

Chapter 185

(Senate Bill 38)

AN ACT concerning

**Public Safety – Fire and Rescue – Veterinary Care of Retired Fire and Rescue
K-9s**

FOR the purpose of requiring certain State or local fire and rescue entities to reimburse individuals who take possession of dogs formerly used in fire and rescue work under a written agreement for reasonable and necessary veterinary treatment; authorizing State fire and rescue entities to accept certain donations and requiring that the donations be disbursed to a certain fund; authorizing local fire and rescue entities to establish a separate fund to accept public donations for the payment of certain veterinary expenses; and generally relating to dogs formerly used for fire and rescue work.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
 Article – Public Safety
 Section 3-526(a)
 Annotated Code of Maryland
 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Public Safety

3-526.

(a) (1) This section applies only to publicly owned dogs that are:

(I) licensed under § 2-313 of this article; **OR**

**(II) USED BY A STATE OR LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE ENTITY IN
 FIRE AND RESCUE WORK.**

(2) A State or local law enforcement agency **OR STATE OR LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE ENTITY** that removes from duty a dog used in law enforcement **OR FIRE AND RESCUE** work shall reimburse an individual who, under a written agreement with the law enforcement agency **OR STATE OR LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE ENTITY**, takes possession of ~~the~~ **A LAW ENFORCEMENT** dog on or after October 1, 2020, **OR A FIRE AND RESCUE DOG ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 1, 2022**, for reasonable and necessary veterinary treatment provided to the dog.

(3) Reimbursement under paragraph (2) of this subsection:

(i) may be only for usual and customary veterinary treatment that is not attributable to abuse or neglect of the dog and is verified by written receipt; and

(ii) may not exceed \$2,500 during a calendar year and \$10,000 over the life of the dog.

(4) (i) 1. A State law enforcement agency **OR FIRE AND RESCUE ENTITY** may accept public donations to meet the requirements of this section.

2. The revenue from donations by the public shall be distributed to the K–9 Compassionate Care Fund, which is not subject to appropriation by the Governor, to be used only to meet the requirements of this section.

(ii) A local law enforcement agency **OR FIRE AND RESCUE ENTITY** may establish a separate fund to accept and manage public donations in order to meet the requirements of this section.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2022.

Approved by the Governor, April 21, 2022.