

Workers Comp 1

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Bedford firefighter fighting cancer and more

By Ken Molestina

BEDFORD – He has helped save lives his entire career, but now a Bedford firefighter is in need of help. The problem is the help he needs is being denied by the city.

Lt. Keith Long has been battling stage 4 cancer for two years now. He's applied for workers compensation from the City of Bedford to help with the financial impact his treatment has caused him and his family but city officials have repeatedly said no.

Now, the firefighters union is stepping up to help.

Chris Connor, a fellow firefighter and the President of the Bedford Professional Fire Fighter's Association said, "He still reports to shift every shift except for the days that he has to have chemo treatment," said Connor.

He went on to describe his character by adding, "he's been seeking treatment during these past two years while continuing to do his job."

According to Connor, Lt. Long has served on the Bedford Fire Department for more than 20 years. He says his cancer may be the result of being exposed to dangerous chemicals while on the job throughout his career.

Connor said, "Not only has he been a firefighter paramedic he's also been a Hazmat technician his entire career."

He said to this date they have yet to receive a reason from the city of Bedford as to why the workers compensation claim has been denied.

CBS 11 reached out city officials and received the following statement in response:

"The City is aware of this issue. The employee is receiving benefits through City sponsored insurance; however, due to HIPAA Laws our ability to provide a more detailed response is limited at this time. Our thoughts and concerns continue to be with the employee and his family."

A hearing with a judge is scheduled for September 2. It is at that point that Connor hopes the Lt. will receive the help he needs in battling his stage 4 cancer.

"What we do for our city we want some in return knowing they'll have our back when something happens to us," says Connor.