



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 352

February Session, 2026

Senate Bill No. 348

Senate, April 2, 2026

The Committee on Labor and Public Employees reported through SEN. KUSHNER of the 24th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING PORTAL-TO-PORTAL WORKERS'
COMPENSATION COVERAGE FOR PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
EMPLOYEES.***

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

1 Section 1. Subdivision (1) of section 31-275 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
3 *1, 2026*):

4 (1) "Arising out of and in the course of his employment" means an
5 accidental injury happening to an employee or an occupational disease
6 of an employee originating while the employee has been engaged in the
7 line of the employee's duty in the business or affairs of the employer
8 upon the employer's premises, or while engaged elsewhere upon the
9 employer's business or affairs by the direction, express or implied, of the
10 employer, provided:

11 (A) (i) For a police officer or firefighter, "in the course of his
12 employment" encompasses such individual's departure from such

13 individual's place of abode to duty, such individual's duty, and the
14 return to such individual's place of abode after duty;

15 (ii) For an employee of the Department of Correction, (I) when
16 responding to a direct order to appear at such employee's assignment
17 under circumstances in which nonessential employees are excused from
18 working, or (II) following two or more mandatory overtime work shifts
19 on consecutive days, "in the course of his employment" encompasses
20 such individual's departure from such individual's place of abode
21 directly to duty, such individual's duty, and the return directly to such
22 individual's place of abode after duty;

23 (iii) For a telecommunicator, as defined in section 28-30, (I) when a
24 telecommunicator is subject to emergency calls while off duty by the
25 terms of such telecommunicator's employment, (II) when responding to
26 a direct order to appear at such telecommunicator's work assignment
27 under circumstances in which nonessential employees are excused from
28 working, or (III) following two or more mandatory overtime work shifts
29 on consecutive days, "in the course of his employment" encompasses
30 such individual's departure from such individual's place of abode
31 directly to duty, such individual's duty, and the return directly to such
32 individual's place of abode after duty;

33 (iv) For an employee of a public works department, (I) when such
34 employee is subject to emergency calls while off duty by the terms of
35 such employee's employment, (II) when responding to a direct order to
36 appear at such employee's work assignment under circumstances in
37 which nonessential employees are excused from working, or (III)
38 following two or more mandatory overtime work shifts on consecutive
39 days, "in the course of his employment" encompasses such individual's
40 departure from such individual's place of abode directly to duty, such
41 individual's duty, and the return directly to such individual's place of
42 abode after duty. For purposes of this subparagraph, "public works
43 department" means a state or municipal department responsible for the
44 construction, regulation or maintenance of all things in the nature of
45 public works and improvements;

46 [(iv)] (v) Notwithstanding the provisions of clauses (i) and (ii) of this
47 subparagraph, the dependents of any deceased employee of the
48 Department of Correction who was injured in the course of his
49 employment, as defined in this subparagraph, on or after July 1, 2000,
50 and who died not later than July 15, 2000, shall be paid compensation
51 on account of the death, in accordance with the provisions of section 31-
52 306, retroactively to the date of the employee's death. The cost of the
53 payment shall be paid by the employer or its insurance carrier which
54 shall be reimbursed for such cost from the Second Injury Fund as
55 provided in section 31-354 upon presentation of any vouchers and
56 information that the Treasurer may require;

57 (B) A personal injury shall not be deemed to arise out of the
58 employment unless causally traceable to the employment other than
59 through weakened resistance or lowered vitality;

60 (C) In the case of an accidental injury, a disability or a death due to
61 the use of alcohol or narcotic drugs shall not be construed to be a
62 compensable injury;

63 (D) For aggravation of a preexisting disease, compensation shall be
64 allowed only for that proportion of the disability or death due to the
65 aggravation of the preexisting disease as may be reasonably attributed
66 to the injury upon which the claim is based;

67 (E) A personal injury shall not be deemed to arise out of the
68 employment if the injury is sustained: (i) At the employee's place of
69 abode, and (ii) while the employee is engaged in a preliminary act or
70 acts in preparation for work unless such act or acts are undertaken at
71 the express direction or request of the employer;

72 (F) For purposes of subparagraph (C) of this subdivision, "narcotic
73 drugs" means all controlled substances, as designated by the
74 Commissioner of Consumer Protection pursuant to subsection (c) of
75 section 21a-243, but does not include drugs prescribed in the course of
76 medical treatment or in a program of research operated under the
77 direction of a physician or pharmacologist. For purposes of

78 subparagraph (E) of this subdivision, "place of abode" includes the
79 inside of the residential structure, the garage, the common hallways,
80 stairways, driveways, walkways and the yard;

81 (G) The Workers' Compensation Commission shall adopt
82 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to
83 implement the provisions of this section and shall define the terms "a
84 preliminary act", "acts in preparation for work", "departure from place
85 of abode directly to duty" and "return directly to place of abode after
86 duty" on or before January 1, 2006.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	31-275(1)

LAB *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Workers' Comp. Claims-Admin. Serv. Dept.	App Fund - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: App Fund=All Appropriated Funds

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Various Municipalities	STATE MANDATE ¹ - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

Explanation

The bill results in a potential cost to the Department of Administrative Services – Worker’s Compensation Claims and various self-insured municipalities beginning in FY 27 to the extent qualified public works personnel apply for workers’ compensation benefits due to the expanded population eligible for such benefits under the bill.

Any potential increase in the number of workers' compensation claims resulting from this bill is not anticipated to be great enough to result in a fiscal impact to the Workers' Compensation Commission.

¹ State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 348*****AN ACT CONCERNING PORTAL-TO-PORTAL WORKERS' COMPENSATION COVERAGE FOR PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill extends “portal-to-portal” workers’ compensation coverage to public works department employees in three situations: (1) when they are subject to emergency calls while off duty by the terms of their employment, (2) when they are responding to a direct order to appear at their work assignment when non-essential employees are excused from working, or (3) after working two or more mandatory overtime shifts on consecutive days.

With “portal-to-portal” coverage, an injury that occurs while the employee is traveling directly between his or her home and workplace is deemed to have occurred in the course of the employee’s employment, making him or her eligible to receive workers’ compensation benefits for the injury. Under the bill, a “public works department” is a state or municipal department responsible for building, regulating, or maintaining all things in the nature of public works and improvements.

Existing law gives 9-1-1 emergency dispatchers portal-to-portal coverage under the same conditions the bill applies to public works department employees. The law also gives portal-to-portal coverage to (1) Department of Correction employees when they are responding to a direct order to appear at their work assignment when non-essential employees are excused from working or after they have worked two or more mandatory overtime shifts on consecutive days and (2) police officers and firefighters whenever they are traveling directly between home and work.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

BACKGROUND

Related Bill

sHB 5003, § 8, reported favorably by the Labor and Public Employees Committee, is identical to this bill.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 9 Nay 4 (03/17/2026)