



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 786

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 7257

House of Representatives, April 28, 2025

The Committee on Judiciary reported through REP. STAFSTROM of the 129th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT REQUIRING AN INVESTIGATION OF ANY REPORTED DOG BITE OR ATTACK.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) Any person may make a
2 complaint concerning an alleged dog bite or attack upon such person or
3 another person to any animal control officer appointed pursuant to
4 section 22-331 or 22-331a of the general statutes of the town or region
5 where such bite or attack occurred. The animal control officer to whom
6 such complaint is made shall investigate the circumstances of the bite or
7 attack set forth in the complaint and report on the circumstances of the
8 attack to the Chief State Animal Control Officer, appointed pursuant to
9 section 22-328 of the general statutes. If after investigation, any animal
10 control officer appointed pursuant to section 22-328, 22-331 or 22-331a
11 of the general statutes determines that a person has in fact been bitten
12 or attacked by a dog, such animal control officer may make any order
13 concerning the restraint or disposal of such biting or attacking dog as is
14 necessary to protect public health and safety pursuant to subsection (c)

15 of section 22-358 of the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note**State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None**Explanation**

The bill allows someone to (1) submit a complaint about a dog bite or attack to a municipal or regional animal control officer, and (2) requires the animal control officer to investigate the complaint. This does not result in a fiscal impact to the state or municipalities as it is not anticipated that they will require additional resources to meet the requirements of this bill.

The Out Years**State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7257

AN ACT REQUIRING AN INVESTIGATION OF ANY REPORTED DOG BITE OR ATTACK.

SUMMARY

This bill allows a person to make a complaint about a dog bite or attack to a municipal or regional animal control officer (ACO) of the town where the bite or attack occurred. It requires the ACO to (1) investigate the circumstances of the bite or attack and (2) report them to the Department of Agriculture (DoAg)-appointed chief state ACO.

After an investigation, if a municipal, regional, or DoAg-appointed ACO in the town or region where the alleged dog bite or attack occurred determines that a person has in fact been bitten or attacked by a dog, the bill authorizes the ACO to make an order to restrain or dispose of the dog as needed to protect public health and safety (see below).

Existing law allows a person to kill a biting or attacking dog and has a process similar to the bill's requiring the person to file a complaint to an ACO, an ACO to investigate the complaint, and, after considering public health and safety-related factors, an ACO to issue a final order. Under existing law, but not the bill, final orders may be appealed and noncompliance with the order is a crime (see BACKGROUND).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY FACTORS

By law, in the interest of public health and safety, if after investigation, a municipal, regional, or DoAg-appointed ACO in the municipality or region in which an alleged dog bite or attack occurs determines that a person has in fact been bitten or attacked by a dog, the ACO may make any order concerning the restraint or disposal of the

biting or attacking dog as is necessary to protect public health and safety.

In determining the type of order to be issued or conditions of restraint to be imposed, the ACO must consider factors including:

1. the owner's or keeper's ability, if any, to control the dog;
2. the severity of the injury the dog inflicted on the person;
3. the viciousness of the bite or attack;
4. any history of the dog's past bites or attacks;
5. whether the bite or attack occurred at a location that is off of the property of the dog's owner or keeper;
6. whether the dog was provoked; and
7. whether the dog was protecting its owner or keeper from physical harm (CGS § 22-358(c)).

BACKGROUND

Related Law

In 2024, the legislature enacted a law (PA 24-108 §§ 28 & 43, codified at CGS § 22-358) with reporting and investigating provisions similar to those in this bill. The 2024 act generally replaced the prior dog bite response law with provisions that (1) establish new procedures for owners, keepers, ACOs, police officers, and injured persons to follow and (2) specify factors an ACO must consider in deciding whether to issue an order to restrain or dispose a biting or attacking dog.

The 2024 law generally (1) allows anyone injured by a biting or attacking dog to kill the animal and (2) requires him or her to file a complaint to the ACO. The ACO must investigate the complaint, and, if the ACO determines that the person was bitten or attacked, the law provides factors the ACO must consider in determining what type of final order to issue or restraint conditions to impose. The act makes

noncompliance with a final order or judgment a class D misdemeanor, punishable by a fine up to \$250, up to 30 days in prison, or both.

This law provides for a pre-appeal meeting within a certain amount of time after the ACO's order and allows for a further appeal to the Superior Court.

It establishes similar provisions for when a person's animal is injured by the dog. It also created exemptions for military, law enforcement, and service animals.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 39 Nay 0 (04/10/2025)