

S.306

Introduced by Senators Major, Clarkson, Hardy, Mattos, Perchlik, Plunkett,  
Weeks and White

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Internal security and public safety; emergency management; first  
responders in communications; labor; workers' compensation; post-  
traumatic stress disorder

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to define public  
safety dispatchers and emergency services dispatchers as first responders in  
communications and to provide workers' compensation benefits for post-  
traumatic stress disorder incurred during service in the line of duty as a first  
responder in communications.

An act relating to first responders in communications

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this act is to give formal recognition and validation to public  
safety and emergency services dispatchers, whose work in responding to  
emergencies is critical and often traumatic, by providing access to benefits

1 more traditionally associated with first responders, such as training  
2 opportunities and access to mental health supports.

3 Sec. 2. 20 V.S.A. chapter 161 is added to read:

4 CHAPTER 161. FIRST RESPONDERS IN COMMUNICATIONS

5 § 2461. DEFINITIONS

6 “First responder in communications” means any individual who is currently  
7 or formerly certified by the Vermont Enhanced 911 Board as a 911 call taker, a  
8 public safety dispatcher, public safety telecommunicator, emergency operator,  
9 or emergency telecommunicator, or who is employed as an emergency  
10 communications dispatcher providing service for an emergency provider  
11 organization. A first responder in communications is responsible for the  
12 administration or supervision of lifesaving communication services for  
13 emergency situations.

14 § 2462. TRAINING

15 To the extent practicable, employers of a first responder in communications  
16 shall provide training to maintain and enhance the knowledge, skills, and  
17 proficiency of the first responder in communications.

18 Sec. 3. 21 V.S.A. § 601 is amended to read:

19 § 601. DEFINITIONS

20 As used in this chapter:

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5 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.