

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Administrative Code - Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment Containing PFAS]

Ordinance amending the Administrative Code to prohibit the Fire Department from providing or using personal protective equipment containing intentionally-added PFAS (perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances) by June 30, 2026; and requiring the Fire Department to conduct regular meetings with labor representatives, and submit regular reports to the Board of Supervisors and Fire Commission, regarding its progress toward meeting the June 30, 2026, deadline.

Existing Law

Existing local law does not address firefighter personal protective equipment (“PPE”). Under California law, General Industry Safety Orders in Sections 3403 to 3407 of Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations set forth certain standards for firefighter PPE, but California law does not address the presence of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (“PFAS”) in firefighter PPE.

Amendments to Current Law

The proposed legislation would require that, by no later than June 30, 2026, the Fire Department shall no longer provide or use firefighter PPE containing intentionally-added PFAS. The proposed ordinance would also require the Fire Department to meet with labor representatives at least every three months until June 30, 2026 to discuss and evaluate progress toward phasing out PPE containing intentionally-added PFAS, and submit regular reports to the Board of Supervisors and the Fire Commission on the Department’s progress toward meeting the June 30, 2026 deadline. The proposed ordinance would allow the Fire Department to recommend to the Board of Supervisors an extension of the deadline if the Department is unable to meet the deadline based on factors beyond the Department’s control.

Background Information

Scientific research has demonstrated the toxic and carcinogenic nature of PFAS, which are known as “forever chemicals” due to their persistent presence in the environment and human body. In addition to other industrial and commercial uses, PFAS have been utilized in firefighter PPE. Fire agencies throughout the country have worked to reduce levels of firefighter occupational exposure to harmful substances, including PFAS.