

SENATE No. 118

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Nick Collins

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to the licensure of dog trainers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Nick Collins

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

First Suffolk

SENATE No. 118

By Mr. Collins, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 118) of Nick Collins for legislation relative to the licensure of dog trainers. Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act relative to the licensure of dog trainers.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 140 of the Massachusetts General laws is hereby amended by
2 adding the following section 137E:

3 SECTION 2. The following words in this section shall have the following meanings:

4 “Board” means the Dog Trainer Board of Examiners established under section 2 of
5 this act.

6 “Director” means the Director of the Division of Professional Licensure

7 “Dog training” means the handling or training of dogs for a fee, salary, or other form
8 of compensation.

9 “Dog trainer” means a person engaged in the practice of dog training or behavior
10 modification who is licensed pursuant to the provisions of this act.

11 SECTION 3. There is hereby created within the Division of Professional Licensure the
12 Dog Trainer Board of Examiners. The board shall consist of nine members who are residents of
13 this State and who shall be appointed by the Governor, as follows: one member shall be from the
14 Department of Agriculture; three members shall be, except for the members first appointed, dog
15 trainers licensed pursuant to the provisions of this act; two members shall be veterinarians
16 licensed in this State; and three members shall be affiliated with an animal protection group. The
17 Governor shall appoint each member, other than the State executive department member, for
18 terms of four years, except that of the members first appointed, two shall serve for a term of four
19 years, two shall serve for a term of three years, two shall serve for a term of two years, and two
20 shall serve for terms of one year. Any vacancy in the membership of the board shall be filled for
21 the unexpired term in the manner provided for the original appointment. No member of the
22 board may serve more than two successive terms in addition to any unexpired term to which the
23 member has been appointed.

24 SECTION 4. The board shall organize within 30 days after the appointment of its
25 members and shall annually elect from among its members a chairperson and vice-chairperson,
26 and shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the board. The board shall meet
27 twice a year and may hold additional meetings as necessary to discharge its duties. A majority of
28 the board membership shall constitute a quorum.

29 SECTION 5. The board shall:

30 a. adopt a seal to authenticate its records and proceedings;

31 b. prescribe rules pertaining to types and methods of examination of applicants for
32 licensure;

33 c. examine and pass on the qualifications of applicants for licensure under this act,
34 and issue a license to each qualified and successful applicant, attesting to the applicant's
35 professional qualification to practice as a dog trainer;

36 d. keep records of its proceedings and a register of all persons to whom licenses
37 have been issued, and a record of all license renewals, suspensions and revocations;

38 e. maintain records of expenses incurred by members of the board in the
39 performance of their duties;

40 f. take disciplinary action, against any dog trainer who violates the provisions of
41 this act or any regulation promulgated hereunder;

42 g. adopt rules and regulations as it deems necessary to administer the provisions of
43 this act; and

44 h. Prescribe or change the charges for examination, licensure, renewal and other
45 services performed.

46 SECTION 6. There shall be an Executive Director of the board appointed by the
47 director who shall serve at the director's pleasure. The salary of the Executive Director shall be
48 determined by the director within the limit of available funds. The director may, within the
49 limits of available funds, hire any assistants as are necessary to administer this act.

50 SECTION 7. No person shall practice, attempt to practice, or hold himself out as being
51 able to practice dog training unless that person is licensed in accordance with the provisions of
52 this act.

53 SECTION 8. To be eligible to be licensed as a dog trainer, an applicant shall fulfill the
54 following requirements:

55 a. be at least 18 years of age;

56 b. be of good moral character;

57 c. have successfully completed high school or successfully passed a high school
58 equivalency examination developed by the General Education Development (GED) Testing
59 Service;

60 d. have successfully completed a minimum of 300 hours in dog training, under the
61 supervision of, and documented by, a dog trainer licensed pursuant to this act, within the three
62 years immediately preceding application for licensure under this act pursuant to the following:

63 (1) of the 300 hours required, no less than 225 hours shall include training in
64 conducting group dog training classes, conducting private dog training classes, and consulting
65 with clients;

66 (2) of the 300 hours required, up to 75 hours may include work as a licensed dog
67 trainer's assistant, work as a veterinary technician or assistant, work as a dog groomer,
68 volunteering at an animal shelter, designing dog training lesson plans, or consulting with a
69 licensed dog trainer on client cases;

70 (3) hours of experience gained as a licensed dog trainer's assistant may count toward
71 the hours required under paragraph (1) of this subsection provided that the applicant's role as an
72 assistant includes actively instructing a client or training a dog;

73 (4) if any of the hours of experience gained under paragraph (2) of this subsection are
74 not under the supervision of a licensed dog trainer, the applicant shall provide documentation
75 from any other person that supervised the applicant, including, but not limited to, a veterinarian,
76 an owner or supervisory employee of a dog grooming business, or a supervisory employee of an
77 animal shelter; and

78 (5) the 300 hours of experience required under this subsection shall not apply to any
79 applicant who submits proof satisfactory to the board no later than 180 days after the date
80 procedures are established by the board for applying for licensure under this act that the
81 applicant has engaged in the practice of dog training in this State continuously for at least one
82 year prior to the effective date of this act; and

83 e. pass an examination administered or approved by the board to determine the
84 applicant's competence to practice dog training; except that this requirement shall not apply to
85 any applicant who submits proof satisfactory to the board no later than 180 days after the date
86 procedures are established by the board for applying for licensure under this act that the
87 applicant has passed any Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT)
88 certification examination, or any other examination that is determined by the board to be a
89 substantially similar assessment of dog training skills and competency, prior to the effective date
90 of this act.

91 SECTION 9. Each applicant for a license as a dog trainer shall be examined by the
92 board. The examination shall be held at least twice a year at the times and places to be
93 determined by the board. The board, in consultation with the Certification Council for
94 Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT), shall adopt as the examination required under this section

95 any examination as developed and administered by CCPDT, or any other examination that is
96 determined by the board to be a substantially similar assessment of dog training skills and
97 competency.

98 SECTION 10. a. All licenses shall be issued for a three-year period and shall be
99 renewed upon filing a renewal application.

100 b. All applicants shall pay a fee for licensure and renewal for licensure under this
101 act. Fees shall be determined by the board and established by regulation. The revenue generated
102 from these fees shall not exceed the operating costs incurred by the board in administering this
103 act.

104 c. A license shall not be renewed until the license holder submits satisfactory
105 evidence to the board that during the preceding three years the license holder has completed such
106 continuing education credits as are to be determined by the board pursuant to regulation. The
107 board shall approve, in consultation with the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers
108 (CCPDT), continuing education credits that build upon the basic knowledge of dog training and
109 which enhance the competency of the license holder. The board may make exceptions from the
110 continuing education requirement in emergency or hardship cases with the approval of an
111 affirmative vote of a majority of the board.

112 SECTION 11. This act shall take effect on January 1, 2021.