

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.B. 2073  
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Local Government  
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Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The recent pandemic affected communities across Texas. As Texans struggled to make the best of a very tough situation, our first responders remained vigilant and answered the calls of the public they protect and serve. Through riots, storms, and their normal duties they are expected to perform, many were exposed to COVID-19.

In an effort to protect other first responders many local governments made the proper decision to order these first responders to quarantine.

Unfortunately, among those who were forced to quarantine because of exposure doing their duties, many were forced to use vacation or sick leave in order to cover the costs associated with the quarantining employee's absence. For many this seemed punitive and unfair.

The bill resolves this issue by requiring paid leave specifically for quarantine. The bill would ensure that no firefighter, peace officer, or EMT faces an unexpected financial burden in addition to the other physical and psychological stresses of continuing to perform their duties during an outbreak of disease.

H.B. 2073 amends current law relating to quarantine leave for fire fighters, peace officers, detention officers, and emergency medical technicians employed by, appointed by, or elected for a political subdivision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends the heading to Chapter 180, Local Government Code, to read as follows:

#### **CHAPTER 180. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS AFFECTING OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF MORE THAN ONE TYPE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 180, Local Government Code, by adding Section 180.008, as follows:

Sec. 180.008. QUARANTINE LEAVE FOR FIRE FIGHTERS, PEACE OFFICERS, DETENTION OFFICERS, AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS. (a) Defines "detention officer," "emergency medical technician," "fire fighter," and "peace officer."

(b) Requires a political subdivision to place on paid quarantine leave a fire fighter, peace officer, detention officer, or emergency medical technician employed by the political subdivision and ordered by a supervisor or a health authority to quarantine or isolate due to a possible or known exposure to a communicable disease while on duty.

(c) Requires a political subdivision to provide to a fire fighter, peace officer, detention officer, or emergency medical technician on quarantine leave all employment benefits and compensation, including leave accrual, pension benefits, and health benefit plan benefits, and to provide costs related to the quarantine, including lodging, medical, and transportation costs.

(d) Prohibits a political subdivision from reducing a fire fighter's, peace officer's, detention officer's, or emergency medical technician's sick leave balance, vacation leave balance, holiday leave balance, or other paid leave balance in connection with quarantine leave required by Subsection (b).

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.