



General Assembly

February Session, 2024

***Raised Bill No. 427***

LCO No. 2902



Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY

Introduced by:  
(JUD)

***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 2024 supplement to the general  
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof  
3 (*Effective October 1, 2024*):

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

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

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

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

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

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

59 (f) In addition to any sentence imposed pursuant to subsections (a) to  
60 (e), inclusive, of this section, at the time of a person's sentencing for a  
61 conviction under this section, the court shall order that, for the five-year  
62 period commencing from the date of such conviction or the date of such  
63 person's release from imprisonment for such conviction, whichever is  
64 later, such person (1) shall not harbor, own, possess, reside with, adopt  
65 or serve as a foster placement for any animal, and (2) shall not be  
66 employed by, or volunteer for, any entity in any position that involves  
67 care for, or regular contact with, any animal.

68 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) On and after July 1, 2025,  
69 emergency medical services personnel, as defined in section 20-206jj of  
70 the general statutes, may provide emergency treatment to an animal  
71 that is injured in the performance of its duties under the supervision of  
72 a peace officer, as defined in section 53a-3 of the general statutes, and  
73 transport such animal by ambulance to a veterinary facility equipped to  
74 provide emergency treatment to such animal pursuant to regulations  
75 adopted under subsection (b) of this section, provided such treatment  
76 or transportation may not be provided if it would inhibit the ability of  
77 such personnel to provide emergency medical attention or transport to  
78 a person requiring such services.

79 (b) Not later than July 1, 2025, the Department of Public Health shall  
80 adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the  
81 general statutes, regarding (1) training of emergency services personnel

82 in basic level first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and life-saving  
83 interventions for such animals; (2) safe handling procedures for such  
84 animals; (3) identification of veterinary facilities that provide emergency  
85 treatment for such animals; and (4) decontamination and sterilization  
86 requirements for equipment and vehicles after transport of such  
87 animals.

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

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

116 2003, have attended a minimum of two hundred hours of classroom,  
117 lecture and hands-on practice in myofascial trigger point therapy,  
118 including animal musculoskeletal anatomy and biomechanics, theory  
119 and application of animal myofascial trigger point techniques, factors  
120 that habituate a presenting condition and corrective exercise.

121 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) For the fiscal year ending June 30,  
122 2025, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Department of Emergency  
123 Services and Public Protection shall, within available appropriations,  
124 administer a grant program to provide law enforcement units that use  
125 one or more dogs to perform law enforcement duties as part of a state-  
126 wide or municipal canine unit with body armor for such dogs. Not later  
127 than October 1, 2024, the department shall post in a conspicuous place  
128 on the department's Internet web site a description of the grant  
129 program, including, but not limited to, eligibility criteria and the  
130 application process for the program. A law enforcement unit shall apply  
131 for such grants on such forms and in such manner as determined by the  
132 department.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2024</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, 2024</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.]*