

MONTANA



DEATH BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO THE SURVIVING FAMILIES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WHO HAVE DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

STATE DEATH BENEFITS

Montana Senate Bill 294 (SB 294) established the **Montana End of Watch Trust Fund** in 2023, creating a state special revenue account to provide financial support, specifically a monthly income-loss payment for up to five years, to families of Montana law enforcement officers who are killed or catastrophically injured in the line of duty, with provisions for retroactive payments and tax exemption on benefits. This fund is administered by the Montana Department of Justice.

Visit <https://dojmt.gov/> or call (406) 444-2026 for more information.

EDUCATION BENEFITS

Montana Code Annotated MCA 20-25-421 (d) The Regents of the Montana University System may waive tuition for surviving spouses and children. The prospective student should tell the university of their survivorship status and request a tuition waiver at the time of application.

Contact the **Montana Office of Commissioner of Higher Education / Montana University System** at (406) 449-9124 or visit <https://www.mus.edu/Prepare/Pay/Waivers/index.html#sd> for more information.

CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS – provides financial assistance of up to \$2,000 per semester to surviving children and surviving spouses of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty, according to C.O.P.S. criteria, who wish to pursue a course of study beyond high school. Since there is a tuition-free education benefit available in your state, you must first apply for and be denied by the state or the institution to be eligible for the C.O.P.S. scholarship.

How to Apply: <https://www.concernsofpolicesurvivors.org/scholarship>

The PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' EDUCATION ASSISTANCE (PSOEA) Program provides financial assistance, for the purpose of seeking higher education, to the spouses and eligible children of local police, fire, and emergency public safety officers who have been killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty.

Educational assistance through the PSOEA Program is available after the Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB) death or disability claim process has been completed and benefits have been awarded.

CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS (C.O.P.S.) // (573) 346-4911 // cops@nationalcops.org

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Visit <https://psob.bja.ojp.gov/> for more information and the application or call the PSOB Office toll-free at 1-888-744-6513 to discuss the requirements for receiving PSOEBA benefits.

KIDS CHANCE OF MONTANA - To be eligible for a scholarship grant, applicants must have a parent who has been killed or seriously injured as a result of a work-related incident that meets the criteria of the Montana Workers' Compensation Act and that has resulted in demonstrated financial need. Applicants must be between the ages of 16-26. For more information or to apply, visit <http://www.kidschanceofmontana.org/>

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Benefit for a spouse or a spouse with child(ren) is 66 2/3% of the employee's wage. Spouse receives benefits for up to 500 weeks, unless the spouse remarries, then benefits will no longer be received. Children receive benefits until age 18 or beyond age 18 if disabled, or until age 22 if full-time students or if they are enrolled in an accredited apprenticeship program. To receive workers' compensation benefits the surviving spouse must take the initiative and file a workers' compensation claim through a workers' compensation attorney to receive any compensation.

Contact **Montana Labor & Industry Workers' Compensation Assistance** by calling (406) 444-6543 or visit <http://erd.dli.mt.gov/work-comp-claims> for more information.

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' BENEFITS (PSOB) PROGRAM

A unique effort of the U.S. Department of Justice; local, state, tribal, and federal public safety agencies; and national organizations, the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program provides death and education benefits to survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty.

The claim has two parts (A&B) that require the agency and family to fill out online. Visit <https://psob.bja.ojp.gov/> for additional filing information. If you need assistance filing this claim, contact the National C.O.P.S. office at (573) 346-4911 or cops@nationalcops.org

STATE LIFE INSURANCE & RETIREMENT

Check with your agency to see if you are eligible for State Life Insurance or death benefits from a Retirement system. You can also visit:

MPERA (Montana Public Employee Retirement Administration)

<https://mpera.mt.gov/members/MPORS>

Montana Police Officers' Retirement System (MPORS) <http://mpera.mt.gov/MEMBERS/MPORS>

HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS

Health benefits vary depending upon agencies. Contact the Benefits Coordinator at your agency.

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FUNERAL BENEFITS

Workers' Compensation A reasonable expense of the employee's funeral and burial up to \$10,000 will be paid. See Workers' Compensation section above.

DIGNITY MEMORIAL FUNERAL, CREMATION AND CEMETERY providers created the Public Servants Program for emergency service personnel. This program provides dignified and honorable tributes, at no cost, for career and volunteer law enforcement officers who fall in the line of duty. Visit their website for complete information at <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/> and look under Public Servants for details. You may also call 800-344-6489 and speak with a representative.

WILBERT FUNERAL SERVICES, INC. provides complimentary burial vaults and related services for fallen law enforcement officers. For more information visit <https://www.wilbert.com/> or call (888) WILBERT.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

PEER SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS INC., (C.O.P.S.), is a national, non-profit organization that works with law enforcement agencies, police organizations, mental health professionals, and local peer-support organizations to provide assistance to surviving families of law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. C.O.P.S. provides Hands-On Programs, training for law enforcement, National Police Week registration/accommodations, scholarships, counseling and so much more to surviving families and co-workers.

Contact the C.O.P.S. National Office 573-346-4911, email cops@nationalcops.org or visit <https://www.concernsofpolicesurvivors.org/local-chapters> for information on a chapter in your area. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CST.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT Spouses, children, or parents may be eligible for Social Security Benefits. To apply for benefits, call (800) 772-1213 to speak to a Social Security representative or visit your local Social Security Office. You cannot report a death or apply for survivors benefits online. Visit <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/survivors/ifyou.html> for more information.

MPPA (MONTANA POLICE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION) FOUNDATION, INC The only membership requirement is to be a sworn law enforcement officer in Montana. They provide death benefits and scholarship opportunities. A member must have a completed MPPA Enrollment/Death Benefit Form on file with the MPPA office.
<https://www.montanapolice.org/about-the-foundation/>

Montana Law Enforcement Museum <http://www.mtle.org/>

Montana Narcotics Officers Association (MNOA) <http://www.mnoa.org/>

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American Association of State Troopers <https://www.statetroopers.org/member-benefits>

FIRST RESPONDERS CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION provides financial support to children who have lost a parent in the line of duty as well as families enduring significant financial hardships due to tragic circumstances. They also provide annual education scholarships to children of fallen heroes. For more information, call (646) 822-4236 or visit <https://1strcf.org>

OTHER BENEFITS TO ASK YOUR AGENCY ABOUT:

City life insurance?

Private life insurance?

County & Local Jurisdiction Benefits?

Retirement Benefits?

Real estate tax relief?

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