

up



# SIZE THE

2019 - Volume 1

## Illinois Professional Firefighters Association

188 West Industrial Drive  
Suite 134  
Elmhurst, IL  
60126-1608

v 630.833.2405  
f 630.833.2412

[www.ipfaonline.org](http://www.ipfaonline.org)  
[ipfa@aol.com](mailto:ipfa@aol.com)

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# PENSION BOARD SECRETARY VERSION



Photo courtesy of Flashover Photography

IPFA Legislative Rep. Mark Mifflin, Rep. Michael Zalewski (D-23), Exec. Dir. Greg Knoll & Board V-P Steve Iovinelli at the 2018 Fall Pension Seminar

### 2019 DATES TO REMEMBER:

Wednesday	February 20	Black	Board Meeting
Friday	May 3	Black	2019 Spring Seminar
Tuesday	May 14	Gold	Firefighter Medal of Honor Ceremony
Wednesday	May 15	Black	Board Meeting
Saturday	August 10	Black	IPFA Day at the Illinois State Fair
Wednesday	August 21	Gold	Board Meeting
Wednesday	October 16	Red	IPFA Annual Meeting—Officer Elections
Friday	November 1	Gold	2019 Fall Pension Seminar

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**Public Act 100-0900**

Illinois Professional Firefighters Association (IPFA) was formed in 1959. IPFA has grown to almost 1,900 members. Membership includes active firefighters, retired or disabled firefighters, their surviving spouses or children, and other individuals and firms with an interest in downstate police and fire pension funds.

AN ACT concerning government.

In 1975 IPFA began offering interactive pension seminars. A wide range of speakers provide valuable information and insight concerning downstate police and fire pension fund operations.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

This is a 8 page edited version of the 24 page newsletter received quarterly by members. The Table of Contents shows the contents of the 24 page version.

Section 5. The State Commemorative Dates Act is amended by adding Section 148 as follows:

Staff maintains a database of assets, liabilities, rate of return, and state calculated levy amounts for all Article 3 and Article 4 funds.

(5 ILCS 490/148 new)

The Board of Directors and staff feel we provide a great value for membership in IPFA. We ask that you make time to go to our website, see the full range of membership benefits, and consider joining IPFA.

Sec. 148. First Responder Mental Health Awareness Day. The third Friday in May of each year is designated as First Responder Mental Health Awareness Day, to be observed throughout the State as a day to honor firefighters, police officers, and other first responders who have lost their lives due to and suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and other mental health issues.

**FIREFIGHTER FATALITIES IN 2017**

The United States Fire Administration released their 2017 annual report on firefighter fatalities in the United States is now available:

- 87 firefighters (48 volunteer, 33 career and 6 wildland agency) died while on duty.
- 50 firefighters died from heart attacks.
- 40 firefighters died from activities related to an emergency incident.
- 17 firefighters died from activities at a fire scene.
- 12 firefighters died while training.
- 12 firefighters died during non-fire emergency duties.
- 11 firefighters died while responding to or returning from emergency incidents.

To read the full 2017 report: [https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/ff\\_fat17.pdf](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/ff_fat17.pdf)

**ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT BOARD  
REDUCES ASSUMED RATE OF RETURN**

IMRF website

At its December 14 meeting, the IMRF Board of Trustees lowered the amount it assumes IMRF will annually earn on its investment portfolio.

At the recommendation of actuarial consultant GRS Retirement Consulting, the Board lowered the assumption from 7.5% net of fees to 7.25% net of fees, effective January 1,

*(Continued on page 3)*



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(Continued from page 2)

2019. This change is consistent with market trends and actions taken by most public pension funds across the nation.

For more detail, here is the link to the web page where the 27 slide PowerPoint presentation that GRS made to the IMRF Board at its November meeting can be downloaded:

<https://www.imrf.org/en/news/2018/12-december/assumed-rate-reduced>

**RETIREES PENSIONABLE SALARIES  
IMPROPERLY CALCULATED, REDUCED BY COURT**

City of Countryside v. City of Countryside Police Pension Bd. of Trustees et al., 2018 IL App (1st) 171029

Brian LaBardi, IPFA Board Counsel

In an update from a case featured in our April 2017 newsletter, the First District Appellate Court has affirmed a lower court ruling invalidating what the City and DOI termed as pension “spikes” for a number of retired Countryside police officers.

The trouble began in 2002 when the FOP negotiated a contract with the city providing for longevity benefits. Per the negotiated CBA, qualifying officers would receive longevity bonuses of between \$800-850 payable during a specific pay period designated by the officer. Labor counsel for the city signed a side letter with FOP’s attorney providing the longevity bonus would be calculated as \$800 or \$850 times 26 pay periods as opposed to simply adding the longevity stipend to the retiring officer’s salary attached to rank. The FOP contract was approved by city resolution however, the side letter was not included.

*Editor’s Note: The above is the first two paragraphs of a full page article that appears in the member version of the Size-Up.*

**2019 IFCA  
FOUNDATION  
SCHOLARSHIP  
INFORMATION**

For years Illinois Professional Firefighters Association has funded scholarships through the Illinois Fire Chiefs Educational Research Foundation. We currently co-fund three.

IPFA encourages all of our members to consider applying for a scholarship. They can help fund college degrees at all levels as well as certain certification programs. Check the ICHIEFS website 2019 scholarship information and the application. You have until March 15 to complete the process.



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The ICHIEFS Foundation scholarship applications are available on-line. Here is the link:

<https://www.illinoisfirechiefs.org/foundation/scholarship-info/>

**UNION SUIT NIXED VS LINCOLNSHIRE  
OVER DUES PAID FOR 'ANTI-UNION' LOBBYING  
ballot box remains open: Judge**

Scott Holland, Cook Country Record

A federal judge has rejected an attempt by unions to force the village of Lincolnshire to stop paying dues to the Illinois Municipal League because the association of Illinois cities and villages lobbies in favor of policies union members may oppose.

In an opinion issued Dec. 7, U.S. District Judge John Robert Blakey granted a joint motion filed by the village and the Illinois Municipal League, asking the judge to dismiss the legal action brought by two union members and two local labor unions, the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 150 and the Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters.

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Please contact Allie Rysell for more information at [arysell@lauterbachamen.com](mailto:arysell@lauterbachamen.com) or (630) 821-0182.

Seven states – Washington, Nevada, Wyoming, Texas, South Dakota, Florida and Alaska – have no individual income tax, while New Hampshire and Tennessee tax only income from interest and dividends, rather than wages and salaries, the study says.

Complexities of state income tax laws include differences in standard deductions, exemptions and the number of tax brackets. In all, individual income taxes account for 37 percent of state tax revenues, according to the analysis.

### NFA ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO EXECUTIVE FIRE OFFICER PROGRAM

The National Fire Academy (NFA) announced upcoming changes to the Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Program recently. EFO provides senior fire officers enhanced knowledge on management and leadership problems facing fire and EMS departments.

Students are required to complete applied research projects each year. Currently a 4-year program, the EFO curriculum is being shortened to 2 years. It will blend online learning with courses offered at the Emmitsburg, Maryland campus. This allows more flexibility for interested fire officers to commit to the program.

Applications are on hold at the moment. Those interested can read more about the changes on the U.S. Fire Administration’s website and subscribe to receive updates by email.

### ANALYSIS: ILLINOIS POSTED 9th LOWEST INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX RATE IN 2018

By Illinois Business Daily reports | Jan 10, 2019

Illinois ranked No. 36 for its top individual income tax rate, according to a Tax Foundation analysis of 2018 tax numbers that tracked the District of Columbia and the 43 states that levy such taxes.

Illinois has a single tax bracket on individual income, with a top rate of 4.95 percent, the study by policy analyst Morgan Scarboro said.

The highest marginal state income tax rates range from 13.3 percent to 2.9 percent, the analysis concluded.

### STATE TO SET QUALIFICATIONS FOR LOCAL CHIEFS DESPITE VETO, OBJECTIONS

Greg Bishop, Illinois News Network

The state legislature approved a bill that requires fire chiefs to have specific qualifications over a veto from the governor and objections from municipal management groups.

State Rep. Kathleen Willis, D-Addison, said Senate Bill 2619 establishes requirements for the fire chief post that local governments must follow.

“We’re not mandating any increase in pay,” Willis said. “We’re just making sure that the men and women that run these departments are trained personnel ... They could have firefighter officer training, they could have a certification from the International Fire Association or they could have ten years experience as a firefighter.”

*Editor’s Note: The above is the first three paragraphs of an article that appears in the member version of the Size-Up.*

### UPTICK IN SOCIAL SECURITY CHECKS FOR 2019 AS INFLATION RISES

Ricardo Alonzo-Zaldivar | AP

WASHINGTON — Tens of millions of Social Security beneficiaries and other retirees can expect an increase in benefits next year as inflation edges higher.

*(Continued on page 5)*



(Continued from page 4)


The government announced a cost-of-living adjustment of 2.8 percent on Thursday. That would mean an extra \$39 a month for the average retired worker.

Seniors count on the money to help keep pace with rising prices for health care and housing. The Social Security Administration will formally announce details later on Thursday.

By law, the annual cost-of-living adjustment, or COLA, is based on a broad official measure of consumer prices. Advocates

for seniors claim the inflation index doesn't accurately capture costs faced by seniors, especially health care.

The COLA affects benefits for more than 70 million Americans, including Social Security recipients, disabled veterans and federal retirees.



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**FORMER WEST COVINA  
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF WINS  
WHISTLEBLOWER LAWSUIT AGAINST CITY**

CHRISTOPHER YEE, San Gabriel Valley Tribune

A jury sided with a former West Covina deputy fire marshal last week in his whistleblower-retaliation lawsuit against the city.

Jason Briley had worked for the West Covina Fire Department for nine years when he was fired in September 2015. The city claimed Briley had been fired for improper conduct and being difficult to work with, but he alleged the move was retaliation for him pointing out various city facilities — including City Hall, the Cortez Park Community & Senior Center and the Cameron Park Community Center — did not have proper fire alarm systems.

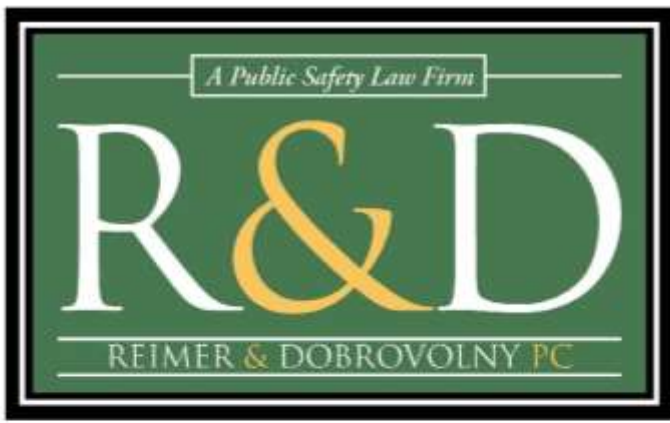
Briley filed his lawsuit in January 2016, and on Wednesday, a jury awarded him a little more than \$4 million.

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**President George H. W. Bush**

Before the 1988 election, "It's no exaggeration to say the undecideds could go one way or another."

Later in his presidential career, "We are enjoying sluggish times, but we are not enjoying them very much."



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## SNIPPETS FROM VARIOUS ARTICLES IN THE 24 PAGE ISSUE:

1. What's less expensive than a volunteer Pension Board? No board members can draw a salary directly from the fund.
2. Trustee training expenses are a lot less than the \$ 3 million per year estimate offered by groups with other points of view.
3. If education is expensive, what's the price of ignorance? Seems that pension board trustees have a better

### A SCHOOL BOARD HAS FIRED THE STATE'S HIGHEST PAID SUPERINTENDENT FOR ALLEGEDLY FALSIFYING HIS OWN PAY AND ATTENDANCE RECORDS TO GET A \$1.7 MILLION END-OF CAREER PAYOUT.

Cole Lauterbach | Illinois News Network

The Calumet City School Board fired Superintendent Troy Paraday just days before he was set to retire. Paraday earned \$430,000 a year. On top of that, he tried to cash in 885 unused personal, sick and vacation days worth more than \$1.7 million, according to his calculations. After news coverage of the potential payout, the board investigated. The board said it found alleged misconduct regarding Paraday's pay and fired him.

"I think there needs to be a new day on that Calumet City school board that for sure," said Adam Andrzejewski, CEO of

the government spending watchdog Open the Books. "It looks like they were asleep for years as the superintendent felt that he had amassed all these sick and vacation days that now look very questionable."

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grasp of the statutes, rules and regulations, and necessary skills in conducting the business of a local retirement system.

4. Why are downstate pension fund rates of return being compared to systems with different end of fiscal year months? Different fiscal year end dates produce different results.

### AND THESE FROM A DIFFERENT ARTICLE:

*Article 4 : 16 year difference: Category IV fund investment returns were: 12.7% higher than the IDOI average, 34.8% higher than Category I, 18.60% higher than Category II, and 11.3% higher than Category III funds.*

*Article 3 : 14 year difference: Category IV fund investment returns were: 19.7% higher than the IDOI average, 54.0% higher than Category I, 21.64% higher than Category II, and 13.4% higher than Category III funds.*

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## PROPOSED LIFE SAFETY CODE CHANGES

The OSFM has proposed amendments to our administrative rules that update our adopted code from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101, *Life Safety Code* (2000 edition) to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101, *Life Safety Code* (2015 edition), with additional modifications.

Our proposed rules were published in the Illinois Register on Friday, January 4.

There is a link on our website to the text of the proposed rules:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/sfm/Resources/Pages/Proposed-Rule-Changes.aspx> to review the text of proposed rules.

You are also encouraged to review two separate fact sheets: [What is the Life Safety Code? And Why is the OSFM updating the Life Safety Code?](#) & [Where Does the Life Safety Code Apply?](#). They provide a sense of the impact that this change may have on your community or organization.

After reviewing the sheets, if you have a specific comment or question on the rulemaking that you wish to make, you may send that to:

Office of the State Fire Marshal  
Attn: Cathy Stashak  
100 W. Randolph St., Suite 4-600  
Chicago, IL 60601

Or by facsimile, Attn: Cathy Stashak to 312.814.3459.

Should you choose to attend a public hearing:

Tuesday, January 29, 2019, 09:00, John Logan College, Room F103, 700 Logan College Road, Carterville, IL 62918

Wednesday, January 30, 2019, 13:00, Office of the State Fire Marshal, 1035 Stevenson Drive, Springfield, IL 62703

Tuesday, February 5, 2019, 09:00, Des Plaines Facility, Lower Level Conference Room, 9511 Harrison St., Des Plaines, IL 60016

### FROM A CHICAGO TRIBUNE EDITORIAL:

CBS News, during the 1980 campaign, had asked Bush if he was "too nice" to be president.

Bush defended himself — politely: "I don't equate toughness with just attacking some individual. I equate toughness with moral fiber, with character, with principle, with demonstrated leadership in tough jobs where you emerge not bullying somebody but with the respect of the people you led. If I happen to be decent in the process, that should not be a liability."



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