



689614

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RS	.	
02/25/2022	.	
	.	
	.	
	.	

The Committee on Appropriations (Powell) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 24 - 127

and insert:

Police Dogs Program Act."

Section 2. Section 943.69, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

943.69 Care for Retired Police Dogs Program.—

(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds that:

(a) Police dogs are an integral part of many law



689614

11 enforcement and correctional efforts statewide, including the
12 apprehension of suspects through tracking and searching,
13 evidence location, drug and bomb detection, and search and
14 rescue operations.

15 (b) Law enforcement and correctional agencies agree that
16 the use of police dogs is an extremely cost-effective means of
17 crime control and that police dogs possess skills and abilities
18 that frequently exceed those of existing technology.

19 (c) The service of police dogs is often dangerous and can
20 expose them to injury at a rate higher than that of nonservice
21 dogs.

22 (d) Police dogs provide significant contributions to the
23 residents of this state.

24 (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

25 (a) "Correctional agency" means a lawfully established
26 state or local public agency having primary responsibility for
27 the supervision, protection, care, custody, control, or
28 investigation of inmates at a correctional institution.

29 (b) "Law enforcement agency" means a lawfully established
30 state or local public agency having primary responsibility for
31 the prevention and detection of crime or the enforcement of
32 penal, traffic, highway, regulatory, game, immigration, postal,
33 customs, or controlled substance laws.

34 (c) "Retired police dog" means a dog that was previously in
35 the service of or employed by a law enforcement agency or a
36 correctional agency in this state for the principal purpose of
37 aiding in the detection of criminal activity, enforcement of
38 laws, or apprehension of offenders and that received
39 certification in obedience and apprehension work from a



689614

40 certifying organization, such as the National Police Canine
41 Association, Inc., or other certifying organization.

42 (d) "Veterinarian" has the same meaning as in s. 474.202.

43 (e) "Veterinary care" means the practice, by a
44 veterinarian, of veterinary medicine as defined in s. 474.202.
45 The term includes annual wellness examinations, vaccinations,
46 internal and external parasite prevention treatments, testing
47 and treatment of illnesses and diseases, medications, emergency
48 care and surgeries, veterinary oncology or other specialty care,
49 euthanasia, and cremation.

50 (3) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—The Care for Retired Police
51 Dogs Program is created within the department to provide a
52 stable funding source for the veterinary care for retired police
53 dogs.

54 (4) ADMINISTRATION.—The department shall contract with a
55 nonprofit corporation organized under chapter 617 to administer
56 and manage the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program.
57 Notwithstanding chapter 287, the department shall select the
58 nonprofit corporation through a competitive grant award process.
59 The nonprofit corporation must meet all of the following
60 criteria:

61 (a) Be dedicated to the protection or care of retired
62 police dogs.

63 (b) Be exempt from taxation under s. 501(a) of the Internal
64 Revenue Code as an organization described in s. 501(c)(3) of
65 that code.

66 (c) Have maintained such tax-exempt status for at least 5
67 years.

68 (d) Agree to be subject to review and audit at the



689614

69 discretion of the Auditor General in order to ensure accurate
70 accounting and disbursement of state funds.

71 (e) Demonstrate the ability to effectively and efficiently
72 disseminate information and to assist former handlers and
73 adopters of retired police dogs in complying with this section.

74 (5) FUNDING.—

75 (a) The nonprofit corporation shall be the disbursing
76 authority for funds the Legislature appropriates to the
77 department for the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program. These
78 funds must be disbursed to the former handler or the adopter of
79 a retired police dog that served for 5 years or more as a police
80 dog upon receipt of:

81 1. Valid documentation from the law enforcement agency or
82 correctional agency from which the dog retired which verifies
83 that the dog was in the service of or employed by that agency;
84 and

85 a. That the dog served 5 years or more with that agency;

86 b. Documentation showing that the dog served a total of 5
87 years or more with two or more law enforcement agencies or
88 correctional agencies; or

89 c. That, notwithstanding the length of service requirements
90 elsewhere in this paragraph, the dog served 3 years or more with
91 one or more law enforcement agencies and was injured in the line
92 of duty while serving with a law enforcement agency and retired
93 from the agency the dog was serving with at the time of the
94 injury due to such injury; and

95 2. A valid invoice from a veterinarian for veterinary care
96 provided in this state to a retired police dog and documentation
97 establishing payment of the invoice by the former handler or the



689614

98 adopter of the retired police dog.

99 (b) Annual disbursements to a former handler or an adopter
100 to reimburse him or her for the cost of the retired police dog's
101 veterinary care may not exceed \$1,500 per dog. A former handler
102 or an adopter of a retired police dog may not accumulate unused
103 funds from a current year for use in a future year.

104 (c) A former handler or an adopter of a retired police dog
105 who seeks reimbursement for veterinary care may not receive
106 reimbursement if funds appropriated for the Care for Retired
107 Police Dogs Program are depleted in the year for which the
108 reimbursement is sought.

109 (6) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—The department shall pay to
110 the nonprofit corporation, and the nonprofit corporation may
111 use, up to 10 percent of appropriated funds for its
112 administrative expenses, including salaries and benefits.

113 (7) RULEMAKING.—The department shall adopt rules to
114 implement this section.

115 Section 3. For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, and each fiscal
116 year thereafter, the sum of \$300,000 in recurring funds is
117 appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of
118 Law Enforcement for the purpose of implementing and
119 administering the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program.

120
121 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

122 And the title is amended as follows:

123 Delete lines 2 - 12

124 and insert:

125 An act relating to care for retired police dogs;
126 providing a short title; creating s. 943.69, F.S.;



689614

127 providing legislative findings; defining terms;
128 creating the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program
129 within the Department of Law Enforcement; requiring
130 the department to contract with a nonprofit
131 corporation to administer and manage the program;
132 specifying requirements for the nonprofit corporation;
133 specifying requirements for the disbursement of funds
134 for the veterinary care of eligible retired police
135 dogs; limiting annual