

By: Collier, Geren, Giddings, Burns, Hughes

H.B. No. 593

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to canine encounter training for peace officers.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 1701.253, Occupations Code, is amended by adding Subsection (1) to read as follows:

(1) As part of the minimum curriculum requirements, the commission shall require an officer licensed by the commission on or after January 1, 2016, to complete a canine encounter training program established by the commission under Section 1701.261. An officer shall complete the program not later than the second anniversary of the date the officer is licensed under this chapter unless the officer completes the program as part of the officer's basic training course.

SECTION 2. Subchapter F, Chapter 1701, Occupations Code, is amended by adding Section 1701.261 to read as follows:

Sec. 1701.261. CANINE ENCOUNTER TRAINING PROGRAM. (a) The commission shall establish a statewide comprehensive education and training program on canine encounters and canine behavior. The training program must consist of at least four hours of classroom instruction and practical training, developed and approved by the commission, that addresses:

(1) handling canine-related calls, anticipating unplanned encounters with canines, and using humane methods and tools in handling canine encounters;

- 1           (2) recognizing and understanding canine behavior;
- 2           (3) state laws related to canines;
- 3           (4) canine conflict avoidance and de-escalation;
- 4           (5) use of force continuum principles in relation to  
5 canines;
- 6           (6) using nonlethal methods, tools, and resources to  
7 avoid and defend against a canine attack; and
- 8           (7) a general overview of encounters with other  
9 animals.

10           (b) At least once every four years, the commission shall  
11 review the content of the training program under this section and  
12 update the program as necessary.

13           (c) Notwithstanding Sections 1701.253(1) and 1701.402(1),  
14 an officer who has completed at least four hours of a canine  
15 encounter training program is not required to complete the program  
16 under this section.

17           SECTION 3. Section 1701.402, Occupations Code, is amended  
18 by adding Subsection (1) to read as follows:

19           (1) As a requirement for an intermediate or advanced  
20 proficiency certificate issued by the commission on or after  
21 January 1, 2016, an officer must complete the canine encounter  
22 training program established by the commission under Section  
23 1701.261.

24           SECTION 4. Not later than January 1, 2016, the Texas  
25 Commission on Law Enforcement shall establish the canine encounter  
26 training program as required by Section 1701.261, Occupations Code,  
27 as added by this Act.

1           SECTION 5. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act,  
2 an officer employed by a county with a population of less than  
3 125,000 is not required to comply with Sections [1701.253\(1\)](#) and  
4 [1701.402\(1\)](#), Occupations Code, as added by this Act, before January  
5 1, 2017.

6           SECTION 6. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.