

By: Whitmire

S.B. No. 1637

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 that the commission develops and approves in:

(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; and
6 (6) using nonlethal methods, tools, and resources to
7 avoid and defend against a canine attack.

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

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

15 SECTION 3. Section [1701.402](#), Occupations Code, is amended
16 by adding Subsection (1) to read as follows:

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

22 SECTION 4. Not later than January 1, 2016, the Texas
23 Commission on Law Enforcement shall establish the canine encounter
24 training program as required by Section [1701.261](#), Occupations Code,
25 as added by this Act.

26 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.