

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003

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HOUSE BILL 916
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/28/03

Short Title: First Responders Vaccination Program. (Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 8, 2003

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A VACCINATION PROGRAM FOR FIRST RESPONDERS TO TERRORIST INCIDENTS, CATASTROPHIC OR NATURAL DISASTERS, OR EMERGENCIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Article 22 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes is amended by adding the following new section to read:

"§ 130A-485. Vaccination program established; definitions.

(a) The Department and local health departments shall offer a vaccination program for first responders who may be exposed to infectious diseases when deployed to disaster locations. The vaccinations shall include, but are not limited to, hepatitis A vaccination, hepatitis B vaccination, diphtheria-tetanus vaccination, influenza vaccination, pneumococcal vaccination, and other vaccinations when recommended by the United States Public Health Service and in accordance with Federal Emergency Management Directors Policy. Immune globulin will be made available when necessary, as determined by the State Health Director.

(b) Participation in the vaccination program is voluntary by the first responders, except for first responders who are classified as having "occupational exposure" to bloodborne pathogens as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standard contained at 29 C.F.R. § 1910.10300 who shall be required to take the designated vaccinations or otherwise required by law.

(c) The Department shall exempt from vaccinations first responders who present a written statement from a licensed physician indicating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for the first responder or the first responder signs a written statement that the administration of a vaccination conflicts with the first responder's religious tenets.

(d) In the event of a vaccine shortage, the State Public Health Director, in consultation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall give priority for vaccination to first responders deployed to a disaster location.

1 (e) The Department shall notify first responders of the availability of the
2 vaccination program and shall provide educational materials on ways to prevent
3 exposure to infectious diseases.

4 (f) As used in this section, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the
5 term:

6 (1) 'Bioterrorism' means the intentional use of any microorganism, virus,
7 infectious substance, biological product, or biological agent as defined
8 in G.S. 130A-479 that may be engineered as a result of biotechnology
9 or any naturally occurring or bioengineered component of any
10 microorganism, virus, infectious substance, or biological product to
11 cause or attempt to cause death, disease, or other biological
12 malfunction in any living organism.

13 (2) 'Disaster location' means any geographical location where a
14 bioterrorism attack, terrorist incident, catastrophic or natural disaster,
15 or emergency occurs.

16 (3) 'First responders' means State and local law enforcement personnel,
17 fire department personnel, and emergency medical personnel who will
18 be deployed to bioterrorism attacks, terrorist attacks, catastrophic or
19 natural disasters, or emergencies."

20 **SECTION 2.** Nothing in this act obligates the General Assembly to
21 appropriate State funds for the implementation of this act. The Department of Health
22 and Human Services shall work with local employers to access, when available, federal
23 funds to implement a vaccination program for first responders as enacted in Section 1 of
24 this act.

25 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.