

THE CONSEQUENCES OF TIERS V AND VI: HOW THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF NEW YORK'S PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS WAS HARMED

In 2010, a new retirement tier was introduced to the Police and Fire Retirement System, and just two years later, the Governor without any understanding of its impact, or evidence of need, created Tier VI.

With the stroke of a pen, he initiated a series of cascading consequences and inequities that are harming New York's full-time fire fighters, their families and the communities that rely upon them.

Fire Fighting is not an Ordinary Job

During one 24-hour shift a fire fighter will respond to extraordinary events ranging from multi-story blazes where toxic chemicals fill the air they breathe, to accidents and medical emergencies where high-pressured decision making is the norm.

Being a Fire Fighter Takes its Toll on Both Mind and Body

Due to the uncontrolled environment and circumstances confronted while on duty, first responders have higher incidents of heart disease, cancer, and exposure to trauma. It is among the most dangerous occupations in the U.S.

A Disturbing Trend

While professional fire fighters can retire after 20 years, the Tier V and VI provisions eroded the pension and survivor benefits for the vast majority of those serving today. To support their families, many seek to work additional shifts; and are forced to work more years than they should.

When is One More Year on the Job - Too Many?

Collectively fire fighters have a lower life expectancy than the general population. Historically, these challenging work conditions resulted in wage and retirement benefits reflecting this very real vulnerability. Under Tiers V and VI this support is eroding.

IN 2023, MORE THAN 10 YEARS AFTER ITS INTRODUCTION, FIRE FIGHTERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE SUFFERING THE HARM AND CONSEQUENCE OF TIERS V & VI.

