



BALTIMORE COUNTY LODGE NO. 4
FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

INCORPORATED

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Message from President Dave Rose – Re: COVID-19 Presumption and Administrative Leave

While we continue our efforts as a community to stop the spread of this terrible pandemic, you and your co-workers remain on the frontlines, tirelessly working to ensuring the health and safety of the citizens of Baltimore County. As cases of COVID-19 continue to rise, more and more of our members have been quarantined for exposure or possible exposure by the Baltimore County Police Department and/or Baltimore County Health Department. While such quarantine procedures are needed if we are to stop the spread of this pandemic, they carry with them an additional level of stress and anxiety for our first responders and their families.

As of last week, thirty-two of our members have already been quarantined for possible exposure to COVID-19. Although most of our members were placed on administrative leave during that time, FOP Lodge #4 leadership was alerted to the fact that some were forced to use personal leave as the origin of the exposure or possible exposure could not be definitively determined.

On March 26th, your FOP Lodge #4 leadership petitioned Baltimore County Executive Olszewski as well as Governor Hogan to immediately undertake steps to establish a worker's compensation presumption of all public safety members who contract the COVID-19 virus in the line of duty. On Thursday, April 2, the Lodge received as response from Deputy Administrative Officer Drew Vetter on behalf of County Executive Olszewski. In his response, Mr. Vetter states:

"Baltimore County is extremely fortunate to have so many outstanding men and women first responders that continue to answer the call to serve, even in the most challenging of times. I recognize this is a time of great anxiety, especially so for public safety personnel and their families..."

"...Maryland's worker's compensation presumptions are a matter of State law, recognized in the Maryland Labor and Employment Article §9-503. Such presumptions are limited to certain occupational diseases and there are currently no presumptions for accidental injuries. Therefore, the County does not possess the authority to amend this article to include an additional COVID-19 presumption.

...To that end, if a member of FOP 4 is directed to quarantine by the BCoPD based on suspected exposure, regardless of where that exposure occurred, that employee will be placed on administrative leave and will not have to use their personal sick leave or other leave types in accordance with current County policy."

I would like to thank County Executive Olszewski, Mr. Vetter, and his staff for their timely response to our request. While the County may lack authority to make the necessary statutory changes to allow for a



presumption, we appreciate the steps the County Executive has taken in allowing for the use of administrative leave for a COVID-19 related quarantine.

As we strive to meet this challenge, your FOP Lodge #4 leadership will work with our state elected leaders to ensure the enactment of legislation supporting a COVID-19 worker's compensation presumption.

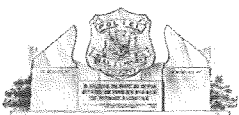
We remind you to take every precaution possible to ensure the continued health and safety of you and your families. Remember to always use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) even on the most routine calls and if you are not feeling well, please stay home. And, in the event you are exposed to COVID-19, members are strongly advised to file a first report of injury according to the usual process.

Your FOP Lodge #4 leadership remains committed to serving you in these difficult times. Should you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call, text or email me or any other board member. To view and learn more about your rights and instructions for the worker's compensation process for COVID-19, visit www.foplodge4.org

Thank you and be safe.

Fraternally

Dave Rose
President
4/6/20



REPRESENTING THE PROFESSIONAL POLICE OFFICERS OF BALTIMORE COUNTY

