



# 2024 Acts Affecting Criminal Justice and Public Safety

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July 5, 2024 | 2024-R-0084

## Notice to Readers

This report provides summaries of new laws (public acts and special acts) significantly affecting criminal justice and public safety enacted during the 2024 regular legislative session. OLR's other Acts Affecting reports are, or will soon be, available on [OLR's website](#).

Each summary indicates the public act (PA) or special act (SA) number. Not all provisions of the acts are included. The report does not include vetoed acts unless the veto was overridden. Complete summaries of public acts are, or will soon be, available on [OLR's website](#).

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the Connecticut State Library, House Clerk's Office, or [General Assembly's website](#).

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## **Crimes and Penalties**

### ***Beverage Container Redemption Fraud***

A new law prohibits a person from returning an empty beverage container to a dealer, redemption center, reverse vending machine, distributor, or deposit initiator, to obtain its refund value or handling fee if he or she knows, or should know, that it was already redeemed or originally purchased out-of-state. It correspondingly requires dealers, redemption centers, and reverse vending machine operators to post a sign informing users of the prohibition. A violation of the prohibition or signage posting requirement is subject to the same fines that apply to other bottle bill violations (e.g., between \$50 and \$100 for a first offense and between \$250 and \$500 for third or subsequent offenses) ([PA 24-2](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Connecticut Business Registry Perjury Violation***

Among other things, a new law makes changes regarding authenticating and verifying data that business entities must submit to the secretary of the state for the Connecticut Business Registry. For any data, document, or record submitted to the secretary on behalf of a business entity, the new law specifically prohibits (1) including certain individuals' names without their written consent or an address without the owner's or occupant's consent and (2) delivering a document about an entity if the person making the delivery lacks the necessary written consent or authority to do so. The new law makes an intentional violation of the prohibited actions perjury, which is a class D felony punishable by up to five years in prison, a fine of up to \$5,000, or both ([PA 24-111](#), § 52, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Election Worker Harassment***

A new law makes it a felony to influence or attempt to influence through force, threat, or harassment an election worker performing election administration duties. It also makes it a misdemeanor to publicly disclose an election worker's personal information with the intent to harass, terrorize, or alarm the worker or influence them in performing his or her election administration duties. The law also gives election workers civil causes of action for violations of these provisions ([PA 24-148](#), § 7, effective upon passage).

### ***Mandated Reporters' Immunity From Liability***

The law designates certain professionals (e.g., school employees, health professionals, and coaches) as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. Generally, they must report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or law enforcement within prescribed timeframes when, in the ordinary course of their employment or profession, they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child (1) has been abused or neglected, (2) has an injury that does not match the history given, or (3) is at imminent risk of physical harm.

A new law specifies that the mandated reporter law does not prohibit mandated reporters from making a preliminary inquiry to determine if reasonable cause exists for a report. Additionally, existing law grants immunity from civil or criminal liability to persons, institutions, and agencies that, in good faith, report suspected child abuse or neglect or alleged sexual assault of a student to DCF or law enforcement as required or permitted by law. The new law extends this immunity to persons, institutions, and agencies that, in good faith, do not make such a report ([PA 24-41](#), §§ 40 & 41, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Online or Cellular Crimes***

A new law specifies that offenses committed by communications through computer networks, cell phones, or similar means can be considered to have been committed either where the communication was sent or received ([PA 24-137](#), § 3, effective upon passage and applicable to offenses committed before, on, or after that date).

### ***Voting Interference***

Existing law makes it a felony to influence or attempt to influence a voter to stay away from an election through various illegal means (e.g., bribery). A new law extends this provision to cover using these means to influence or attempt to influence a voter to refrain from voting. Existing law also makes it a felony to willfully and fraudulently suppress or destroy any vote or ballot properly given or cast, or to willfully miscount or misrepresent the votes. The law specifies that a violation of any of these provisions may occur for votes cast (1) by mail; (2) into a secure drop box; or (3) in person at a polling place, early voting location, or same-day election registration location ([PA 24-148](#), §§ 6 & 7, effective upon passage).

## **Criminal Procedure**

### ***Appointed Counsel Related to Firearm Risk Protection Orders or Risk Warrants***

A new law requires an attorney to be appointed for an adult who is subject to in-court proceedings for a firearm risk protection order or risk warrant, if the person (1) cannot afford an attorney, (2) is represented by a public defender or assigned counsel in a pending criminal case, and (3) is eligible for counsel under the public defender laws. Existing law already requires counsel to be appointed under similar circumstances for minors subject to risk warrants under the law's separate process for juveniles ([PA 24-137](#), § 1, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Disclosure of Victim Information to Bail Commissioners***

Among other things, a new law requires police officers, presumably after someone has been arrested and criminally charged, to give bail commissioners or intake assessment and referral

specialists identifying information about the victim of the charged offenses, including the victim's name, address, and phone number, if available, to carry out the commissioner's or specialist's duties. Officers must do so regardless of the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and certain court procedure statutes ([PA 24-108](#), § 20, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Electronic Oaths and Signatures for Warrant Affidavits***

This session, the legislature passed a law that, among other things, specifies that affidavits establishing the grounds for issuing certain warrants may be sworn to a judge or judge trial referee either in person or electronically with simultaneous sight and sound. Specifically, this may be done for a (1) risk warrant in connection with certain risk protection orders against an adult, (2) search warrant, or (3) warrant to install a tracking device. The new law also specifies that warrants, warrant-related forms, affidavits, and findings are types of documents that court officials may electronically sign or verify ([PA 24-108](#), §§ 3, 16 & 19, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Factors to Restore Competency for Trial***

A new law sets the factors that a court must consider when determining the least restrictive placement appropriate and available for a person to restore their competency for a criminal trial. These factors include, among others, (1) the nature and circumstances of the alleged crime, (2) the defendant's willingness and ability to engage with the treatment, and (3) any of the defendant's psychiatric symptoms, including their nature and severity. The act also generally requires the court to presume that outpatient treatment is the appropriate placement in misdemeanor cases unless it has good cause to find otherwise based on the above factors ([PA 24-137](#), § 6, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Rounding of Cash Bail***

By law, anyone detained in a community correctional center under a bench warrant or for arraignment, sentencing, or trial must be released upon posting a bond or cash bail. A new law requires the bail amount to be rounded down to the nearest dollar ([PA 24-137](#), § 5, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Standing Criminal Protective Orders***

A new law allows courts to issue, on a victim's behalf, a standing criminal protective order to someone found not guilty of a crime due to mental disease or defect, under the same standards and requirements that apply following a criminal conviction ([PA 24-137](#), § 8, effective October 1, 2024).

## ***SEEC Complaints and Related Criminal Prosecutions***

A new law requires certain complaints filed with the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) on or after July 1, 2024, to be referred to the chief state's attorney for further enforcement action. Specifically, this applies to complaints where the commission determines that probable cause exists of a violation but does not issue a decision within 90 days after that determination. The law also requires the chief state's attorney to report on these referrals to the legislature ([PA 24-148](#), § 24, effective July 1, 2024).

Additionally, another new law extends the period during which an alleged election law violation referred from SEEC may be prosecuted. Specifically, it allows prosecution during the (1) existing statute of limitations period or (2) six months from when SEEC referred the complaint to the chief state's attorney, whichever period ends later ([PA 24-135](#), effective October 1, 2024, and applicable to (1) offenses committed on or after that date, (2) offenses committed before that date for which the statute of limitations in effect at the time of the offense had not yet expired as of October 1, 2024, or (3) any offense SEEC referred to the chief state's attorney on or after April 1, 2024).

## ***Victim Statements on Plea Agreements***

By law, in criminal cases, before the court can accept a plea of guilty or nolo contendere through a plea agreement with the state, the court must allow certain victims of the crime to appear before the court to make a statement for the record, which may include the victim's opinion on any plea agreement.

Among other things, a new law allows crime victims to make a statement on any plea agreement before its acceptance by the court instead of just those where the defendant pleads to a lesser offense than what was originally charged ([PA 24-108](#), § 21, effective July 1, 2024).

## **Department of Correction**

### ***Commissary Implementation Plan***

By July 1, 2024, a new law requires the Department of Correction (DOC), in consultation with the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee's (JJPOC) incarceration subcommittee, to report to the Appropriations, Children's, and Judiciary committees on the implementation of the commissary implementation plan.

By law, the commissary implementation plan relates to youths in DOC facilities and includes identifying those that do not have equitable access to commissary. The law requires DOC to (1) develop the plan, in consultation with the JJPOC subcommittee, by July 1, 2023; (2) immediately



implement procedures for more equitable commissary options for these youths; and (3) fully implement the plan by November 1, 2023 ([PA 24-140](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Cost of Incarceration***

By law, the DOC commissioner must assess an inmate for the cost of his or her incarceration. Among other things, a new law generally (1) terminates the state's claims for incarceration costs that it incurred during time the inmate was serving for crimes that were later erased from his or her criminal record and prohibits the reimbursement of claims paid before July 1, 2024; (2) generally exempts up to \$50,000 from the lien the state may place on an inmate's inheritance; and (3) specifies that any property the probate court deems an asset must be used to pay the state's claim against the estate of a former inmate who dies within 20 years after his or her release ([PA 24-81](#), §§ 31-33, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***DOC Vocational Village Program***

By law, DOC, in consultation with the Department of Economic and Community Development, administers a vocational village program to provide skilled trades training to inmates, including opportunities to earn nationally recognized industry certifications and credentials. A new law requires the DOC commissioner to prepare and equip the department and its post-secondary education partners to use the program's allocated funding for programs that produce economic and other benefits, including employment opportunities for inmates ([PA 24-81](#), § 17, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Dyslexia Screening for Incarcerated Individuals***

A new law requires DOC to assess and consider ways to screen for dyslexia people who (1) are sentenced to a period of incarceration and (2) have not been convicted or sentenced and are in DOC custody for longer than six months. The new law also allows the department, at the commissioner's discretion, to consider ways to screen these people for other learning disabilities. By December 11, 2024, the commissioner must report on the assessment's findings and any legislative recommendations to the Judiciary Committee ([SA 24-14](#), effective upon passage).

### ***First Responder Peer Support Confidentiality***

This session, the legislature extended to all DOC employees existing provisions that make oral and written communications between a first responder and a peer support team member confidential, with certain exceptions ([PA 24-67](#), effective July 1, 2024).

## ***Inmate Compensation***

By law, the DOC commissioner, after consulting with certain officials, must set a compensation schedule for the pay DOC inmates receive for services they perform on the state's behalf. A 2023 law required a pay range of between \$5 and \$10 per week. This year, a new law instead sets a rate of \$1 per day, with higher pay rates based on skill level or other factors as the DOC commissioner or his designee determines ([PA 24-137](#), § 4, effective October 1, 2024).

## **Dog Bite Statutes and Animal Cruelty**

### ***Animal Neglect or Cruelty***

By law, in animal neglect or cruelty cases where an animal control officer takes physical custody of the animal, the court may order temporary custody of the animal to a person or agency, at which point the owner may either relinquish the animal or pay a bond to the custodial person or agency. If the court makes a finding of neglect or cruelty within 30 days after the temporary custody order, a portion of the bond must be returned to the original owner and is currently calculated at a daily rate for certain larger animals, for the days less than 30 that the person or agency had temporary custody of the animal, less any veterinary costs and expenses incurred for the animal's welfare.

A new law (1) increases, by \$5, the daily rate at which the return of the bonds must be calculated and (2) establishes confidentiality protections for the animal's new owner ([PA 24-108](#), § 27, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Dog Bite Statutes***

This session, the legislature passed a law that generally replaced the previous dog bite statute with provisions that, among other things:

1. establish new procedures for owners, keepers, their agents, animal control officers, police officers, and injured persons or those defending themselves or others when a dog bites or attacks someone or causes damage to another animal;
2. specify factors an animal control officer must consider in deciding whether to issue an order to restrain or dispose of a biting or attacking dog; and
3. exempt military, law enforcement, and service animals if the animal is in the custody and control of the U.S. military or a government agency or a disabled person, is currently vaccinated for rabies, and is subject to routine veterinary care.

The new factors an animal control officer must consider, at a minimum, are (1) the ability of the dog's owner or keeper, if any, to control the animal; (2) the severity of the injury and viciousness of

the bite or attack; (3) any history of past bites or attacks by the dog; (4) the location where the attack occurred; and (5) whether the dog was provoked or protecting its owner or keeper ([PA 24-108](#), § 28, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Liability for Damage to Person or Property by a Dog***

A new law allows both a dog’s owner and its keeper to be liable for any damage a dog causes to a person’s body or property in most circumstances, instead of just one or the other. By law, if the dog’s owner or keeper is a minor, his or her parent or guardian must be liable for the damage.

The new law also allows both to be liable if the dog attacks and injures a service animal. By law, this includes the cost of veterinary care, rehabilitation or replacement of the injured animal, and reasonable attorney’s fees ([PA 24-108](#), §§ 40 & 41, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Restitution for Injuring or Killing a Police Animal or Volunteer Search and Rescue Dog***

A new law requires anyone convicted of intentionally injuring or killing a peace officer’s animal or a volunteer canine search and rescue team’s dog to pay restitution to the animal’s owner. The restitution may include the cost of veterinary services and, if the animal or dog is killed or rendered unable to perform its duties, the costs and expenses of purchasing and training a replacement. The restitution is in addition to the criminal penalties under existing law ([PA 24-65](#), effective October 1, 2024).

## **Domestic and Family Violence**

### ***Coerced Debt***

New legislation prohibits anyone from knowingly making another individual liable for “coerced debt” (i.e., generally, certain credit card debt incurred by a domestic violence victim). Principally, the act also imposes specific obligations and responsibilities on coerced debt “claimants” (e.g., consumer collection agencies). Specifically, if a victim gives a claimant certain information and documentation that a debt is coerced debt, the claimant must pause all collection activities on the debt for at least 60 days, review the victim’s submission and other available information it has, and then continue or end its collection based on the review. Among other things, if a claimant ends collection activities against a victim, and had given negative information about the victim to a consumer credit reporting agency, then the claimant must notify the agency to delete the information ([PA 24-77](#), effective January 1, 2025).

## ***Nondiscrimination Provision in Public Contracts***

Among other things, a new law adds domestic violence victims to the list of people with protected status under existing nondiscrimination provisions that must be part of most state agency, municipal public works, and quasi-public agency project contracts. Under existing law, these provisions already apply to various other protected classes, such as race, age, or disability status ([PA 24-108](#), § 1, effective July 1, 2024).

## ***Pretrial Family Violence Education Program***

This session, the legislature passed a new law expanding eligibility to participate in the judicial branch's pretrial family violence education program for people charged with family violence crimes. Previously, a defendant charged with a class C felony was ineligible for the program; however, the new law makes an exception by allowing program participation if (1) the offender is charged with certain class C felony violations of risk of injury to, or impairing the morals of, a child and (2) good cause is shown for allowing participation. The new law's exception specifically applies to someone charged with (1) willfully or unlawfully causing or allowing a child under age 16 to be placed in a situation where the child's life or body is in danger, health is likely to be injured, or morals are likely to be impaired or (2) doing any act likely to impair the child's health or morals ([PA 24-129](#), effective October 1, 2024).

## **Firearms**

### ***Firearms Background Checks and Juvenile Records***

By law, records of juvenile cases involving delinquency proceedings are available only to certain people and in specified circumstances, such as employees and agents of municipal, state, and federal agencies involved in evaluating a proposed transfer of a firearm to a person under age 21, as required by federal law. This session, the legislature passed a new law that specifies that these employees and authorized agents have access to the juvenile records whether the proposed transfer of the firearm is to a person under age 21 in this state or any other state ([PA 24-43](#), effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Gun Safety Education Material During Primary Care Visits***

A new law requires primary care providers to make educational material on gun safety practices available to each of their patients annually at their appointments, or at each appointment if the patient visits the provider less frequently than once a year.

By February 1, 2025, the Department of Public Health (DPH) must (1) make this material available, for free, to all in-state primary care providers and (2) recommend how they can effectively use it ([PA 24-19](#), § 7, effective July 1, 2024).

## ***National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) Databank***

A new law conforms the law to existing practice by requiring the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's (DESPP) Division of Scientific Services to participate in the NIBIN databank, rather than the firearms evidence databank that prior law required the division to establish. The law also requires all firearms, not just handguns, that pertain to a criminal investigation to be tested ([PA 24-32](#), effective October 1, 2024).

## **Grant Programs**

### ***Drone Grant Program***

A new law requires DESPP to administer a municipal grant program for municipalities to cover part of the cost of purchasing drones, accessories, or both, within available resources, and authorizes up to \$3 million in state general obligation bonds for the program. It also requires the department to develop and post certain information by January 1, 2025 (e.g., technical standards and application criteria) and annually report on these grants to the Public Safety Committee beginning January 1, 2026 ([PA 24-151](#), §§ 60 & 61, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Nonprofit Security Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program***

A new law specifies that eligible nonprofits applying for DESPP's nonprofit security infrastructure competitive grant program may also apply for a federal grant as long as they do not receive both for the same project ([PA 24-151](#), § 28, effective July 1, 2024).

## **Juvenile Justice**

### ***JJPOC's Human Trafficking Data Analysis***

A new law makes various changes in laws related to JJPOC and human trafficking. Among other things, the new law specifically requires:

1. JJPOC to establish a gender responsiveness subcommittee by January 1, 2025;
2. the subcommittee to work with the Trafficking in Persons Council to, among other things, develop a framework for reporting, collecting, and distributing human trafficking police data to generate annual reports and make legislative and policy recommendations; and
3. the Trafficking in Persons Council and the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee to collaborate with JJPOC's gender responsiveness subcommittee in carrying out its responsibilities.

Under the new law, the subcommittee’s recommendations must (1) address improvements to the range of care to youth who identify as girls and are impacted by the juvenile justice system; and (2) provide for culturally- and trauma-informed approaches, services, treatment, and permanency models for the youth ([PA 24-139](#), §§ 1, 3 & 4, effective upon passage).

### ***Reentry Success Plan for Youths***

This session, the legislature gave the judicial branch’s Court Support Services Division executive director and specified state officials an extra year to develop a reentry success plan for youths released from DOC and the judicial branch’s facilities and programs.

The new law also requires the plan to include youths being released from programs that are contracted with the judicial branch. It also (1) establishes additional requirements for the job readiness and career training programs that the plan must include; (2) expands the principles that the plan must incorporate; and (3) delays a related reporting requirement by 11 months, until December 1, 2024 ([PA 24-139](#), § 2, effective upon passage).

## **Law Enforcement and First Responders**

### ***Boating Laws Enforcement***

A new law grants people with authority to enforce boating laws (e.g., environmental conservation officers and patrolmen) the power to make arrests on any part of waters lying between Connecticut and a neighboring state for violations and bring the violator to trial in the state where the violation happened. However, they may only exercise this cross-border authority if Massachusetts, New York, or Rhode Island enacts a similar law ([PA 24-123](#), effective upon passage).

### ***DCF Special Police Officers***

A new law requires the DESPP commissioner to appoint up to two people nominated by the DCF commissioner to act as special police officers at DCF to (1) assist with background checks on (a) each applicant for a department position and (b) all vendors or contractors and their employees who provide direct services to children in DCF custody, (2) conduct and respond to threat assessments in and around any building or facility under DCF supervision or control, and (3) respond to acute crises or security concerns in DCF-supervised or -controlled buildings or facilities ([PA 24-79](#), §§ 7 & 8, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Fallen Officer Fund***

A new law codifies a policy of the state comptroller by establishing the “Fallen Officer Fund” to, within available appropriations, give a lump sum death benefit totaling \$100,000 to a surviving family member or beneficiary of a police officer who was killed in the line of duty or sustained

injuries that were the direct and proximate cause of the officer's death. (The FY 24-25 Budget appropriated \$500,000 in each year to the comptroller's operating expenses account to provide money for the Fallen Officer Fund.)

The act also allows survivors who were covered by the police officer's health insurance at the time of the officer's death, to apply for or keep the coverage for one year after the death and to renew annually for up to five years ([PA 24-27](#), various effective dates).

### ***Fire Services Administrative Changes***

A new law makes several changes to how fire services are administrated. Principally, it eliminates the Office of State Fire Administration and creates a Division of Fire Services Administration within DESPP as a successor agency. It assigns jurisdiction of this new division to the state fire administrator and reassigns the administrator's current duties to the division and expands on them.

The act also makes several changes to the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, including expanding its membership and its powers and duties, such as advising the new division on managing the Statewide Fire Service Disaster Response Plan. Additionally, the act creates a working group to make recommendations on the structure and operations of the offices of the State Fire Marshal and Education and Data Management under the Department of Administrative Services ([PA 24-136](#), most provisions effective July 1, 2025).

### ***Internet Gaming Oversight***

A new law requires licensed lottery gaming system vendors to report system disruptions to the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) and expands the jurisdiction of certain DCP special police officers to include investigating and making arrests for any offense arising from Internet gaming, in addition to their existing authority over retail sports wagering, off-track betting systems, and lottery games ([PA 24-142](#), §§ 78 & 88, effective upon passage).

### ***Law Enforcement and Government Agency Records FOIA Exemptions***

This session, the legislature passed a law expanding exemptions of certain law enforcement and government agency records from disclosure under FOIA. This includes, for certain investigatory records, exempting (1) the identity of "mandated reporters" not otherwise known and (2) sworn witness statements. The act also exempts, subject to specific conditions, certain photographs, films, videos, digital images, and other visual images depicting a minor, domestic or sexual abuse victim, homicide or suicide victim, or deceased victim of an accident ([PA 24-56](#), effective July 1, 2024).

## ***Line of Duty Death Declarations***

A new law generally allows a police or fire chief or emergency medical service (EMS) chief or administrative head to declare that a police officer, uniformed paid or volunteer firefighter, or EMS personnel died in the line of duty if the death was caused by a cardiac event, stroke, or pulmonary embolism within 24 hours after the officer, firefighter, or EMS personnel finished a shift or training. The chief or administrative head may do so unless a local charter or ordinance in effect on October 1, 2024, authorizes a different person or entity to make the determination ([PA 24-16](#), effective October 1, 2024).

## ***Local Voluntary Public Safety Registration System***

A new law eliminates the 2023-enacted local voluntary public safety registration system for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), including autism spectrum disorder, cognitive impairments, and nonverbal learning disorders, as well as related provisions. It correspondingly eliminates a requirement that each emergency dispatcher employed by a public safety answering point, when practicable, search the system when dispatching emergency services to a residential address ([PA 24-81](#), § 37, effective upon passage).

## ***Missing Persons Clearinghouse***

New legislation removes children with IDDs from the missing persons information clearinghouse administered by DESPP, which must hold information on certain missing individuals to help law enforcement agencies locate them ([PA 24-81](#), § 34, effective upon passage).

## ***Police Body Cameras***

A new law specifically requires the state's guidelines on the use of police body cameras, starting October 1, 2024, to include provisions on the circumstances when officers must not pause recording with the cameras. The act requires similar provisions to be included in police basic and review training programs on body camera use ([PA 24-15](#), various effective dates).

## ***School Resource Officer Reports***

Prior law required each school resource officer (SRO) to give his or her agency's police chief a report for each investigation or behavioral intervention the SRO conducts within five days after doing so. The law requires police chiefs to submit SROs' reports to their school districts' superintendents at least monthly.

A new law clarifies that if the SRO's chief of police is not Police Officer Standards and Training Council-certified, then the SRO must instead submit the reports to the superintendent ([PA 24-45](#), § 15, effective July 1, 2024).



## **Offices, Commissions, and Councils**

### ***Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime***

By law, the Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime must meet at least four times per year to recommend legislation to the Office of Victim Service (OVS). Among other things, a new law increases the membership of the council from 15 to 20.

Under existing law, the represented victim populations expressly include homicide survivors and victims of family violence, sexual assault, drunk drivers, and assault and robbery. The new law specifically adds victims of gun violence as a represented victim population ([PA 24-108](#), § 23, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Office of the Claims Commissioner***

A new law makes several changes in the laws governing the Office of the Claims Commissioner as well as claims against the state. For example, it (1) reinstates the \$50,000 minimum threshold for claimants seeking legislative review of the office's decision on certain claims, and requires claimants seeking legislative review to submit a summary, of no more than two pages, of the basis for their request; and (2) removes the 90-day post-hearing deadline for the office to issue decisions on claims, instead requiring that it make all reasonable efforts to do so within this period, and sets a limit on the duration of extensions that the legislature may grant the office ([PA 24-44](#), effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Sexual Assault Criminal Justice Response, Enhancement, and Model Policy Advisory Council***

This session, the legislature established the Sexual Assault Criminal Justice Response, Enhancement, and Model Policy Advisory Council to, among other things, evaluate the current criminal justice response to sexual assault incidents involving adult victims and develop a model policy for responding to these incidents ([PA 24-127](#), § 1, July 1, 2024).

## **Record Erasure and Wrongful Incarceration**

### ***Automated Criminal Record Erasure Process***

Existing law provides for record erasure of most misdemeanor convictions and certain felony convictions after a specified period following the person's most recent conviction. By law, DESPP, in consultation with the judicial branch and the Criminal Justice Information System Governing Board, must develop and implement automated processes for criminal records.

A new law requires any agency holding records subject to the automated processes for erasure to assist DESPP in carrying out these automated processes and provide any necessary information to DESPP to do so ([PA 24-108](#), § 42, effective upon passage).

### ***Wrongful Incarceration Compensation Eligibility***

This session, the legislature passed a new law that makes various changes in the law governing wrongful incarceration compensation, including expanding eligibility by allowing compensation when the complaint or information is dismissed on “grounds consistent with innocence.” Under the new law, this includes a situation where the conviction was vacated or reversed and there is substantial evidence of innocence (whether available at the time of the investigation or trial or newly discovered).

Among other things, the new law also does the following:

1. requires the claims commissioner to determine whether a claimant meets the eligibility requirements within 90 days after the hearing;
2. calculates the award based on the “median family income” instead of the “median household income”;
3. eliminates the General Assembly’s authority to modify awards but allows it to remand the matter to the claims commissioner; and
4. allows a deceased claimant’s estate to receive compensation under certain conditions ([PA 24-106](#), effective upon passage and applicable to claims pending before the claims commissioner on the act’s passage or filed with the claims commissioner on or after that date).

## **Sexual Abuse and Assault**

### ***Child Sexual Abuse Material***

Among other things, a new law replaces the term “child pornography” with “child sexual abuse material” in statutes that define the term and criminalize the possession, importation, and transmission of this material. In changing the terminology, the act retains the elements of, and penalties for, these crimes ([PA 24-118](#), §§ 2-10, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Connecticut School Health Survey***

This session, the legislature passed a law that makes various changes in laws that relate to the protection of children from sexual abuse. Among other things, starting July 1, 2026, the new law requires DPH to include a sexual abuse and assault awareness prevention survey for high school

administrators as part of the Connecticut School Health Survey ([PA 24-118](#), § 1, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Sexual Assault Victim Assistance***

A new law provides additional assistance to sexual assault victims by, among other things, (1) expanding existing information provided by OVS to include services and resources available to sexual assault victims and providing the information to sexual assault crisis centers and sexual assault hotlines; and (2) establishing that it is a police officer's responsibility to provide immediate assistance to a victim at the scene of a sexual assault incident or at the time the complaint is filed ([PA 24-127](#), §§ 2-4, various effective dates).

## **Studies, Task Forces, and Working Groups**

### ***Child Advocate's Study Related to Probate Court Guardian Proceeding***

By January 1, 2025, a new law requires the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) to (1) review state agency practices and procedures for ensuring the care and protection of minors in Probate Court guardianship proceedings and (2) report to the Children's and Judiciary committees on the adequacy of the practices and procedures. OCA's report must include, among other things, an analysis of the statutory requirements and court rules and policies applicable to probate court guardianship proceedings ([PA 24-118](#), § 12, effective upon passage).

### ***Effects of Hate Speech and Bullying on Children***

This session, the legislature enacted a new law that establishes a 17-member task force to study the effects of hate speech and bullying on children, including an analysis of (1) its effect on a child's mental and physical health and academic achievement, (2) the factors that may contribute to a child encountering or perpetrating such behavior, and (3) the environment in which it is likely to occur. The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Children's Committee by January 1, 2025 ([SA 24-9](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Responsiveness to Child Sexual Abuse***

Among other things, a new law establishes a 22-member task force to study the responsiveness of certain state agencies and the judicial branch as well as their policies and practices relating to and impacting children to identify opportunities to detect, mitigate, prevent, and effectively respond to child abuse. The task force must report its recommendations to the Children's and Judiciary committees by July 1, 2025 ([PA 24-118](#), § 11, effective upon passage).

## **Transportation**

### ***Court Reporting to the Department of Motor Vehicles***

Among other things, a new law requires the court to report to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) commissioner anyone who willfully fails to comply with remote events and deadlines the court sets for motor vehicle infractions and certain violations. Specifically, this applies to motor vehicle violations under the jurisdiction of the Superior Court’s Centralized Infractions Bureau, which is responsible for processing payments and not-guilty pleas ([PA 24-108](#), § 2, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Ignition Interlock Requirements End Date***

A new law set conditions under which ignition interlock device (IID) requirements end earlier than usual following administrative per se driver’s license suspensions for driving under the influence (DUI). Under the act, if the person was arrested for DUI and if cannabis was the only detected intoxicating substance, the required IID usage ends when (1) the person is acquitted or all charges are withdrawn, nolle, or dismissed, or (2) the person’s conviction is vacated, overturned, or erased. If the person was convicted for DUI and alcohol was one of the intoxicating substances, the required IID usage ends if the person received an absolute pardon ([PA 24-137](#), § 2, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Illegally Passing a School Bus***

New legislation makes several changes relating to Connecticut’s motor vehicle law that generally prohibits drivers from passing a school bus that has its red signal lights flashing (i.e., the “stop arm law”). Principally, it (1) sunsets the current statutory authorization for municipalities and boards of education to use a live digital video school bus violation detection monitoring system to enforce the stop arm law, generally by July 1, 2026, and (2) replaces that statutory authorization with a similar one that expressly allows municipalities to adopt ordinances that authorize the use of a monitoring system to enforce the stop arm law and establish \$250 municipal fines for violations ([PA 24-107](#), effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Incident Reports and the Administrative Per Se Process***

By law, someone arrested for DUI is subject to administrative licensing sanctions through the DMV in addition to criminal prosecution. This process is referred to as “administrative per se,” and the sanctions may occur when (1) a driver refuses to submit to a blood, breath, or urine test; (2) a test indicates an elevated blood alcohol content (BAC); or (3) the officer concludes through investigation (e.g., a drug influence evaluation) that the driver was under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or both. When any of these circumstances occurs, the arresting officer must prepare a report and send it to DMV.

A new act requires that the report be prepared and sent to DMV within six business days after the incident instead of three days as prior law required ([PA 24-40](#), § 54, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Noise Violation Automatic Enforcement***

A new law allows municipalities to authorize the use of noise cameras (i.e., photo noise violation monitoring devices) to enforce vehicle noise violations. To do so, a municipality must adopt an ordinance that, among other things, (1) establishes a municipal violation for causing a vehicle to make a sound of 80 decibels or louder, except for sounds made by a vehicle’s horn and (2) authorizes using cameras to enforce the ordinance. Municipalities operating noise cameras under the new law must issue a written warning for a first violation, a \$100 fine for a second violation, and a \$250 fine for subsequent violations. They must also adhere to the law’s provisions on camera operation, image review, citation issuance, hearings, available defenses, privacy, and data retention ([PA 24-151](#), §§ 132-135, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Traffic Control and Road Safety Orders Violations***

This session, the legislature increased, from \$5,000 to \$10,000, the maximum fine for any person or entity that does not comply with certain orders related to traffic control and road safety (e.g., Office of the State Traffic Administration orders for major traffic generating developments or local traffic authorities’ orders related to traffic control devices) ([PA 24-40](#), § 1, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Vertiports and Unmanned Aircraft***

The legislature passed a new law that defines “vertiports” and “unmanned aircraft” (i.e., drones) and incorporates these concepts into various existing aeronautics statutes. In doing so, the new law generally subjects vertiports to the same regulatory framework as other air navigation facilities (e.g., airports, heliports, and restricted landing areas). It also generally expands the authority of the Connecticut Airport Authority executive director to regulate unmanned aircraft and allows him to adopt procedures specifying where unmanned aircraft may take off and land and governing their operation, unless already prohibited or regulated by federal law.

Among other things, the new law (1) prohibits any person from operating, or programming to operate, an unmanned aircraft at a height of less than 250 feet over the boundaries of a private premises without the owner’s prior approval (with certain exceptions) and (2) makes violations an infraction ([PA 24-40](#), §§ 20-40, generally effective July 1, 2024).

## ***Work Zone Speed Camera Program and Municipal Speed and Red-Light Camera Programs***

A new law restarts and makes permanent the Department of Transportation's work zone speed camera program. It makes several changes to the program, such as (1) expanding the permissible locations for work zone speed cameras; (2) lowering, from at least 15 mph to at least 10 mph, the amount by which a vehicle must exceed the posted speed limit in a work zone in order to be issued a warning or ticket; and (3) modifying the fine structure and requiring that a fine be issued for a first violation if the vehicle's detected speed is 85 mph or more.

This new law also modifies the penalty and data retention provisions applicable to municipal speed and red-light camera programs enacted under PA 23-116. Generally, it specifies when a violation is considered a second or subsequent violation, which may be subject to higher penalties, and allows municipalities or their vendors to retain data necessary to impose the penalties ([PA 24-40](#), §§ 15-17 & 42-50, effective July 1, 2024).

## **Victim Services and Rights**

### ***Office of Victim Services Victim Compensation Program***

By law, certain crime victims are eligible for compensation under OVS's victim compensation program. To be eligible, among other things, the victim must (1) apply within two years after the date of the personal injury or death and (2) report the incident or offense to the police within five days after it occurred or, for specified crimes, after it could have been reported.

A new law (1) extends the application deadline to three years after the injury or death, (2) eliminates the requirement that the incident or offense be reported to the police within the five-day time periods, and (3) allows the compensation to be used for security measures ([PA 24-108](#), § 25, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Victim Compensation for Emotional Harm and Pecuniary Loss***

By law, certain crime victims may receive victim compensation for personal injury, including emotional harm. This session, the legislature passed a law that, among other things, removes the requirement that a crime victim's mental or emotional impairment require treatment through services to be eligible for victim compensation and expands permitted victim compensation by allowing payment for pecuniary loss for attending certain Psychiatric Security Review Board hearings ([PA 24-108](#), §§ 22 & 24, effective July 1, 2024).

## **Miscellaneous**

### ***Dam Safety***

Responding to recent concerns about dam safety in the state, the legislature passed a new law that sets out a process for the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection commissioner, without a public hearing, to order a dam's owner or caretaker to remedy a problem with a dam under certain circumstances. Under the act, she may also correct a dam's problem and make its owner or caretaker liable for the associated costs and expenses. The act also explicitly prohibits maintaining a dam in a condition that might endanger life or property unless it is a hazard only to its owner's property ([PA 24-94](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Expanding Fingerprinting Locations***

A new law requires the DESPP commissioner, in consultation with the DPH commissioner, to develop and implement a plan to expand fingerprinting locations in the state to facilitate more access to these locations for people required to complete state and national criminal history records checks for employment or licensing purposes.

The commissioner must report to the Aging, Public Health, and Public Safety committees on the plan by January 1, 2025 ([PA 24-39](#), § 6, effective upon passage).

### ***Union Avenue Detention Center in New Haven***

Starting in 2026, a new law places New Haven's Union Avenue detention center under the jurisdiction of a state agency, as the Office of Policy and Management secretary determines. Under current practice, the facility is under local police jurisdiction ([PA 24-81](#), § 60, effective upon passage).

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