



General Assembly

Amendment

January Session, 2015

LCO No. 6790



Offered by:

REP. URBAN, 43rd Dist.
SEN. BARTOLOMEO, 13th Dist.
REP. HAMPTON, 16th Dist.
REP. STANESKI, 119th Dist.
REP. ROSE, 118th Dist.
REP. CANDELARIA, 95th Dist.

REP. CONROY, 105th Dist.
REP. BOCCHINO, 150th Dist.
REP. KOKORUDA, 101st Dist.
REP. LUXENBERG, 12th Dist.
SEN. MARTIN, 31st Dist.
REP. VARGAS, 6th Dist.

To: House Bill No. 6725

File No. 22

Cal. No. 49

"AN ACT CONCERNING ANIMAL-ASSISTED THERAPY SERVICES."

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the
2 following in lieu thereof:

3 "Section 1. Section 17a-22ee of the general statutes is repealed and
4 the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

5 (a) For purposes of this section: []

6 (1) "Animal-assisted activity" means any activity that involves a
7 team consisting of a registered handler and therapy animal interacting
8 with individuals in the state;

9 (2) ["animal-assisted therapy"] "Animal-assisted therapy" means

10 goal-directed intervention in which [animals are] a team consisting of a
11 therapist and a therapy animal, or a therapist, registered handler and a
12 therapy animal, is used as an integral part of the [crisis response]
13 therapy process to aid individuals who have (A) experienced mental,
14 physical or emotional trauma, (B) witnessed, or have been a victim of,
15 an act of violence, or (C) behavioral health care needs;

16 (3) ["animal-assisted therapy community"] "Animal-assisted activity
17 community" means the local or regional entities capable of providing
18 animal-assisted therapy or animal-assisted activities to individuals
19 within the state; [and]

20 (4) ["animal-assisted activity organization"] "Animal-assisted
21 activity organization" means any entity involved in training,
22 evaluating [and] or registering members of the animal-assisted
23 [therapy] activity community; [.]

24 (5) "Animal-assisted critical incident response team" means a team
25 of registered handlers and therapy animals that (A) has been identified
26 by the Department of Children and Families, and (B) is capable of
27 providing animal-assisted activities to individuals during and after
28 traumatic events;

29 (6) "Registered handler" means an individual who has been
30 screened, trained and registered by a national animal therapy
31 organization to engage in animal-assisted activities or animal-assisted
32 therapy, or both;

33 (7) "Therapist" means any (A) physician licensed pursuant to
34 chapter 370 who specializes in psychiatry, (B) psychologist or
35 professional counselor licensed pursuant to chapter 383, (C) marital
36 and family therapist licensed pursuant to chapter 383a, or (D) clinical
37 social worker or master social worker licensed pursuant to chapter
38 383b; and

39 (8) "Therapy animal" means any animal trained to provide comfort
40 to individuals who have (A) experienced mental, physical or emotional

41 trauma, (B) witnessed, or have been a victim of, an act of violence, or
42 (C) behavioral health care needs.

43 (b) Not later than January 1, [2014] 2016, the Commissioner of
44 Children and Families shall, within available appropriations, develop
45 and implement training for certain employees of the Department of
46 Children and Families and mental health care providers on (1) the
47 healing value of the human-animal bond for children, (2) the value of
48 therapy animals in dealing with traumatic situations, and (3) the
49 [benefit of an] benefits of animal-assisted activities and animal-assisted
50 therapy. [program.]

51 (c) Not later than January 1, [2014] 2016, the Commissioner of
52 Children and Families, in consultation with the Commissioner of
53 Agriculture and within available appropriations, shall [identify a
54 coordinated volunteer canine crisis response team. Such team shall
55 consist of various handlers and canines that have been trained,
56 evaluated and registered by an animal-assisted activity organization to
57 provide aid to individuals during and after traumatic events] develop
58 a protocol to identify and mobilize animal-assisted critical incident
59 response teams throughout the state. Such [team] teams shall operate
60 on a volunteer basis and shall be available to provide animal-assisted
61 [therapy] activities to individuals during and after traumatic events
62 within twenty-four hours of receiving notice to do so.

63 (d) Not later than July 1, [2014] 2016, the Commissioner of Children
64 and Families, in consultation with [the Governor's Prevention
65 Partnership and] the animal-assisted [therapy] activity community,
66 shall, within available appropriations, develop [a crisis response
67 program utilizing the services of the coordinated volunteer canine
68 crisis response team identified pursuant to subsection (c) of this section
69 to provide] a protocol to (1) identify and credential animal-assisted
70 activity organizations and providers of animal-assisted therapy in the
71 state, and (2) utilize animal-assisted activities and animal-assisted
72 therapy to provide aid to children and youths living with trauma and
73 loss."

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