



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

Raised Bill No. 932

LCO No. 3563



Referred to Committee on PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

Introduced by:
(PS)

***AN ACT CONCERNING POLICE ANIMALS AND DOGS IN
VOLUNTEER CANINE SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 53-247 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2023*):

3 (a) Any person who (1) overdrives, drives when overloaded,
4 overworks, tortures, deprives of necessary sustenance, mutilates or
5 cruelly beats or kills or unjustifiably injures any animal, [or who,] (2)
6 having impounded or confined any animal, fails to give such animal
7 proper care or neglects to cage or restrain any such animal from doing
8 injury to itself or to another animal or fails to supply any such animal
9 with wholesome air, food and water, [or] (3) unjustifiably administers
10 any poisonous or noxious drug or substance to any domestic animal or
11 unjustifiably exposes any such drug or substance, with intent that the
12 same shall be taken by an animal, or causes it to be done, [or,] (4) having
13 charge or custody of any animal, inflicts cruelty upon it or fails to
14 provide it with proper food, drink or protection from the weather or
15 abandons it or carries it or causes it to be carried in a cruel manner, or

16 (5) fights with or baits, harasses or worries any animal for the purpose
17 of making it perform for amusement, diversion or exhibition, shall, for
18 a first offense, be fined not more than one thousand dollars or
19 imprisoned not more than one year or both, and for each subsequent
20 offense, shall be guilty of a class D felony.

21 (b) Any person who maliciously and intentionally maims, mutilates,
22 tortures, wounds or kills an animal shall, (1) for a first offense, be guilty
23 of a class D felony, and (2) for any subsequent offense, be guilty of a
24 class C felony. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to any
25 licensed veterinarian while following accepted standards of practice of
26 the profession or to any person while following approved methods of
27 slaughter under section 22-272a, while performing medical research as
28 an employee of, student in or person associated with any hospital,
29 educational institution or laboratory, while following generally
30 accepted agricultural practices or while lawfully engaged in the taking
31 of wildlife.

32 (c) Any person who knowingly (1) owns, possesses, keeps or trains
33 an animal engaged in an exhibition of fighting for amusement or gain,
34 (2) possesses, keeps or trains an animal with the intent that it be engaged
35 in an exhibition of fighting for amusement or gain, (3) permits an act
36 described in subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection to take place on
37 premises under [his] such person's control, (4) acts as judge or spectator
38 at an exhibition of animal fighting for amusement or gain, or (5) bets or
39 wagers on the outcome of an exhibition of animal fighting for
40 amusement or gain, shall be guilty of a class D felony.

41 (d) Any person who intentionally injures or kills any animal while
42 such animal is in the performance of its duties under the supervision of
43 a peace officer, as defined in section 53a-3, or intentionally injures or
44 kills a dog that is a member of a volunteer canine search and rescue
45 team, as defined in section 5-249, while such dog is in the performance
46 of its duties under the supervision of the active individual member of
47 such team, shall be guilty of a class [D] C felony.

48 (e) Any person who intentionally [kills] annoys, teases, torments or
49 otherwise harasses any animal while such animal is confined in a motor
50 vehicle while in the performance of its duties under the supervision of
51 a peace officer, as defined in section 53a-3, [or intentionally kills a dog
52 that is a member of a volunteer canine search and rescue team, as
53 defined in section 5-249, while such dog is in the performance of its
54 duties under the supervision of the active individual member of such
55 team, shall be fined not more than ten thousand dollars or imprisoned
56 not more than ten years, or both] shall be guilty of a class D
57 misdemeanor.

58 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) On and after July 1, 2024,
59 emergency medical services personnel, as defined in section 20-206jj of
60 the general statutes, may provide emergency treatment to an animal
61 that is injured in the performance of its duties under the supervision of
62 a peace officer, as defined in section 53a-3 of the general statutes, and
63 transport such animal by ambulance to a veterinary facility equipped to
64 provide emergency treatment to such animal pursuant to regulations
65 adopted under subsection (b) of this section, provided such treatment
66 or transportation may not be provided if it would inhibit the ability of
67 such personnel to provide emergency medical attention or transport to
68 a person requiring such services.

69 (b) Not later than July 1, 2024, the Department of Public Health shall
70 adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the
71 general statutes, regarding (1) training of emergency services personnel
72 in basic level first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and life-saving
73 interventions for such animals; (2) safe handling procedures for such
74 animals; (3) identification of veterinary facilities that provide emergency
75 treatment for such animals; and (4) decontamination and sterilization
76 requirements for equipment and vehicles after transport of such
77 animals.

78 Sec. 3. Subsection (a) of section 20-197 of the general statutes is
79 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
80 *passage*):

81 (a) No person shall practice veterinary medicine, surgery or dentistry
82 until such person has obtained a license as provided in section 20-199.
83 A person shall be construed to practice veterinary medicine, surgery or
84 dentistry, within the meaning of this chapter, who holds himself or
85 herself out as being able to diagnose, administer biologics for, treat,
86 operate or prescribe for any animal or bird disease, pain, injury,
87 deformity or physical condition, or who either offers or undertakes, by
88 any means or methods, to diagnose, administer biologics for, treat,
89 operate or prescribe for any animal or bird disease, pain, injury,
90 deformity or physical condition. The treatment of animals by emergency
91 medical services personnel pursuant to section 2 of this act shall not be
92 deemed to be the practice of veterinary medicine. The euthanizing of
93 animals in accordance with applicable state and federal drug laws by
94 the Connecticut Humane Society, the floating of teeth in horses by
95 persons experienced in that practice and the performance of myofascial
96 trigger point therapy by persons experienced in that practice shall not
97 be deemed to be the practice of veterinary medicine. For the purposes
98 of this section, (1) "floating teeth" means using hand-held rasps to
99 reduce or eliminate sharp or uneven edges on a horse's upper and lower
100 molars to avoid injury to the tongue and cheeks and to improve chewing
101 food, but does not include treating decay or tumors or extracting teeth,
102 [For the purposes of this section,] (2) "myofascial trigger point therapy"
103 means the use of specific palpation, compression, stretching and
104 corrective exercise for promoting optimum athleticism, and (3) "persons
105 experienced in that practice" means persons who, prior to October 1,
106 2003, have attended a minimum of two hundred hours of classroom,
107 lecture and hands-on practice in myofascial trigger point therapy,
108 including animal musculoskeletal anatomy and biomechanics, theory
109 and application of animal myofascial trigger point techniques, factors
110 that habituate a presenting condition and corrective exercise.

111 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) For the fiscal year ending June 30,
112 2024, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Department of Emergency
113 Services and Public Protection shall, within available appropriations,
114 administer a grant program to provide law enforcement units that use

115 one or more dogs to perform law enforcement duties as part of a state-
116 wide or municipal canine unit with body armor for such dogs. Not later
117 than October 1, 2023, the department shall post in a conspicuous place
118 on the department's Internet web site a description of the grant
119 program, including, but not limited to, eligibility criteria and the
120 application process for the program. A unit shall apply for such grants
121 on such forms and in such manner as determined by the department.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	53-247
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	20-197(a)
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To (1) increase the penalty for intentionally injuring a police animal or dog in a volunteer canine search and rescue team; (2) establish a penalty for annoying, teasing, tormenting or harassing a police animal confined in a motor vehicle; (3) allow emergency medical services personnel to provide emergency treatment and transportation to an injured police animal under certain circumstances; and (4) establish a grant program to provide canine officers with body armor.

[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.]