



**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

**Public Act No. 24-18**

**AN ACT ALIGNING STATE LAW WITH FEDERAL LAW  
CONCERNING SERVICE ANIMALS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 5-247b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) As used in this section, "disability" and "service animal" have the same meanings as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

(b) Each appointing authority shall grant to each full-time employee in a permanent position in [the state service or full-time employee of] a state or quasi-public agency who (1) [is blind or physically disabled] has a disability, and (2) has been employed for at least twelve consecutive months, the use of accumulated paid sick leave, not to exceed [fifteen] twenty days, to participate in training conducted by [a guide dog organization or assistance dog organization] an organization that trains service animals, provided such organization is a member of a professional association of [guide dog or assistance dog] service animal schools, to prepare the employee to handle a [guide dog or assistance dog] service animal for the employee's own use. The appointing authority may require up to seven days' advance notice of an employee's intention to use such leave and may require the employee to provide

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

reasonable documentation that such leave is being taken for the purpose permitted under this section.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) (a) As used in this section, "disability" and "service animal" have the same meanings as provided in section 22-345 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

(b) Each chief elected official or chief executive officer of a municipality shall grant to each full-time employee in a permanent position who (1) has a disability, and (2) has been employed for at least twelve consecutive months, the use of accumulated paid sick leave, not to exceed twenty days, to participate in training conducted by an organization that trains service animals, provided such organization is a member of a professional association of service animal schools, to prepare the employee to handle a service animal for the employee's own use. The chief elected official or chief executive officer may require up to seven days' advance notice of an employee's intention to use such leave and may require the employee to provide reasonable documentation that such leave is being taken for the purpose permitted under this section.

Sec. 3. Subsection (f) of section 13b-119 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(f) A transportation network company driver shall: (1) Comply with all applicable laws regarding nondiscrimination against transportation network company riders or potential transportation network company riders on the basis of age, color, creed, destination, intellectual or physical disability, national origin, race, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity; (2) comply with all applicable laws relating to the accommodation of service animals and accommodate service animals without imposing additional charges for such accommodation; (3) comply with the policies adopted by the transportation network

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

company pursuant to subsection (c) of section 13b-118 and subsections (d) and (e) of this section; (4) not impose additional charges for providing prearranged rides to persons with physical disabilities because of such disabilities; and (5) not solicit or accept a request for transportation unless the request is accepted through the transportation network company's digital network. For the purposes of this subsection, "service animal" has the same meaning as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

Sec. 4. Subsection (d) of section 14-300 of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(d) The operator of a motor vehicle who approaches or comes into the immediate vicinity of a pedestrian who is blind, as defined in subsection (a) of section 1-1f, carrying a white cane or a white cane tipped with red, or a pedestrian being guided by a [guide dog] service animal, shall reduce speed or stop, if necessary, to yield the right-of-way to such pedestrian. No person, except one who is blind, shall carry or use on any street or highway, or in any other public place, a cane or walking stick which is white in color or white, tipped with red. For the purposes of this subsection, "service animal" has the same meaning as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

Sec. 5. Section 14-300i of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) As used in [subsection (b) of] this section, (1) "vulnerable user" means: (A) A pedestrian; (B) a highway worker; (C) a person riding or driving an animal; (D) a person riding a bicycle, an electric bicycle or an electric foot scooter; (E) a person using a skateboard, roller skates or in-line skates; (F) a person operating or riding on an agricultural tractor; (G) a person using a wheelchair or motorized chair; (H) a person who is blind and such person's service animal; and (I) a person operating (i) a

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

commercial motor vehicle equipped with a garbage compactor, a detachable container or a curbside recycling body, (ii) a tank vehicle, (iii) a vehicle authorized by the United States government to carry mail, or (iv) a vehicle authorized by an express delivery carrier service, (2) "public way" includes any state or other public highway, road, street, avenue, alley, driveway, parkway or place, under the control of the state or any political subdivision of the state, dedicated, appropriated or opened to public travel or other use, (3) "substantial bodily harm" means bodily injury that involves a temporary but substantial disfigurement, causes a temporary but substantial loss or impairment of the function of any bodily part or organ, or causes a fracture of any bodily part, [and] (4) "serious physical injury" has the same meaning as provided in section 53a-3, and (5) "service animal" has the same meaning as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

(b) Any person operating a motor vehicle on a public way who fails to exercise reasonable care and causes substantial bodily harm to, or the serious physical injury or death, of a vulnerable user of a public way, provided such vulnerable user has shown reasonable care in such user's use of the public way, shall be fined not more than one thousand dollars.

Sec. 6. Section 22-345 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

Any person with a disability who is the owner or keeper of a dog [which] that has been trained as a service animal, is in training to become a service animal for such person, is in training to become a service animal or is enrolled in a program described in section 17a-22ee shall receive a license and tag for such dog from the town clerk of the town where such dog is owned or kept. Such license and tag shall be issued in accordance with the provisions of section 22-340, and no fee shall be required of the owner or keeper of any such dog. When any such dog has not been previously licensed [,] by the town clerk to whom application is being made, and it is not obvious that the dog is a service

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

animal, such town clerk may inquire of such owner or keeper whether the dog is a service animal required because of a disability and what work or task the dog has been trained to perform. Any person who has a dog placed with such person temporarily, including for breeding purposes, by a nonprofit organization established for the purpose of training or educating the dog as a service animal shall receive a license and tag for such dog from the town clerk of the town where such dog is kept. Such license and tag shall be issued in accordance with the provisions of section 22-340, and no fee shall be required for such license and tag, provided such person presents confirmation that such dog was placed with such person by such organization. As used in this section, (1) "disability" means any one or more of the following, as defined in section 46a-51: (A) An intellectual disability, (B) physically disabled, (C) a mental disability, or (D) a learning disability; and (2) "service animal" has the same meaning as provided in 28 CFR 35.104, as amended from time to time, and includes a service animal in training.

Sec. 7. Subsection (c) of section 22-354a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(c) The provisions of this section shall not be construed to apply to any lease or rental of any of the following animals provided such animal is used in accordance with any applicable provision of federal or state law or any municipal ordinance: (1) Any purebred dog that is rented for the purpose of breeding, pursuant to a written lease, when such lease is recorded with a national purebred dog registry and such lease is for a specific period of time and contains an end date for such lease, (2) any animal used in a spectator event, show, exhibition, motion picture, audiovisual media, including, but not limited to, any animal exhibition, any racing event, any field trial, polo or any rodeo, or (3) any working animal that is trained or utilized to perform tasks, including, but not limited to, [guide dogs] service animals, security dogs, law enforcement

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

dogs and any assistance animal. For the purposes of this subsection, "service animal" has the same meaning as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

Sec. 8. Subsection (a) of section 22-357 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Law enforcement officer" means: Each officer, employee or other person otherwise paid by or acting as an agent of (A) the Division of State Police within the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection; (B) the Office of the State Capitol Police; (C) a municipal police department; and (D) the Department of Correction;

(2) "Property" includes, but is not limited to, a companion animal, as defined in section 22-351a; [and]

(3) "The amount of such damage", with respect to a companion animal, includes expenses of veterinary care, the fair monetary value of the companion animal, including all training expenses for a [guide dog] service animal owned by a [blind person or an assistance dog owned by a deaf or mobility impaired] person with a disability and burial expenses for the companion animal;

(4) "Service animal" has the same meaning as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act; and

(5) "Disability" has the same meaning as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

Sec. 9. Subsection (c) of section 22-358 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

(c) The commissioner, the Chief Animal Control Officer, any animal control officer, any municipal animal control officer or any regional animal control officer may make any order concerning the restraint or disposal of any biting dog, cat or other animal as the commissioner or such officer deems necessary. Notice of any such order shall be given to the person bitten by such dog, cat or other animal within twenty-four hours. The owner of such animal shall pay all fees as set forth in section 22-333. Any owner or keeper of such dog, cat or other animal who fails to comply with such order shall be guilty of a class D misdemeanor. If an owner or keeper fails to comply with a restraining order made pursuant to this subsection, the Chief Animal Control Officer, any animal control officer, any municipal animal control officer or any regional animal control officer may seize the dog, cat or other animal to ensure such compliance and the owner or keeper shall be responsible for any expenses resulting from such seizure. Any person aggrieved by an order of any municipal animal control officer, the Chief Animal Control Officer, any animal control officer or any regional animal control officer may request a hearing before the commissioner within fourteen days of the issuance of such order. Any order issued pursuant to this section that requires the restraint of an animal shall be effective upon its issuance and shall remain in effect during any appeal of such order to the commissioner. After such hearing, the commissioner may affirm, modify or revoke such order as the commissioner deems proper. Any dog owned by a police agency of the state or any of its political subdivisions is exempt from the provisions of this subsection when such dog is under the direct supervision, care and control of an assigned police officer, is currently vaccinated and is subject to routine veterinary care. Any [guide dog] service animal owned or in the custody and control of a [blind person or a person with a mobility impairment] person with a disability is exempt from the provisions of this subsection when such [guide dog] service animal is under the direct supervision, care and control of such person, is currently vaccinated and is subject to routine veterinary care. For the purposes of this subsection, "service

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

animal" and "disability" have the same meanings as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

Sec. 10. Section 22-364b of the 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

The owner or keeper of a dog shall restrain and control such dog on a leash when such dog is not on the property of its owner or keeper and is in proximity to a person with a disability accompanied by a service animal, provided such service animal is readily identifiable as a service animal, is in the direct custody of such person and is licensed in accordance with section 22-345, as amended by this act. Any person who violates the provisions of this section shall have committed an infraction. If an owner or keeper of a dog violates the provisions of this section and, as a result of such violation, such dog attacks and injures the service animal, such owner or keeper shall be liable, as provided in section 22-357, as amended by this act, for any damage done to such service animal, and such liability shall include liability for any costs incurred by such person with a disability for the veterinary care, rehabilitation or replacement of the injured service animal and for reasonable attorney's fees. As used in this section, "disability" and "service animal" have the same meanings as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

Sec. 11. Section 46a-44 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) As used in this section, (1) "disability" and "service animal" have the same meanings as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act; and (2) "person training an animal as a service animal" means a person who (A) (i) is employed by an organization that trains service animals, (ii) complies with the criteria for membership in a professional association of schools that train service animals, (iii) is authorized to



**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

engage in designated training activities, and (iv) carries photographic identification indicating such employment and authorization, or (B) volunteers for an organization that (i) trains service animals, and (ii) authorizes volunteers to raise animals to become service animals.

[(a)] (b) Any [blind, deaf or mobility impaired] person with a disability or any person training [a dog as a guide dog for a blind person or an assistance dog to assist a deaf or mobility impaired person] an animal as a service animal to assist a person with a disability may travel on a train or on any other mode of public transportation, and may enter any other place of public accommodation [which] that caters or offers its services or facilities or goods to the general public, including but not limited to, any public building, inn, restaurant, hotel, motel, tourist cabin, place of amusement, resort or any facility of any such public accommodation, accompanied by such person's [guide dog or assistance dog] service animal, and such person may keep such [dog] service animal with him or her at all times in any such public accommodation or facility thereof at no extra charge, provided such [dog] service animal shall be in the direct custody and control of such person. [and shall be wearing a harness or an orange-colored leash and collar.]

[(b)] (c) Any [blind, deaf or mobility impaired] person with a disability or any person training [a dog as a guide dog for a blind person or an assistance dog to assist a deaf or mobility impaired person] an animal as a service animal for a person with a disability shall be entitled to visit any place of public accommodation, resort or amusement or a dwelling as a guest of a lawful occupant thereof, accompanied by such person's [guide dog or assistance dog] service animal, and such person may keep such [dog] service animal with him or her at all times in such public accommodation, resort, amusement or dwelling at no extra charge, provided such [dog] service animal shall be in the direct custody and control of such person. [and shall be wearing a harness or an orange-colored leash and collar.] No such [blind, deaf or mobility

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

impaired] person with a disability or person training [a dog as a guide dog or an assistance dog] an animal as a service animal shall be charged any fee not applicable alike to all guests, provided the owner of such [dog] service animal shall be liable for any damage done to the premises or facilities by such [dog] service animal. For the purposes of this subsection, (1) a "place of public accommodation, resort or amusement" means any establishment which caters or offers its services or facilities or goods to the general public, including, but not limited to, any commercial building lot, on which it is intended that a commercial property or building will be constructed or offered for sale or rent, and (2) "dwelling" means any building, structure, mobile manufactured home park or portion thereof which is occupied as, or designed or intended for occupancy as, a residence by one or more families, and any vacant land which is offered for sale or lease for the construction or location thereon of any such building, structure, mobile manufactured home park or portion thereof, provided the provisions of this subsection shall not apply to (A) the rental of a room or rooms in a single-family dwelling unit, if the owner actually maintains and occupies part of such living quarters as the owner's residence, or (B) a unit in a dwelling containing living quarters occupied or intended to be occupied by no more than two families living independently of each other, if the owner actually maintains and occupies the other such living quarters as the owner's residence.

[(c)] (d) Any person who intentionally interferes with [a blind, deaf or mobility impaired person's use of a guide dog or an assistance dog] the use of a service animal by a person with a disability, including, but not limited to, any action intended to harass or annoy the [blind, deaf or mobility impaired] person [,] with a disability or the person training [a dog as a guide dog or assistance dog or the guide dog or assistance dog] an animal as a service animal, or who denies the rights afforded to a [blind, deaf or mobility impaired] person with a disability or person training [a dog as a guide dog or an assistance dog] an animal as a

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

service animal under subsection [(a) or] (b) or (c) of this section shall be guilty of a class C misdemeanor, provided such [blind, deaf or mobility impaired] person with a disability or person training [a dog as a guide dog or an assistance dog] an animal as a service animal complies with the applicable provisions of subsection [(a) or] (b) or (c) of this section.

[(d) For the purposes of this section, "guide dog" or "assistance dog" includes a dog being trained as a guide dog or assistance dog and "person training a dog as a guide dog for a blind person or an assistance dog to assist a deaf or mobility impaired person" means a person who is employed by and authorized to engage in designated training activities by a guide dog organization or assistance dog organization that complies with the criteria for membership in a professional association of guide dog or assistance dog schools and who carries photographic identification indicating such employment and authorization, or a person who volunteers for a guide dog organization or assistance dog organization that authorizes such volunteers to raise dogs to become guide dogs or assistance dogs and causes the identification of such dog with (1) identification tags, (2) ear tattoos, (3) identifying bandanas on puppies, (4) identifying coats on adult dogs, or (5) leashes and collars.]

Sec. 12. Subsection (a) of section 46a-64 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

(a) It shall be a discriminatory practice in violation of this section: (1) To deny any person within the jurisdiction of this state full and equal accommodations in any place of public accommodation, resort or amusement because of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, age, lawful source of income, intellectual disability, mental disability, physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness or deafness, status as a veteran or status as a victim of domestic violence, of the applicant, subject only

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

to the conditions and limitations established by law and applicable alike to all persons; (2) to discriminate, segregate or separate on account of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, age, lawful source of income, intellectual disability, mental disability, learning disability, physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness or deafness, status as a veteran or status as a victim of domestic violence; (3) for a place of public accommodation, resort or amusement to restrict or limit the right of a mother to breast-feed her child; (4) for a place of public accommodation, resort or amusement to [fail or refuse to post a notice, in a conspicuous place, that any blind, deaf or mobility impaired person, accompanied by his guide dog wearing a harness or an orange-colored leash and collar, may enter such premises or facilities] refuse entry to a person with a disability who is accompanied by a service animal; or (5) to deny any [blind, deaf or mobility impaired] person with a disability or any person training [a dog as a guide dog for a blind person or a dog to assist a deaf or mobility impaired person] an animal as a service animal to assist a person with a disability, accompanied by [his guide dog or assistance dog] such service animal, full and equal access to any place of public accommodation, resort or amusement. Any [blind, deaf or mobility impaired] person with a disability or any person training [a dog as a guide dog for a blind person or a dog to assist a deaf or mobility impaired person] an animal as a service animal may keep [his guide dog or assistance dog with him] such service animal at all times in such place of public accommodation, resort or amusement at no extra charge, provided [the dog wears a harness or an orange-colored leash and collar and] such service animal is in the direct custody and control of such person. [The blind, deaf or mobility impaired person or person training a dog as a guide dog for a blind person or a dog to assist a deaf or mobility impaired person shall be liable for any damage done to the premises or facilities by his dog. For purposes of this subdivision, "guide dog" or "assistance dog" includes a dog being trained as a guide dog or assistance dog and "person training a dog as a guide dog for a blind

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

person or a dog to assist a deaf or mobility impaired person" means a person who is employed by and authorized to engage in designated training activities by a guide dog organization or assistance dog organization that complies with the criteria for membership in a professional association of guide dog or assistance dog schools and who carries photographic identification indicating such employment and authorization.] When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, staff of a place of public accommodation, resort or amusement may inquire of the owner or keeper whether such animal is a service animal required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude a business owner's ability to recover for damage caused to a person or property by a service animal. For the purposes of this subsection, "disability" and "service animal" have the same meanings as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act, and "place of public accommodation, resort or amusement" has the same meaning as provided in section 46a-44, as amended by this act.

Sec. 13. Section 52-175a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

The failure of a blind person to use a [guide dog] service animal or to carry a cane or walking stick which is predominantly white or metallic in color, with or without red tip, shall not be construed as evidence of comparative or contributory negligence in any negligence action. As used in this section, "service animal" has the same meaning as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

Sec. 14. Section 54-201 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

As used in sections 54-201 to 54-235, inclusive, as amended by this act:

**Substitute House Bill No. 5288**

(1) "Victim" means a person who is injured or killed as provided in section 54-209;

(2) "Personal injury" means (A) actual bodily harm or emotional harm and includes pregnancy and any condition thereof, or (B) injury or death to a service animal, as defined in 28 CFR 35.104, as amended from time to time, owned or kept by a person with a disability;

(3) "Dependent" means any relative of a deceased victim or a person designated by a deceased victim in accordance with section 1-56r who was wholly or partially dependent upon his income at the time of his death or the child of a deceased victim and shall include the child of such victim born after his death;

(4) "Relative" means a person's spouse, parent, grandparent, stepparent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, child, including a natural born child, stepchild and adopted child, grandchild, brother, sister, half brother or half sister or a parent of a person's spouse;

(5) "Crime" means any act which is a felony, as defined in section 53a-25, or misdemeanor, as defined in section 53a-26, and includes any crime committed by a juvenile; [and]

(6) "Emotional harm" means a mental or emotional impairment that requires treatment through services and that is directly attributable to a threat of (A) physical injury, as defined in subdivision (3) of section 53a-3, or (B) death to the affected person; and

(7) "Disability" has the same meaning as provided in section 22-345, as amended by this act.

Sec. 15. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities shall, within available appropriations, make available on its Internet web site links to educational materials on (1) the differences between service animals, emotional support animals and

***Substitute House Bill No. 5288***

therapy animals, (2) the rights and responsibilities of an owner of each such animal under state and federal law, and (3) permissible methods under state and federal law for an owner of a place of public accommodation, resort or amusement, as defined in section 46a-63 of the general statutes, or a landlord, to determine whether an animal is a service animal, an emotional support animal or a therapy animal. As used in this section, "service animal" has the same meaning as provided in section 22-345 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

Sec. 16. Section 46a-42 of the general statutes is repealed. (*Effective July 1, 2024*)