

AN ACT concerning criminal law.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Unified Code of Corrections is amended by changing Section 3-12-16 as follows:

(730 ILCS 5/3-12-16)

Sec. 3-12-16. Helping Paws Service Dog Program.

(a) In this Section:

"Person with a disability" means a person who suffers from a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

"Program" means the Helping Paws Service Dog Program created by this Section.

"Service dog" means a dog trained in obedience and task skills to meet the needs of a person with a disability.

"Animal care professional" means a person certified to work in animal care related services, such as grooming, kenneling, and any other related fields.

"Service dog professional" means a person certified to train service dogs by an agency, organization, or school approved by the Department.

"Veteran" means an Illinois resident who is a veteran as defined in subsection (h) of Section 1491 of Title 10 of the

United States Code.

(b) The Department may establish the Helping Paws Service Dog Program to train committed persons to be service dog trainers and animal care professionals. The Department shall select committed persons in various correctional institutions and facilities to participate in the Program.

(c) Priority for participation in the Program must be given to committed persons who either have a high school diploma or have passed high school equivalency testing.

(d) The Department may contract with service dog professionals to train committed persons to be certified service dog trainers. Service dog professionals shall train committed persons in dog obedience training, service dog training, and animal health care. Upon successful completion of the training, a committed person shall receive certification by an agency, organization, or school approved by the Department.

(e) The Department may designate a non-profit organization to select animals from humane societies and shelters for the purpose of being trained as service dogs and for participation in any program designed to train animal care professionals.

(f) After a dog is trained by the committed person as a service dog, a review committee consisting of an equal number of persons from the Department and the non-profit organization shall select a person with a disability or a veteran with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or depression to receive the service dog free of charge.

(g) Employees of the Department shall periodically visit persons with disabilities who have received service dogs from the Department under this Section to determine whether the needs of the persons with disabilities or veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or depression have been met by the service dogs trained by committed persons.

(h) Employees of the Department shall periodically visit committed persons who have been certified as service dog trainers or animal care professionals and who have been paroled or placed on mandatory supervised release to determine whether the committed persons are using their skills as certified service dog trainers or animal care professionals.

(Source: P.A. 98-718, eff. 1-1-15; 99-143, eff. 7-27-15.)