



General Assembly

February Session, 2008

Raised Bill No. 5803

LCO No. 2368

02368_____PS_

Referred to Committee on Public Safety and Security

Introduced by:
(PS)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR MUNICIPAL ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2008*) For the purposes of sections
2 2 to 6, inclusive, of this act, "animal control officer" includes a regional
3 animal control officer, assistant regional animal control officer and
4 municipal animal control officer, as defined in section 22-327 of the
5 general statutes, and an assistant municipal animal control officer and
6 "council" means the Police Officer Standards and Training Council
7 established pursuant to section 7-294b of the 2008 supplement to the
8 general statutes.

9 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2008*) (a) The council, in consultation
10 with the Commissioner of Agriculture, shall develop a training
11 program, within available appropriations, for certification of animal
12 control officers. The program shall consist of not less than eighty hours
13 of training including, but not limited to: (1) State and federal law
14 relating to arrest, search and seizure; (2) state law relating to animals;
15 (3) the basics of investigation; (4) report writing and record keeping;

16 (5) shelter or pound standards; (6) disease recognition; (7) euthanasia
17 policy; (8) ethics and professionalism in dealing with the public; (9)
18 cruelty and neglect investigations, including, but not limited to, blood
19 sports and cults; (10) animal bite and vicious animal investigations;
20 (11) officer safety and loss prevention; (12) animal care, identification,
21 behavior, handling and capture and restraint techniques; (13) overview
22 of the legal system, court structure and terminology; (14) warrants; and
23 (15) civil liability issues.

24 (b) The council shall hire one instructor for the purpose of
25 instructing, certifying and retraining animal control officers. The
26 council, in consultation with the Commissioner of Agriculture, shall
27 approve or develop an examination, within available appropriations,
28 designed to test proficiency in the subjects covered by the training
29 program developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. The
30 examination may be written, oral, practical or a combination thereof.

31 (c) The council, in consultation with the Commissioner of
32 Agriculture, may approve, reject or revoke approval of any animal
33 control officer training courses, including, but not limited to, courses
34 provided by the National Animal Control Association, the American
35 Humane Association or the Humane Society of the United States for
36 inclusion in the training programs developed pursuant to this section.

37 (d) The council may, from time to time, amend or alter the training
38 programs and the examination the council develops pursuant to this
39 section.

40 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2008*) (a) Each person appointed as an
41 animal control officer on and after July 1, 2008, shall be certified by the
42 council not later than two years after such appointment. Except as
43 provided in subsection (b) of this section, the council shall only certify
44 a person who has satisfactorily completed the training program
45 developed pursuant to section 2 of this act. The provisions of section
46 7-294d of the general statutes concerning police officer training shall
47 not apply to animal control officers appointed pursuant to section

48 22-328, 22-331 or 22-331a of the general statutes unless the duties of
49 such officer include carrying a firearm or custodial arrest.

50 (b) The council, in consultation with the Commissioner of
51 Agriculture, shall develop a retraining program for persons who have
52 served as animal control officers in the state for a period of five years
53 since July 1, 1997. Such officers shall complete the retraining program
54 in order to be certified. The council shall refuse to certify any officer
55 that fails to complete such training satisfactorily.

56 (c) The council may decline to issue a certificate if (1) the applicant
57 falsified any document in order to obtain or renew the certificate, (2)
58 the applicant has been convicted of a felony, (3) the applicant has been
59 found not guilty of a felony by reason of mental disease or defect
60 pursuant to section 53a-13 of the general statutes, (4) the applicant has
61 been convicted of a violation of subsection (c) of section 21a-279 of the
62 general statutes or section 29-9 of the general statutes, or (5) the
63 applicant has been refused issuance of a certificate or similar
64 authorization or has had a certificate or other similar authorization
65 revoked by another jurisdiction on grounds that would authorize
66 revocation under the provisions of this subsection.

67 (d) The council may revoke any certificate if (1) the certificate was
68 issued by administrative error, (2) the certificate was obtained through
69 misrepresentation or fraud, (3) the holder falsified any document in
70 order to obtain or renew any certificate, (4) the holder has been
71 convicted of a felony, (5) the holder has been found not guilty of a
72 felony by reason of mental disease or defect pursuant to section 53a-13
73 of the general statutes, (6) the holder has been convicted of a violation
74 of subsection (c) of section 21a-279 of the general statutes or section
75 29-9 of the general statutes, or (7) the holder has been refused issuance
76 of a certificate or similar authorization or has had the certificate or
77 other authorization revoked by another jurisdiction on grounds that
78 would authorize revocation under the provisions of this subsection.
79 Whenever the council believes there is a reasonable basis for

80 revocation of the certificate of an animal control officer, the council
81 shall give the holder of the certificate notice and an opportunity for a
82 hearing, in accordance with the provisions of section 4-182 of the
83 general statutes. Any officer whose certification is revoked pursuant to
84 this section may reapply for certification no sooner than two years
85 after the date on which the revocation order becomes final.

86 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2008*) (a) If a person who was
87 employed and certified as an animal control officer is not employed in
88 such capacity, such certification shall expire after two years of
89 unemployment, unless such officer has been on a leave of absence.
90 Upon reemployment as an animal control officer, such officer shall
91 apply for certification and become certified in the manner provided in
92 section 2 of this act.

93 (b) A municipality may appoint a temporary animal control officer
94 who does not hold a certificate pursuant to sections 1 to 4, inclusive, of
95 this act for a period not to exceed thirty days per calendar year. The
96 council may grant a one time thirty-day extension for such temporary
97 animal control officer. The council may encourage municipalities to
98 share the services of animal control officers in the event a temporary
99 animal control officer is needed by a municipality.

100 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2008*) The Commissioner of
101 Agriculture, in consultation with the Police Officer Standards and
102 Training Council, may adopt regulations, in accordance with the
103 provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to implement the
104 provisions of sections 1 to 4, inclusive, of this act, including, but not
105 limited to, establishing procedures for applying for certification as an
106 animal control officer.

107 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2008*) No municipality shall be
108 liable for compensation to any municipal animal control officer whose
109 certification under section 3 or 4 of this act has been revoked or
110 expired during the period of such revocation or expiration.

111 Sec. 7. (*Effective July 1, 2008*) The sum of eighty thousand dollars is
112 appropriated to the Department of Public Safety, from the General
113 Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, for the Police Officer
114 Standards and Training Council for purposes specified in sections 1 to
115 5, inclusive, of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>October 1, 2008</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To require municipal animal control officers to complete training to be developed by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council and to be certified by said council.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]