



General Assembly

February Session, 2014

***Raised Bill No. 5039***

LCO No. 410



Referred to Committee on COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

Introduced by:  
(KID)

***AN ACT CONCERNING ANIMAL-ASSISTED SERVICES.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 17a-22ee of the 2014 supplement to the general  
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof  
3 (*Effective October 1, 2014*):

4 (a) For purposes of this section, "animal-assisted therapy" means  
5 goal-directed intervention in which animals are used as an integral  
6 part of the crisis response process to aid individuals who have  
7 experienced mental, physical or emotional trauma; "animal-assisted  
8 therapy community" means the local or regional entities capable of  
9 providing animal-assisted therapy to individuals within the state;  
10 [and] "animal-assisted activity" means an activity that involves animals  
11 interacting with individuals within the state; "animal-assisted activity  
12 organization" means any entity involved in training, evaluating and  
13 registering members of the animal-assisted therapy community; and  
14 "canine disaster stress relief team" means any entity consisting of  
15 handlers and canines that have been trained, evaluated and registered  
16 by an animal-assisted activity organization to provide aid to

17 individuals during and after traumatic events.

18 (b) Not later than January 1, 2014, the Commissioner of Children  
19 and Families shall, within available appropriations, develop and  
20 implement training for certain employees of the Department of  
21 Children and Families and mental health care providers on (1) the  
22 healing value of the human-animal bond for children, (2) the value of  
23 therapy animals in dealing with traumatic situations, and (3) the  
24 benefit of [an] animal-assisted activity, animal-assisted therapy  
25 [program] and a canine disaster stress relief team.

26 (c) Not later than [January] July 1, 2014, the Commissioner of  
27 Children and Families, in consultation with the Commissioner of  
28 Agriculture and within available appropriations, shall identify a  
29 coordinated volunteer canine [crisis response] disaster stress relief  
30 team. [Such team shall consist of various handlers and canines that  
31 have been trained, evaluated and registered by an animal-assisted  
32 activity organization to provide aid to individuals during and after  
33 traumatic events.] Such team shall operate on a volunteer basis and  
34 shall be available to provide animal-assisted therapy within twenty-  
35 four hours of receiving notice to do so.

36 (d) Not later than [July 1, 2014] January 1, 2015, the Commissioner  
37 of Children and Families, in consultation with the Governor's  
38 Prevention Partnership and the animal-assisted therapy community,  
39 shall, within available appropriations, develop [a crisis response] an  
40 animal-assisted activity program [utilizing the services of the  
41 coordinated volunteer canine crisis response team identified pursuant  
42 to subsection (c) of this section] to provide animal-assisted therapy and  
43 animal-assisted activity to children and youths living with trauma and  
44 loss.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	17a-22ee

***Statement of Purpose:***

To facilitate the development and implementation of a state-wide animal-assisted therapy program.

*[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.]*