifying job-related cardiac incidents and coverage for heart screenings not covered by regular health insurance. The cancer program provides benefits upon diagnosis of various cancers.

Subject to annual appropriations, the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) reimburses public employers for the direct cost of maintaining accident insurance, self-insurance, or participation in an insurance pool or health trust. Over the last several years, the General Assembly has appropriated about \$830,000 to the cash fund to reimburse local employers of firefighters. According to DOLA, Aurora, Colorado Springs, Denver, and Grand Junction maintain self-insurance, instead of participating in the heart and cancer trust.

State Expenditures

The majority of public employers already participate in multiple employer health benefit trusts. State workload increases minimally for program staff at DOLA to provide technical assistance to new participants as part of the normal course of business. This effort does not require new appropriations.

Local Government

The bill removes the ability of a municipality to provide heart and circulatory health benefits via accident insurance, self-insurance, or as part of an insurance pool and instead requires participation in a multiple employer health trust. For some municipalities that maintain one of the alternative types of coverage being eliminated, there could be a change in the employers' cost to cover employees, and the types and value of benefits provided.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature, and applies to benefits provided 90 days after that date.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties
Public Safety

Local Affairs
Regulatory Agencies

Municipalities

The revenue and expenditure impacts in this fiscal note represent changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year. For additional information about fiscal notes, please visit the [General Assembly website](#).