

Who Can You Trust?

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Firefighters and police officers face danger as a part of their occupation. Dangers can appear from any direction at any time. A large amount of these professionals', training is attuned to identify such situations and avoid or neutralize the oncoming realities of what may appear around the next corner. Those dangers could come in any form, (including your city government), it could be fire related, it could be in the form of duty related catastrophic injuries at emergencies or other duty required activities. These dangers could be in the form of physical or psychological pressures, they could come from many unexpected forces that would be unbelievable even when identified.

When a Fire or Police Officer is hired, some of the most important factors used to judge his or her performance are honestly, honor and integrity. Officials have a right to expect and demand these traits in public safety employees. There is zero tolerance when it comes to these basic ideals. The public expects no less than excellence from every employee employed by government. Most governments cannot afford to pay for, and do not pay for, all of these expectations. Therefore, they have for over one hundred years made promises to protect public safety people and their families relating to when they retire, are injured or are killed in the performance of the duties to the people they serve. In the case of firefighters, they work a 24 hour shift (56 Hrs per week) every third day. They do not receive overtime for these extra hours worked in comparison to other employees (40 Hrs per week).

Firefighters know this expectation when they are hired. They are told that when and if injured or killed in the line of duty, "the city will be there for you" as well as your families. This would include an earlier retirement than most. Yes, firefighters must pay a little more than other employees, but the fire and police services have their separate pension funds. They are governed by state statutes, and firefighters and the city will assure the funds will be there to take care of you and your loved ones if needed. It is guaranteed by the Constitution of this state.

Now, these people that sold us on the security of these jobs are only trying to renege on these contractual promises. They have tried hard to find ways to divert funds by underfunding tax levies for other needs causing the underfunding to grow, not only by the short falls but by the compounding of the unfunded liabilities. The pension boards are required to request the funding needed to pay the cities' agreed on portion of these funds. All the while, the employees pay 100% of their portion of the obligation with every pay check they receive.

When you read the enclosed information you will see how some units of government are trying to push the blame to the General Assembly, firefighters and police that serve them. The "city fathers" expect honesty from their employees but the employees have found some city fathers are not being honest about the causes that have lead to the financial condition we are in today. So now the professionals that lay their lives on the line day after day have to be concerned with the misinformation campaign being pushed by the people that are governing some of our cities today.

For more information feel free to contact your IPFA office at 680-833-2405. Keep up to date by visiting - www.ipfaonline.org