

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1205**

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**In the Year Two Thousand Nine**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act legislation to provide for binding arbitration for fire fighters and police officers.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1           SECTION 1. If an employee organization duly recognized as representing the firefighters  
2 or police officers of a city, town or district is engaged in an impasse with said city, town or  
3 district which has continued for thirty days after the publication of the fact-finders report  
4 pursuant to section nine of chapter one hundred and fifty E of the General Laws, or, if the parties  
5 have mutually waived the fact-finding provisions contained in said section nine of said chapter  
6 one hundred and fifty E, said employee organization shall petition the board to make an  
7 investigation. If, after an investigation, the board determines that:

8           1. the requirements of section nine of said chapter one hundred and fifty E have been  
9 complied with in good faith by the employee organization;

10           2. thirty days have passed since the date of publication of the fact-finding report pursuant  
11 to said section nine;

12           3. the proceedings for the prevention of any prohibited practices have been exhausted,  
13 provided that any such complaints have been filed with the commission prior to the date of the  
14 fact-finders report; and

15           4. an impasse exists; the board shall notify the employer and the employee organization  
16 that the issues in dispute shall be resolved by a three-member arbitration panel, or when the  
17 parties mutually agree, the board shall select a single arbitrator in lieu of the arbitration panel.  
18 Said panel shall be comprised of three arbitrators, one selected by the employee organization,  
19 one selected by the employer, and a third impartial arbitrator, who shall act as chairman of the  
20 panel, and who shall be selected by the two previously selected arbitrators. In the event that  
21 either party fails to select an arbitrator or for any reason there is a delay in the naming of an  
22 arbitrator, or if the arbitrators fail to select a third arbitrator within the time prescribed by the  
23 board, the board shall appoint the arbitrator or arbitrators necessary to complete the panel, which  
24 shall act with the same force and effect as if the panel had been selected without intervention of  
25 the board.

26           In the event that the parties mutually elect to use a single arbitrator, selected by the board,  
27 the parties shall immediately request the board to appoint said arbitrator, who shall act with the  
28 same force and effect as if a three member panel had been selected by the parties. The single  
29 arbitrator or the arbitration panel acting through its chairman, shall conduct a hearing within ten  
30 days after the date of appointment of its chairman, at a place within the locality of the  
31 municipality involved, where feasible. The chairman shall give at least seven days notice in  
32 writing to each of the other arbitrators. The chairman or single arbitrator shall give like notice to  
33 the representative of the municipal employer and employee organizations of the time and place  
34 of such hearing.

35           The single arbitrator or chairman shall preside over the hearing and shall take testimony.  
36   Upon application and for good cause shown, a person, labor organization, or governmental unit  
37   having substantial interest therein may be granted leave to intervene by the arbitration panel. The  
38   proceedings shall be informal. Any oral or documentary evidence and other data deemed relevant  
39   by the arbitration panel or single arbitrator may be received into evidence. The arbitrators shall  
40   have the power to administer oaths and to require by subpoena the attendance and testimony of  
41   witnesses, the production of books, records, and other evidence relative to or pertinent to the  
42   issues presented to them for determination. If any person refuses to obey a subpoena, or refuses  
43   to be sworn or to testify, or if any witness, party, or attorney is guilty of any contempt while in  
44   attendance at any hearing, the arbitration panel or single arbitrator may, or the district attorney if  
45   requested, shall invoke the aid of the superior court within the jurisdiction in which the hearing is  
46   being held, which the court shall issue an appropriate order.

47           A record of the proceedings shall be kept, and the chairman or single arbitrator shall  
48   arrange for the necessary recording service. Transcripts may be ordered at the expense of the  
49   party ordering them, but the transcripts shall not be necessary for an award by the panel or single  
50   arbitrator. The hearing may be continued at the discretion of the panel or single arbitrator and  
51   shall be concluded within forty days from the time of commencement. At the conclusion of the  
52   hearing, each party shall submit a written statement containing its last and best offer for each of  
53   the issues in dispute to the panel or single arbitrator, who shall take said statements under  
54   advisement. Within ten days after the conclusion of the hearing, a majority of the panel, or the  
55   single arbitrator, shall select as the last and best arbitration award either the employer's written  
56   statement of its last and best offer, the employee organization's written statement of its last and  
57   best offer, or the recommendations of the fact-finder, if a fact-finding report and

58 recommendations have been issued, and immediately shall give written notice of the selection to  
59 the parties. The selection shall be final and binding upon the parties and upon the appropriate  
60 legislative body. Within thirty calendar days of the last and best offer selection and award, the  
61 impartial chairperson of the arbitration panel or, the single arbitrator, shall issue a written  
62 opinion inclusive of an analysis of all statutory factors applicable to the proceedings.

63 At any time before the rendering of an award, the chairman of the arbitration panel or  
64 single arbitrator, if he is of the opinion that it would be useful or beneficial to do so, may remand  
65 the dispute to the parties for further collective bargaining for the period not to exceed three  
66 weeks and notify the board of the remand. If the dispute is remanded for further collective  
67 bargaining the statutory time frames of this act shall be tolled for a time period equal to the  
68 duration of the remand.

69 In the event that the representatives of the parties mutually resolve each of the issues in  
70 dispute and agree to be bound accordingly, said representatives may, at any time prior to the final  
71 decisions by the panel, or single arbitrator, request that the arbitration proceedings be terminated.  
72 The panel, acting through its chairman or single arbitrator, shall terminate the proceedings.

73 The factors among others, to be considered by the arbitration panel or single arbitrator in  
74 arriving at the decision shall include:

75 (1) The financial ability of the municipality to meet costs. Such factors which shall be  
76 taken into consideration shall include but not be limited to, (a) the city, town, or district's state  
77 reimbursements and assessments; (b) the city, town, or district's long and short term bonded  
78 indebtedness; (c) the city, town, or district's estimated share in the metropolitan district  
79 commission deficit; (d) the city, town, or district's estimated share in the Massachusetts Bay

80 Transportation Authority's deficit; and (e) consideration of the average per capita property tax  
81 burden, average annual income of members of the community, the effect any accord by the panel  
82 or single arbitrator might have on the respective property tax rates of the city or town.

83 (2) The interests and welfare of the public.

84 (3) The hazards of employment, physical, educational and mental qualifications, job  
85 training and skills involved.

86 (4) A comparison of wages, hours and conditions of employment of the employees  
87 involved in the arbitration proceedings with the wages, hours and conditions of employment of  
88 other employees performing similar services and with other employees generally in public and  
89 private employment in comparable communities.

90 (5) The decisions and recommendations of the fact-finder, if any.

91 (6) The average consumer prices for goods and services, commonly known as the cost of  
92 living.

93 (7) The overall compensation presently received by the employees, including direct  
94 wages and fringe benefits.

95 (8) Changes in any of the foregoing circumstances during the pendency of the arbitration  
96 proceedings.

97 (9) Such other factors, not confined to the foregoing, which are normally or traditionally  
98 taken into consideration in the determination of wages, hours and conditions of employment  
99 through voluntary collective bargaining, mediation, fact-finding, arbitration or otherwise  
100 between parties, in the public service or in private employment.

101 (10) The stipulation of the parties.

102 Any determination or decision of the arbitration panel or single arbitrator, if supported by  
103 material and substantive evidence on the whole record shall be binding upon the parties and may  
104 be enforced at the election of either party, the single arbitrator or the arbitration panel in the  
105 superior court in equity, provided however, that the scope of arbitration in police matters shall be  
106 limited to wages, hours, and conditions of employment and shall not include the following  
107 matters of inherent managerial policy: the right to appoint, promote, assign, and transfer  
108 employees; and provided, further, that the scope of arbitration in firefighter matters shall not  
109 include the right to appoint and promote employees. Assignments shall not be within the scope;  
110 provided, however, that the subject matters of initial station assignment upon appointment or  
111 promotion shall be within the scope of arbitration. The subject matter of transfer shall not be  
112 within the scope of arbitration, provided however, that the subject matters of relationship of  
113 seniority to transfers and disciplinary and punitive transfers shall be within the scope of  
114 arbitration. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter to the contrary, no municipal  
115 employer shall be required to negotiate over subjects of minimum manning of shift coverage,  
116 with an employee organization representing municipal police officers and firefighters.

117 The commencement of a new municipal finance year prior to the final awards by the  
118 arbitration panel shall not be deemed to render a dispute moot, or to otherwise impair the  
119 jurisdiction or authority of the arbitration panel or its award. Any award of the arbitration panel  
120 may be retroactive to the expiration date of the last contract.

121 If a municipal employer, or an employee organization willfully disobeys a lawful order of  
122 enforcement pursuant to this section, or willfully encourages or offers resistance to such order,

123 whether by strike or otherwise, the punishment for each day that such contempt continues may  
124 be a fine for each day to be determined by the court.

125 Each of the parties shall provide compensation for the arbitrator which he has selected  
126 pursuant to this section. The remaining costs of arbitration proceedings under this section shall  
127 be divided equally between the parties. Compensation for the arbitrators shall be in accordance  
128 with a schedule of payment established by the American Arbitration Association.

129 No member of a unit of municipal police officers or firefighters who is employed on a  
130 less than full-time basis shall be subject to the provisions of this section.