



**Substitute Senate Bill No. 309**

**Public Act No. 14-205**

**AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL COSTS FOR THE CARE OF  
CONFISCATED ANIMALS AND ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE  
ON THE HUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS IN MUNICIPAL  
SHELTERS.**

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

Section 1. Subsections (f) to (k), inclusive, of section 22-329a of the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(f) If the court issues an order vesting the animal's temporary care and custody in some suitable state, municipal or other public or private agency or person, the owner or owners shall either relinquish ownership of the animal or post a surety bond or cash bond with the agency or person in whom the animal's temporary care and custody was vested. The surety bond or cash bond shall be in the amount of five hundred dollars for each animal placed in the temporary care or custody of such agency or person and shall secure payment for the reasonable expenses of the agency or person having temporary care and custody of the animal in caring and providing for such animal until the court makes a finding as to the animal's disposition under subsection (g) of this section. The requirement that a bond be posted may be waived if such owner provides satisfactory evidence that such

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owner is indigent and unable to pay for such bond.

(g) (1) If, after hearing, the court finds that the animal is neglected or cruelly treated, it shall vest ownership of the animal in any state, municipal or other public or private agency which is permitted by law to care for neglected or cruelly treated animals or with any person found to be suitable or worthy of such responsibility by the court.

(2) If, after hearing, the court finds that the animal is so injured or diseased that it should be destroyed, the court may order that such animal be humanely destroyed.

(3) If, after hearing, the court finds that the animal is not neglected or cruelly treated, it may cause the animal to be returned to its owner or owners or person having responsibility for its care or, if such owner or owners or person is unknown or unwilling to resume caring for such animal, it may vest ownership of the animal in any state, municipal or other public or private agency or person found to be suitable or worthy of such responsibility.

(4) If the court makes a finding under subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection less than thirty days after the issuance of an order of temporary care and custody and the owner of the animal has posted a bond, the agency or person with whom the bond was posted shall return the balance of such bond, if any, to the owner. The amount of the bond to be returned to the owner shall be calculated at the rate of fifteen dollars per day per animal or twenty-five dollars per day per animal if the animal is a horse or other large livestock for the number of days less than thirty that such agency or person has not had temporary care and custody of the animal less any veterinary costs and expenses incurred for the welfare of the animal.

(5) If the court makes a finding under subdivision (3) of this subsection after the issuance of an order of temporary care and

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custody and the owner of the animal has posted a bond, the agency or person with whom the bond was posted shall return such bond to such owner.

(h) If the court finds that the animal is neglected or cruelly treated, the expenses incurred by the state or a municipality in providing proper food, shelter and care to an animal it has taken custody of under subsection (a) or (b) of this section and the expenses incurred by any state, municipal or other public or private agency or person in providing temporary care and custody pursuant to an order vesting temporary care and custody, calculated at the rate of fifteen dollars per day per animal or twenty-five dollars per day per animal if the animal is a horse or other large livestock until the date ownership is vested pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (g) of this section shall be paid by the owner or owners or person having responsibility for the care of the animal. In addition, all veterinary costs and expenses incurred for the welfare of the animal that are not covered by the per diem rate shall be paid by the owner or owners or person having responsibility for the animal.

(i) If the court vests ownership of the animal in the Commissioner of Agriculture or a municipality, the commissioner or the municipality may conduct or participate in a public auction of the animal under such conditions the commissioner or the municipality deems necessary or the commissioner or the municipality may consign the animal to an auction or sell the animal through an open advertised bid process whereby bid price and demonstration of sufficient knowledge and ability to care for such animal are factors for the commissioner's or municipality's consideration. All moneys collected from the sale of animals sold by the Commissioner of Agriculture through such open advertised bid process shall be deposited in the animal abuse cost recovery account established in subsection (j) of this section. All moneys collected from the sale of animals sold by a municipality

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through such open advertised bid process shall be deposited by the town treasurer or other fiscal officer in the town's general fund. The commissioner or the municipality may also vest ownership of any such animal in an individual or a public or private nonprofit animal rescue or adoption organization.

(j) There is established a separate, nonlapsing account within the General Fund, to be known as the "animal abuse cost recovery account". All moneys collected from sales at public auction of animals seized by the Department of Agriculture pursuant to this section shall be deposited into the account. Deposits of moneys may be made into the account from public or private sources, including, but not limited to, the federal government or municipal governments.

(k) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, any moneys received by the Department of Agriculture pursuant to subsection (j) of this section shall be deposited in the General Fund and credited to the animal abuse cost recovery account. The account shall be available to the Commissioner of Agriculture for the purpose of the housing, care and welfare of any animal seized by the department, until final disposition of such animal. Additionally, the account may be used for the purpose of providing reimbursement to any municipality for the costs of providing temporary care to such animal if such temporary care exceeded thirty days in duration and such costs exceeded the amount of any surety bond or cash bond posted pursuant to subsection (f) of this section provided the total annual reimbursement to municipalities from said account for such purpose shall not exceed twenty-five thousand dollars. Nothing in this section shall prevent the commissioner from obtaining or using funds from sources other than the account for the housing, care and welfare of any animal seized by the department pursuant to this section.

Sec. 2. Subsection (e) of section 22-380g of the 2014 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu

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thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(e) Any revenue collected pursuant to the provisions of sections 22-380f and 22-380l shall be deposited in the animal population control account. All money in the account shall be used by the commissioner exclusively for (1) the implementation and promotion of the animal population control program, (2) the costs associated with the administration of such program, provided not more than two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars may be expended for administrative costs per year, and (3) reimbursement of persons completing a training program pursuant to subsections (c) and (d) of section 22-328, for the costs of such program, provided moneys in the account may also be used to provide reimbursement to any municipality for the costs of providing temporary care to any animal pursuant to section 22-329a, as amended by this act, if such temporary care exceeded thirty days in duration and such costs exceeded the amount of any surety bond or cash bond posted pursuant to subsection (f) of section 22-329a, as amended by this act, provided the total annual reimbursement to municipalities from said account for such purpose shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars.

Sec. 3. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to study the humane treatment of animals in municipal and regional shelters and other matters concerning the operation of such municipal and regional shelters. The task force shall consider: (1) Recommendations for the establishment of standards for the humane treatment of animals in such shelters; (2) existing education and training standards for animal control officers on current license laws; (3) rules and regulations regarding and penalties for abuse; (4) the development of a system to track persons who have been convicted of animal abuse in order to prevent such persons from acquiring animals from shelters in other municipalities or states; (5) the establishment of standards for such shelters to use when evaluating potential adopters

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for such animals; (6) the establishment of rules and responsibilities for volunteer groups that work with such shelters and animal control officers; and (7) the creation of a framework to coordinate the efforts of local humane organizations with volunteer groups, foster groups and municipal and regional animal shelters.

(b) In addition to the Commissioner of Agriculture or the commissioner's designee, the task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be a member of a local animal welfare advocacy organization and one whom shall be a sworn officer of a municipal police department;

(2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall be an animal control officer and one who shall be a representative of the judicial branch;

(3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a chief elected official from a town with a population of more than twenty-five thousand persons;

(4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who shall be a licensed veterinarian;

(5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a person who volunteers to work with municipal animal shelters and animal control officers; and

(6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who shall be a chief elected official from a town with a population of twenty-five thousand persons or less.

(c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),

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(2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member of the General Assembly.

(d) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to local governments shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

(g) Not later than January 1, 2015, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to local governments and the environment, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or January 1, 2015, whichever is later.

Approved June 13, 2014