

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 1042

Short Title: Vet Care for Retired Law Enforcement Dogs. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Gillespie, Bradford, Greene, and Logan (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: State Personnel, if favorable, Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

May 7, 2024

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO REIMBURSE THE VETERINARY CARE OF RETIRED LAW
3 ENFORCEMENT CANINES.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 143 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
6 Article to read:

7 "Article 12I.

8 "Retired Law Enforcement Canine Veterinary Care Reimbursements.

9 **"§ 143-166.90. Purpose.**

10 In consideration of hazardous public service rendered to the people of this State, there is
11 provided a system of veterinary care reimbursement for retired law enforcement canines.

12 **"§ 143-166.91. Definitions.**

13 The following definitions apply in this Article:

- 14 (1) Correctional agency. – A lawfully established State or local public agency
15 having primary responsibility for the supervision, protection, care, custody,
16 control, or investigation of individuals at a State prison or local confinement
17 facility within the State.
- 18 (2) Law enforcement agency. – A lawfully established State or local public
19 agency within the State having primary responsibility for the prevention and
20 detection of crime or the enforcement of penal, traffic, highway, regulatory,
21 game, immigration, postal, customs, or controlled substance laws.
- 22 (3) Retired law enforcement canine. – A canine meeting each of the following
23 criteria:
- 24 a. It was previously in the service of or employed by a law enforcement
25 agency or a correctional agency for the principal purpose of aiding in
26 the detection of criminal activity, the enforcement of laws, the
27 apprehension of offenders, and search and rescue operations.
- 28 b. It served or was employed by one or more law enforcement agencies
29 or correctional agencies in the manner described in sub-subdivision a.
30 of this subdivision and it received certification in obedience,
31 apprehension, or search and rescue work from a national organization
32 that certifies canines perming that type of work.



1 (4) Veterinary care. – The practice, by a veterinarian, of veterinary medicine as
2 defined in G.S. 90-181. For purposes of this Article, this term includes, at a
3 minimum, each of the following:

- 4 a. Annual wellness examinations.
5 b. Vaccinations.
6 c. Internal and external parasite prevention treatments.
7 d. Testing and treatment of illnesses and diseases.
8 e. Medications.
9 f. Emergency care and surgeries.
10 g. Veterinary oncology or other specialty care.
11 h. Euthanasia.
12 i. Cremation.

13 Veterinary care shall not include elective surgery.

14 **"§ 143-166.92. Application for reimbursement.**

15 (a) When a retired law enforcement canine receives veterinary care, the owner of the
16 canine may apply to the Department of Public Safety pursuant to the provisions of this Article
17 for the reimbursement of that care up to the amount of one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500)
18 in each calendar year.

19 (b) The veterinary care for which the owner of the retired law enforcement canine applies
20 for reimbursement under this Article must be for veterinary care occurring in the calendar year
21 during which the application for the reimbursement is submitted.

22 **"§ 143-166.93. Creation of Fund; management.**

23 There is established within the Department of Public Safety the Retired Law Enforcement
24 Canine Fund. All monies in the Fund shall not revert. Awards from the Fund shall be distributed
25 in accordance with this Article.

26 The Department of Public Safety shall have the power to make necessary rules and
27 regulations for the administration of the provisions of this Article and shall have the authority to
28 use up to one percent (1%) of monies received by the Retired Law Enforcement Canine Fund for
29 the purpose of administering the Fund. The Department of Public Safety shall be vested with the
30 power to make all determinations necessary for the administration of this Article and all of its
31 decisions and determinations shall be final and conclusive and not subject to review or reversal
32 except by the Secretary of the Department of Public Safety or the Secretary's designee.

33 **"§ 143-166.94. Record Keeping.**

34 In relation to applications received under this Article, the Department of Public Safety shall
35 keep a record of the following:

- 36 (1) All applications received.
37 (2) All application determinations.
38 (3) All funds disbursed.

39 **"§ 143-166.95. Other benefits not affected; elective participation.**

40 (a) No other benefits now provided for retired law enforcement canines shall be affected
41 by the provisions of this Article, and the benefits provided for in this Article shall not be
42 diminished, abated, or otherwise affected by the provision of benefits to retired law enforcement
43 canines under any other provision of law.

44 (b) Owners of retired law enforcement canines are not required to seek reimbursement
45 for veterinary care under this Article and the failure to seek that reimbursement in a given year
46 shall not preclude an owner from seeking future reimbursement under this Article."

47 **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Retired Law
48 Enforcement Canine Fund the sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) in recurring
49 funds for the 2024-2025 fiscal year to be used in accordance with the provisions of Article 12I
50 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, as enacted by this act.

1 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2024, and applies to retired law
2 enforcement canines retiring on or after that date.