

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Criminal Justice

BILL: SB 1268
INTRODUCER: Senator Simon
SUBJECT: Department of Law Enforcement
DATE: March 17, 2025 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Vaughan	Stokes	CJ	Favorable
2.	_____	_____	ACJ	_____
3.	_____	_____	FP	_____

I. Summary:

SB 1268 amends various sections throughout ch. 943, F.S., which is the Florida Law Enforcement Act. Specifically the bill:

- Section 943.0311, F.S., to require suggestions for security enhancements of certain buildings, facility, or structure owned or leased by a state agency, state university, or community college or an entity that has conducted an assessment to be submitted with the annual domestic security report, as required by s. 943.0313(6), F.S.
- Section 943.0313, F.S., to allow one statewide domestic security intelligence representative selected by the chair of the Florida Fusion Center Executive Advisory Board to serve as a voting member of the Statewide Domestic Security Intelligence Committee, rather than the chair. The Domestic Security Oversight Council's (DSOC) annual report must include information submitted by the Chief of Domestic Security.
- Section 943.60, F.S., to add the Governor's Mansion and its curtilage to the buildings identified as part of the Capitol Complex.
- Section 943.69, F.S., to increase the maximum annual disbursements for veterinary care of retired police dogs from \$1,500 to \$5,000 per dog.
- Section 914.25, F.S., to remove expense reimbursements for protective services via the Victim and Witness Protection Review Committee and amends s. 914.27, F.S., to remove all references to the Victim and Witness Protection Review Committee.
- Section 943.041, F.S., to rename the Crimes Against Children Criminal Profiling Program to the Child Exploitation and Crimes Against Children Program.
- Section 943.17, F.S., to remove the reference to the Florida Violent Crime and Drug Control Council.

The bill repeals s. 943.031, F.S., relating to the Florida Violent Crime and Drug Control Council and s. 943.042, F.S., relating to the Violent Crime Investigative Emergency and Drug Control Strategy Implementation Account.

This bill does not have a fiscal impact on state revenues or expenditures. *See Section V. Fiscal Impact Statement.*

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2025.

II. Present Situation:

Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Violent Crime Council

In 1993, the Florida Violent Crime Council (Ch. 93-204, LOF) was established to financially assist local law enforcement agencies in extraordinary violent crime cases. After Florida's crime trend slightly shifted from violent crime to drug crimes, the 2001 Legislature approved the expansion of the Council to include funding for drug investigations. Renamed the Violent Crime and Drug Control Council (VCDCC), the VCDCC was authorized to provide supplemental funding to local and state law enforcement agencies working violent crime, major drug and money laundering investigations, and victim/witness protection and relocation efforts. The Legislature supports the funding of the VCDCC on a year-to-year basis.¹

Pursuant to s. 943.031, F.S., the VCDCC is comprised of 14 members. The members are responsible to advise the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Executive Director and make recommendations on the development and implementation of initiatives to combat violent crime, drug trafficking, and money laundering. Eight members of the VCDCC are standing members (or designee) include the:

- Chief Financial Officer
- Attorney General
- Education Commissioner
- Executive Office of the Governor Public Safety Policy Coordinator
- Department of Juvenile Justice Secretary
- Department of Corrections Secretary
- Florida Network of Victim/Witness Services President
- FDLE Commissioner²

The remaining six members are appointed by the Governor,³ three of which are vacant and the other three continue to serve beyond their term, which has expired. Members appointed by the Governor serve 2-year terms and the standing members serve as long as they hold office or employment that was the basis for their appointment to the VCDCC.⁴

¹ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Violent Crime and Drug Control Council Annual Report*, available at [https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications-\(1\)/2024_VCDCC_Annual_Report_FINAL.aspx](https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications-(1)/2024_VCDCC_Annual_Report_FINAL.aspx) (Last visited March 9, 2025).

² Section 943.031(2)(a)-(i), F.S.

³ Section 943.031(3), F.S.

⁴ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Violent Crime and Drug Council Publications*, <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications> (last visited March 10, 2025)

The FDLE coordinates the VCDCC, assists the council in the performance of its duties and administers funds from the Violent Crime Investigative Emergency and Drug Control Strategy Implementation Account. An annual report on the activities of the VCDCC is produced each year in December.⁵

The Florida Network of Victim/Witness Services, which is a standing member of the VCDCC, appears to be inactive based on common internet searches but has submitted annual reporting through the Department of State.⁶ The not-for-profit organization does not maintain contact with the FDLE.

Due to budgetary constraints, VCDCC has only funded victim/witness protection reimbursement since September 2008. In 2009, the Legislature authorized FDLE to utilize trust funds to support victim/witness protection and relocation reimbursement requests. FDLE submitted a budget request during the Fiscal Year 20-21 legislative session requesting \$2,500,000 which would have allowed the department to resume awarding financial assistance to state and local law enforcement agencies. The legislature did not approve that request.⁷

Florida Statutes require all agencies awarded Council funds to complete a report on all active/open violent crime and drug funded cases every six months. The completed report, which is provided to FDLE by the receiving agency, must detail the expenditure of Council funds during the reporting period. FDLE continued to support the program utilizing operating trust funds through Fiscal Year 21-22. The Council did not hold an open conference meeting during 2024.⁸

Victim/Witness Protection Review Committee

The Victim/Witness Protection Review Committee was created within the Violent Crime and Drug Control Council. This committee is responsible for reviewing and approving or denying, in whole or in part, all requests for reimbursement of Victim/Witness Protection funding.⁹

The Council's six-member Victim and Witness Protection Review Committee held two closed conference meetings in February and June of 2022. The Committee approved two reimbursement

⁵ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Violent Crime and Drug Council Publications*, <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications> (last visited March 10, 2025)

⁶ Division of Corporations, available at

<https://search.sunbiz.org/Inquiry/CorporationSearch/SearchResultDetail?inquirytype=EntityName&directionType=Initial&searchNameOrder=FLORIDANETWORKVICTIMWITNESSSER%207482660&aggregateId=domnp-748266-86d11613-e88d-4797-a432-587a87600c6c&searchTerm=florida%20network%20of%20victim%20&listNameOrder=FLORIDANETWORKVICTIMWITNESSSER%207482660> (last visited March 10, 2025)

⁷ Ch 2021-36, L.O.F.

⁸ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *2024 Violent Crime and Drug Control Council Annual Report*, available at [https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications-\(1\)/2024_VCDCC_Annual_Report_FINAL.aspx](https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications-(1)/2024_VCDCC_Annual_Report_FINAL.aspx) (Last visited March 9, 2025).

⁹ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Victim/Witness Protection Program Application Information Package*, available at <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Forms/VictimWitnessProtectionApplication.aspx> (Last visited March 9, 2025).

funding requests for a total of \$13,600.00.¹⁰ No funds were awarded to agencies for victim/witness protection reimbursement in 2023.¹¹

Violent Crime Investigative Emergency Account

In 1993, the Violent Crime Investigative Emergency Account was created (Ch. 93-204, LOF) as a mechanism to provide emergency supplemental funds to state and local law enforcement agencies which were involved in complex violent crime investigations. In 2001, the account was renamed to the Violent Crime Investigative Emergency and Drug Control Strategy Implementation Account (Ch. 2001-127, LOF) to allow agencies to utilize the funding for complex drug investigations. The Legislature supports the funding on a year-to-year basis. The Legislature has not provided an appropriation since Fiscal Year 08-09.

Crimes Against Children Criminal Profiling Program

Section 943.041, F.S., creates the Crimes Against Children Criminal Profiling Program (CACP) within the FDLE. The CACP provides investigative, training, and intelligence assistance to local law enforcement agencies while taking a proactive approach to investigating and preventing child sexual exploitation.^{12,13}

The networking and sharing of intelligence and investigative data enhances the existing communications network of the Florida Investigative Support Center (FISC) within the FDLE. This database enables the FDLE personnel to identify patterns and movements of specific criminal activities. In addition, it provides local law enforcement investigators with a statewide medium through which they share criminal information. Special Agents of the CACP have received extensive training in the area of crimes against children. Consequently, members of this program are qualified to investigate multi-jurisdictional operations and organized crimes against children. In addition, investigative and technical assistance is provided to local law enforcement agencies.¹⁴

Crimes Against Children Criminal Profiling Trust Fund

In 1989, the Crimes Against Children Criminal Profiling Trust Fund was established within FDLE (Ch. 89-3, LOF). The monies placed in the trust fund consisted of an additional fee on birth certificates authorized under s. 382.025, F.S., and any other money appropriated by the Legislature or received from the federal government or any other public or private source. The trust fund was established to assist local law enforcement agencies with investigative,

¹⁰Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *2022 Violent Crime and Drug Control Council Annual Report*, available at [https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications-\(1\)/2022-VCDCC-Annual-Report.aspx](https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications-(1)/2022-VCDCC-Annual-Report.aspx) (last visited March 9, 2025).

¹¹ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *2023 Violent Crime and Drug Control Council Annual Report*, available at [https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications-\(1\)/2023_VCDCC_Annual_Report_Final.aspx](https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications-(1)/2023_VCDCC_Annual_Report_Final.aspx) (Last visited March 9, 2025).

¹² Section 943.041, F.S.

¹³ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Crimes Against Children*, available at <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/mcicsearch/crimesagainstchildren.asp#:~:text=The%20Crimes%20Against%20Children%20Program,to%20local%20law%20enforcement%20agencies>. (last visited March 9, 2025).

¹⁴ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Agency Bill Analysis SB1268* (Department of Law Enforcement) on file with the Senate Criminal Justice Committee).

intelligence, research and training activities related to crimes against children. The trust fund was terminated on July 1, 1995, by legislative action (Ch. 94-265, LOF).

Domestic Security Oversight Council

In 2005, s. 943.0313, F.S., codified the Domestic Security Oversight Council (DSOC). The legislation provided for its membership, governance and duties of the council. The voting members include the:

- Executive Director of the Department of Law Enforcement
- Director of the Division of Emergency Management
- Attorney General
- Commissioner of Agriculture
- State Surgeon General
- Commissioner of Education
- State Fire Marshal
- Adjutant General of the Florida National Guard
- State Chief Information Officer
- Each sheriff or chief of police who serves as a co-chair of a regional domestic security task force pursuant to s. 943.0312(1)(b).
- Each of the department's special agents in charge who serve as a co-chair of a regional domestic security task force.
- Two representatives of the Florida Fire Chiefs Association.
- One representative of the Florida Police Chiefs Association.
- One representative of the Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association.
- The chair of the Statewide Domestic Security Intelligence Committee.
- One representative of the Florida Hospital Association.
- One representative of the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council.
- One representative of the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association.
- One representative of the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development Council.

The voting members must include the Chair of the Statewide Domestic Security Intelligence Committee. As the domestic security framework has evolved, this committee was abolished several years ago. This has caused a vacancy within the council that cannot be filled.¹⁵

The DSOC serves as an advisory council that in part reviews the development, maintenance and operation of a comprehensive domestic security strategy to guide the state's prevention, preparedness, protection, response and recovery efforts against terroristic attacks and make appropriate recommendations. The DSOC is required to report annually on its activities on or before December 31 of each calendar year to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the chairs of the committees having principal jurisdiction over domestic security.¹⁶

¹⁵ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Office of Criminal Justice Grants, *Care for Retired Police Dogs*, available at <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/FDLE-Grants/Office-of-Criminal-Justice-Grants/Programs/SFA/CRPD> (last visited March 10, 2025)

¹⁶ Section 943.0313(5), F.S.

Pursuant to s. 943.0311, F.S., the duties of the Chief of Domestic Security include a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by November 1 of each calendar year which details suggestions for specific and significant security enhancements of any building, facility, or structure owned or leased by a state agency, state university, or community college or any entity that has conducted an assessment under s. 943.0311(6), F.S. This report is separate from the report required under s. 943.0313(6), F.S.

Care for Retired Police Dogs Program

In 2022, the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program was created in s. 943.69, F.S. The program established and provides funding for reimbursement of veterinary care for retired police dogs. The program currently provides reimbursement up to \$1,500 annually, per dog, for veterinary care to any former handler or adopter of a retired police dog, that served 5 or more years as a police dog.¹⁷

Funds under this program may be used for the following veterinary expenses, provided the expenses are the result of care/treatment from a licensed Florida veterinarian, including:

- Annual wellness exams,
- Vaccinations,
- Internal and external parasite prevention treatments,
- Testing and treatment of illnesses and diseases,
- Medications,
- Emergency care and surgeries,
- Veterinary oncology or other specialty care,
- Euthanasia, and
- Cremation.^{18,19}

Basic annual vet visits for cats and dogs cost between \$50 to \$250, and they increase up to \$8,000 for specialized treatment (wound treatment, bloat treatment, emergency surgery, etc.).²⁰ Law enforcement dogs have become an integral part of many law enforcement efforts statewide, including suspect apprehension through tracking and searching, evidence location, drug and bomb detection, and search and rescue operations.²¹ Law enforcement dogs cannot work forever and are faced with natural aging conditions and may have sustained injuries in the line of duty.²²

¹⁷ Section 943.69, F.S.

¹⁸ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Office of Criminal Justice Grants, *Care for Retired Police Dogs*, available at <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/FDLE-Grants/Office-of-Criminal-Justice-Grants/Programs/SFA/CRPD> (last visited March 10, 2025).

¹⁹ Section 943.69, F.S.

²⁰ Dogster, *How Much Does a Vet Visit Cost? 2025 Pricing Update*, available at <https://www.dogster.com/dog-health-care/how-much-does-vet-visit-cost> (last visited March 10, 2025).

²¹ Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, Operational Support Department, K-9 Unit, *Meet Our Team*, available at <https://www.teamhcsso.com/SpecialtyTeamMember> (last visited March 10, 2025); Pasco County Sheriff's Office, *K-9 Association*, available at <https://www.pascosheriffcharities.org/k-9-association/k-9-meet-the-teams/> (last visited March 10, 2025); Gainesville Police Department, *Patrol Support Bureau, K-9*, available at <http://www.gainesvillepd.org/About-GPD/Operations-Bureau/Patrol-Support-Bureau/K-9> (last visited March 10, 2025).

²² For example, in September 2021, three different Law Enforcement K-9s acting in the line of duty were shot by suspects in Florida. *Officials: Florida K-9s shot by carjacking suspect*, September 11, 2021, AP News, available at

When it is time for a law enforcement dog to retire, the dog typically lives with their law enforcement officer partner. The veterinary expenses due to complications from law enforcement K-9's injuries, joint problems, or other job-related health problems may be too costly for the former handler to incur.

Capitol Complex

The term "Capitol Complex" is the portion of Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida, commonly referred to as the Capitol, the Historic Capitol, the Senate Office Building, the House Office Building, the Knott Building, the Pepper Building, the Holland Building, the Elliot Building, the R.A. Gray Building, and the associated parking garages.²³ The Capitol Police provide security for state officials, employees, and visitors to the Capitol Complex as specified in s. 943.61, F.S.

The FDLE provides security to the Governor, the Governor's immediate family, the Governor's office and Mansion including the grounds.²⁴ Capitol Police also provide and maintain security to the Governor's Mansion; however, it is not included in the current definition of "Capitol Complex" in s. 943.60, F.S.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1268 amends various sections throughout ch. 943, F.S., which is the Florida Law Enforcement Act. Specifically the bill:

- Section 943.0311, F.S., to require suggestions for security enhancements of certain buildings, facility, or structure owned or leased by a state agency, state university, or community college or an entity that has conducted an assessment to be submitted with the annual domestic security report, as required by s. 943.0313(6), F.S.
- Section 943.0313, F.S., to allow one statewide domestic security intelligence representative selected by the chair of the Florida Fusion Center Executive Advisory Board to serve as a voting member of the Statewide Domestic Security Intelligence Committee, rather than the chair. The Domestic Security Oversight Council's (DSOC) annual report must include information submitted by the Chief of Domestic Security.
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- Section 943.041, F.S., to rename the Crimes Against Children Criminal Profiling Program to the Child Exploitation and Crimes Against Children Program.

<https://apnews.com/article/police-florida-carjacking-dogs-02ad82fce042d444f7d067151a3aeb30> (last visited March 10, 2025); *JSO K-9 recovering after being shot during Nassau County manhunt*, Carianne Luter, Social Media Producer, September 27, 2021, News4Jax, available at <https://www.news4jax.com/news/local/2021/09/27/jso-k-9-recovering-after-being-shot-during-nassau-county-manhunt/> (last visited March 10, 2025).

²³ Section 943.60, F.S.

²⁴ Section 943.68(1), F.S.

- Section 943.17, F.S., to remove the reference to the Florida Violent Crime and Drug Control Council.

The bill repeals s. 943.031, F.S., relating to the Florida Violent Crime and Drug Control Council and s. 943.042, F.S., relating to the Violent Crime Investigative Emergency and Drug Control Strategy Implementation Account.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2025.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

The bill does not appear to require cities and counties to expend funds or limit their authority to raise revenue or receive state-shared revenues as specified by Article VII, s. 18, of the State Constitution.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

An appropriation of \$300,000 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund (2022) will continue to fund the administration of the program.²⁵

²⁵ Section 943.69, F.S.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 943.0311, 943.041, 943.17, 943.0313, 943.60, 943.69, 914.25, 914.27

This bill repeals the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 943.031, 943.042

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.