

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 Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice

BILL: SB 1268

INTRODUCER: Senator Simon

SUBJECT: Department of Law Enforcement

DATE: April 9, 2025

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Vaughan</u>	<u>Stokes</u>	<u>CJ</u>	Favorable
2.	<u>Kolich</u>	<u>Harkness</u>	<u>ACJ</u>	Pre-meeting
3.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>FP</u>	<u> </u>

I. Summary:

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

- 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 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 crime, 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 April 4, 2025).

² Section 943.031(2)(a)-(i), F.S.

³ *Id.*

⁴ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Violent Crime and Drug Council Publications*, <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications> (last visited April 4, 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 2008 Legislature, in its Fiscal Year 2008-2009 budget, reduced trust fund authority for the VCDCC by \$2,500,000 and has not funded victim/witness protection reimbursement requests since September 2008.⁷

Victim/Witness Protection Review Committee

The Victim/Witness Protection Review Committee was created within the VCDCC. This committee is responsible for reviewing and approving or denying, in whole or in part, all requests for reimbursement of Victim/Witness Protection funding.⁸

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 three reimbursement funding requests for a total of \$13,600.⁹ No funds were awarded to agencies for victim/witness protection reimbursement in 2023.¹⁰

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.

⁵ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Violent Crime and Drug Council Publications*, <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/Publications> (last visited April 7, 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 April 7, 2025)

⁷ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Agency Bill Analysis SB 1268 Department of Law Enforcement*.

⁸ 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 April 7, 2025).

⁹ Florida 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 April 7, 2025).

¹⁰ 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 April 9, 2025).

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 performs investigative, intelligence, research, and training activities related to crimes against children.¹¹

As technology has advanced and the distribution of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) has become more prevalent, the focus has shifted to internet crimes against children. FDLE continues to work crimes against children cases, but not specifically employing profiling techniques for these cases. The priority is on cases involving actual sexual abuse of children and the repeated victimization they experience by the distribution of images and videos utilizing the internet. This involves the use of highly technical investigative tools to target the distributors and distribution networks of CSAM. In addition, FDLE leads a training conference focused on the technical tools for the investigations, best practice techniques, lessons learned from prior cases and intelligence sharing between various task forces focused on similar types of investigations.¹²

Crimes Against Children Criminal Profiling Trust Fund

In 1989, the Crimes Against Children Criminal Profiling Trust Fund was established within FDLE (Ch. 1989-3, L.O.F.). 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, 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).¹³

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.

¹¹ Section 943.041, F.S.

¹² Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Agency Bill Analysis SB1268* (Department of Law Enforcement)

¹³ *Id.*

- 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.¹⁴

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 immigration enforcement incidents 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 in the Senate and the House of Representatives.¹⁵

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 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.¹⁶

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;

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ Section 943.0313(6), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 943.69, F.S.

- Medications;
- Emergency care and surgeries;
- Veterinary oncology or other specialty care;
- Euthanasia; and,
- Cremation.¹⁷

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.).¹⁸ 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.¹⁹ Law enforcement dogs cannot work forever and are faced with natural aging conditions and may have sustained injuries in the line of duty.²⁰ 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.²¹ 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.²² 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:

This bill amends various sections within ch. 943, F.S., which is the Florida Law Enforcement Act. Specifically, the bill amends:

- 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

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ 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 April 7, 2025).

¹⁹ Florida Sheriff's Association, *The Role of a K-9 Unit*, available at [The Role of a K-9 Unit - Florida Sheriffs Association](https://www.floridasheriffs.org/the-role-of-a-k-9-unit) (last visited April 7, 2025);

²⁰ 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 <https://apnews.com/article/police-florida-carjacking-dogs-02ad82fce042d444f7d067151a3aeb30> (last visited April 7, 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 April 7, 2025).

²¹ Section 943.60, F.S.

²² Section 943.68(1), F.S.

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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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 Art. 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:

In 2022, the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program was created in s. 943.69, F.S. FDLE was appropriated \$300,000 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to implement and administer the program. A former handler or an adopter of a retired police dog who seeks reimbursement may not receive reimbursement if funds appropriated for the program are depleted in the year for which the reimbursement is sought.²³ Thus, increasing the maximum annual disbursement for veterinary care will not require additional funds.

FDLE advised the bill does not have a fiscal impact to state government.²⁴

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 and 914.27

This bill repeals the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 943.031 and 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.

²³ Section 943.69, F.S.

²⁴ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Senate Bill 1268 Fiscal Analysis* (March 2, 2025) (on file with the Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice).

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
