



2025 ASSEMBLY BILL 239

May 2, 2025 - Introduced by Representatives GREEN, ANDRACA, BEHNKE, DITTRICH, GUNDRUM, MURSAU, NEDWESKI, NOVAK, O'CONNOR, PIWOWARCZYK and SUBECK, cosponsored by Senators JAMES and WANGGAARD. Referred to Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety.

1 **AN ACT** *to amend* 951.095 (title), 951.095 (1) (intro.), 951.095 (2) (b) and 951.18
2 (2m); *to create* 951.01 (4s) of the statutes; **relating to:** harassment of search
3 and rescue dogs and providing a penalty.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, no person may do any of the following to any animal that is used by a law enforcement agency or fire department to perform agency or department functions or duties: frighten, intimidate, threaten, abuse or harass the animal; strike, shove, kick or otherwise subject the animal to physical contact; or strike the animal by using a dangerous weapon. Under current law, any person who does any of those actions is subject to a Class B forfeiture, or, if the person knows the animal is a police or fire dog, is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor. Any person who intentionally does any of those actions and causes injury to the animal is guilty of a Class I felony, and any person who intentionally does any of those actions and causes death of the animal is guilty of a Class H felony. Additionally, for such a violation, a sentencing court must require a criminal violator to pay restitution, including veterinary care expenses or the value of a replacement animal.

This bill expands this prohibition to include search and rescue dogs in addition to animals that are used by a law enforcement agency or fire department to perform agency or department functions or duties. Under the bill, "search and rescue dog" means a dog that has been trained or is being trained by a state or

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nationally recognized search and rescue agency to locate lost or missing individuals and victims of disasters in search and rescue activities.

Because this bill creates a new crime or revises a penalty for an existing crime, the Joint Review Committee on Criminal Penalties may be requested to prepare a report.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 951.01 (4s) of the statutes is created to read:

951.01 (4s) "Search and rescue dog" means a dog that has been trained or is being trained by a state or nationally recognized search and rescue agency to locate lost or missing individuals and victims of disasters in search and rescue activities.

SECTION 2. 951.095 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

951.095 (title) Harassment of police and fire animals and search and rescue dogs.

SECTION 3. 951.095 (1) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

951.095 (1) (intro.) No person may do any of the following to any animal that is used by a law enforcement agency or fire department to perform agency or department functions or duties or to a search and rescue dog:

SECTION 4. 951.095 (2) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

951.095 (2) (b) Any act that is necessary for the training of an animal to perform functions or duties for a law enforcement agency, fire department, or state or nationally recognized search and rescue agency.

SECTION 5. 951.18 (2m) of the statutes is amended to read:

951.18 (2m) Any person who violates s. 951.095 is subject to a Class B forfeiture. Any person who intentionally or negligently violates s. 951.095, knowing

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1 that the animal that is the victim is used by a law enforcement agency or fire
2 department to perform agency or department functions or duties or that the animal
3 is a search and rescue dog, is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor. Any person who
4 intentionally violates s. 951.095, knowing that the animal that is the victim is used
5 by a law enforcement agency or fire department to perform agency or department
6 functions or duties or that the animal is a search and rescue dog and causing injury
7 to the animal, is guilty of a Class I felony. Any person who intentionally violates s.
8 951.095, knowing that the animal that is the victim is used by a law enforcement
9 agency or fire department to perform agency or department functions or duties or
10 that the animal is a search and rescue dog and causing death to the animal, is
11 guilty of a Class H felony.

12 **(END)**