



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

Raised Bill No. 5279

LCO No. 1290



Referred to Committee on LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Introduced by:
(LAB)

AN ACT ADDING WITNESSING A SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURY AS A QUALIFYING EVENT FOR PURPOSES OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS INJURY WORKERS' COMPENSATION COVERAGE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 31-294k of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
3 *1, 2026*):

4 (a) As used in this section:

5 (1) "COVID-19" means the respiratory disease designated by the
6 World Health Organization on February 11, 2020, as coronavirus 2019,
7 and any related mutation thereof recognized by the World Health
8 Organization as a communicable respiratory disease;

9 (2) "Eligible individual" means a police officer, firefighter, emergency
10 medical services personnel, Department of Correction employee,
11 telecommunicator or health care provider, and on and after January 1,
12 2024, an employee;

13 (3) "Emergency medical services personnel" has the same meaning as
14 provided in section 20-206jj;

15 (4) "Employee" has the same meaning as provided in section 31-275;

16 (5) "Firefighter" has the same meaning as provided in section 7-313g;

17 (6) "Health care provider" means (A) a person employed at a doctor's
18 office, hospital, health care center, clinic, medical school, local health
19 department or agency, nursing facility, retirement facility, nursing
20 home, group home, home health care provider, any facility that
21 performs laboratory or medical testing, pharmacy or any similar
22 institution, or (B) a person employed to provide personal care
23 assistance, as defined in section 17b-706, in or about a private dwelling,
24 provided such person is regularly employed by the owner or occupier
25 of the dwelling for more than twenty-six hours per week;

26 (7) "In the line of duty" means any action that an eligible individual
27 is obligated or authorized by law, rule, regulation or written condition
28 of employment service to perform, or for which the eligible individual
29 is compensated by the public entity such individual serves, except that,
30 in the case of a volunteer firefighter, such action or service constitutes
31 fire duties, as defined in subsection (b) of section 7-314b;

32 (8) "Mental health professional" means a board-certified psychiatrist
33 or a psychologist licensed pursuant to chapter 383, who has experience
34 diagnosing and treating post-traumatic stress injury;

35 (9) "Parole officer" means an employee of the Department of
36 Correction who supervises inmates in the community after their release
37 from prison on parole or under another prison release program;

38 (10) "Police officer" has the same meaning as provided in section 7-
39 294a, except that "police officer" does not include an officer of a law
40 enforcement unit of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe or the Mohegan
41 Tribe of Indians of Connecticut;

42 (11) "Post-traumatic stress injury" means an injury that meets the
43 diagnostic criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder as specified in the
44 most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's
45 "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders";

46 (12) "Qualifying event" means:

47 (A) An event occurring in the line of duty on or after July 1, 2019, in
48 which a police officer, parole officer, firefighter, emergency medical
49 services personnel, Department of Correction employee or
50 telecommunicator:

51 (i) Views a deceased minor;

52 (ii) Witnesses the death of a person or an incident involving the death
53 of a person;

54 (iii) Witnesses an injury to a person who subsequently dies before or
55 upon admission at a hospital as a result of the injury and not as a result
56 of any other intervening cause;

57 (iv) Has physical contact with and treats an injured person who
58 subsequently dies before or upon admission at a hospital as a result of
59 the injury and not as a result of any other intervening cause;

60 (v) Carries an injured person who subsequently dies before or upon
61 admission at a hospital as a result of the injury and not as a result of any
62 other intervening cause; [or]

63 (vi) Witnesses a traumatic physical injury that results in the loss of a
64 vital body part or a vital body function that results in permanent
65 disfigurement of the victim; or

66 (vii) On and after October 1, 2026, witnesses a serious physical injury
67 to a person that does not result in (I) the death of such person, or (II) the
68 loss of a vital body part or a vital body function that results in a
69 permanent disfigurement of such person;

70 (B) An event arising out of and in the course of employment on or
71 after March 10, 2020, in which an eligible individual who is a health care
72 provider is engaged in activities substantially dedicated to mitigating or
73 responding to the public health and civil preparedness emergencies
74 declared by the Governor on March 10, 2020, or any extension of such
75 emergency declarations; and:

76 (i) Witnesses the death of a person due to COVID-19 or due to
77 symptoms that were later diagnosed as COVID-19;

78 (ii) Witnesses an injury to a person who subsequently dies as a result
79 of COVID-19 or due to symptoms that were later diagnosed as COVID-
80 19;

81 (iii) Has physical contact with and treats or provides care for a person
82 who subsequently dies as a result of COVID-19 or due to symptoms that
83 were later diagnosed as COVID-19; or

84 (iv) Witnesses a traumatic physical injury that results in the loss of a
85 vital body function of a person due to COVID-19 or due to symptoms
86 that were later diagnosed as COVID-19; or

87 (C) An event arising out of and in the course of employment on and
88 after January 1, 2024, in which an employee:

89 (i) Views a deceased minor;

90 (ii) Witnesses the death of a person or an incident involving the death
91 of a person;

92 (iii) Witnesses an injury to a person who subsequently dies before or
93 upon admission at a hospital as a result of the injury and not as a result
94 of any other intervening cause;

95 (iv) Has physical contact with and treats an injured person who
96 subsequently dies before or upon admission at a hospital as a result of
97 the injury and not as a result of any other intervening cause;

98 (v) Carries an injured person who subsequently dies before or upon
99 admission at a hospital as a result of the injury and not as a result of any
100 other intervening cause; [or]

101 (vi) Witnesses a traumatic physical injury that results in the loss of a
102 vital body part or a vital body function that results in permanent
103 disfigurement of the victim; or

104 (vii) On and after October 1, 2026, witnesses a serious physical injury
105 to a person that does not result in (I) the death of such person, or (II) the
106 loss of a vital body part or a vital body function that results in a
107 permanent disfigurement of such person;

108 (13) "Serious physical injury" has the same meaning as provided in
109 section 53a-3;

110 ~~[(13)]~~ (14) "Telecommunicator" has the same meaning as provided in
111 section 28-30; and

112 ~~[(14)]~~ (15) "Witnesses" means, for an eligible individual who is a
113 telecommunicator, hears by telephone or radio while directly
114 responding to an emergency call that constitutes a qualifying event
115 under this section and providing a dispatch assignment.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2026	31-294k(a)

Statement of Purpose:

To add witnessing a serious physical injury that does not result in the death or permanent disfigurement of such person as a qualifying event for an employee to be eligible for workers' compensation coverage for a post-traumatic stress injury.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]