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## PROTECTION FROM COVID-19

BY: SCOTT A. O'MARA

On September 17, 2020, Governor Newsom signed two bills --- Senate Bill 1159 and Assembly Bill 685 --- which are designed to protect California workers and slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. These two legislative enactments help California workers to stay safe at work and be eligible for the necessary medical and economic support if they are exposed to or acquire the pandemic virus. This legislation specifically identifies the extraordinary risks safety officers are exposed to in relation to COVID-19.

If in fact you develop COVID-19, it is important that you document same by filing a Workers' Compensation claim. If a COVID-19 infection is found, the new legislation will lessen the burden of receiving the medical care needed to cure or relieve the effects of the virus, and enable you to get paid for any time off work needed to receive that treatment.

One of the factors involved is that a positive finding of COVID-19 should occur within 14 days of the employee performing labor or other services at his/her place of work and exposure. The diagnosis must be made by a licensed physician holding an M.D. or D.O. degree, or by a licensed physician assistant or nurse practitioner acting under the supervision of a physician.

Again, the filing of the claim is to provide protection and medical care, and allow you to receive compensation for any time taken off from work because of COVID-19.



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**NOTICE:** *Making a false or fraudulent Workers' Compensation claim is a felony subject to up to 5 years in prison or a fine of up to \$50,000 or double the value of the fraud, whichever is greater, or by both imprisonment and fine.*

