

54-8.

There is hereby established a length of service award program for qualified active volunteer members of the Charles County Volunteer Fire Companies, Volunteer Rescue Squads [and], VOLUNTEER mobile intensive care units, AND VOLUNTEER DIVE RESCUE UNITS. For the purposes of §§ 54-8 through 54-11, "active volunteer member" means a person who accumulated a minimum of fifty (50) points per calendar year in accordance with the point system set forth in Section 54-11.

54-9.

A. Any person who has served as a member of any Charles County Volunteer Fire Company [or Charles County], Volunteer Rescue Squad, VOLUNTEER MOBILE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT, OR VOLUNTEER DIVE RESCUE UNIT is eligible to receive the benefits set forth in this Article if the person is certified in accordance with the provision of § 54-11 to have served as an active volunteer subsequent to December 31, 1973. Any person who discontinued active volunteer service prior to January 1, 1974, may receive credit for the service after being certified in accordance with the provisions of § 54-11.

B. Beginning January 1, 1974, any person who has reached the age of sixty (60) years and who has completed a minimum of twenty-five (25) years of certified active volunteer service with any Charles County Volunteer Fire Company, [or] Volunteer Rescue Squad, VOLUNTEER MOBILE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT, OR VOLUNTEER DIVE RESCUE UNIT, or combination thereof, shall receive benefits in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.) per month for life. Payments shall begin on the first day of the first month following eligibility. The program shall be administered by the County Commissioners of Charles County, and payment shall be made directly to the volunteer entitled to such benefits. Beginning July 1, 1984, and annually thereafter, this amount shall be increased or decreased by an amount equal to the annual increase or decrease as reflected by the consumer price index, using the published May figure each year. This amount shall not exceed a four-percent increase or decrease per year and shall be cumulative.

C. (1) An additional payment of two dollars (\$2.) per month shall be added to the benefits described in Subsection B of this section for each full year of volunteer service in excess of twenty-five (25) years. Beginning July 1, 1984, and annually thereafter, this amount shall be increased or decreased by an amount equal to the annual increase or decrease as reflected by the consumer price index, using the published May figure each year. This amount shall not exceed a four-percent (4%) increase or decrease per year and shall be cumulative. Beginning July 1, 1990, the amount payable monthly for each year in excess of twenty-five (25) years shall be equal to four percent (4%) of the amount payable under subsection B of this section.

(2) In lieu of a cost of living increase for fiscal year 2000, on July 1, 1999, an increase of one dollar (\$1) shall be applied to the value of one (1) year's qualifying service. Subsequent to June 30, 2000, a cost of living increase shall be calculated as provided in subsection B of this section.

D. In the event that any active volunteer becomes disabled during the course of service as a volunteer [fireman or rescue squadman] while actively engaged in