



State of Wisconsin  
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-2887/1

MJW:cdc

## 2025 SENATE BILL 238

May 9, 2025 - Introduced by Senators JAMES and WANGGAARD, cosponsored by Representatives GREEN, ANDRACA, BEHNKE, DITTRICH, GUNDRUM, MURSAU, NEDWESKI, NOVAK, O'CONNOR, PIWOWARCZYK and SUBECK. Referred to Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety.

1     **AN ACT** *to amend* 951.095 (title), 951.095 (1) (intro.), 951.095 (2) (b) and 951.18  
2           (2m); *to create* 951.01 (4s) of the statutes; **relating to:** harassment of search  
3           and rescue dogs and providing a penalty.

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### ***Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau***

Under current law, no person may do any of the following to any animal that is used by a law enforcement agency or fire department to perform agency or department functions or duties: frighten, intimidate, threaten, abuse or harass the animal; strike, shove, kick or otherwise subject the animal to physical contact; or strike the animal by using a dangerous weapon. Under current law, any person who does any of those actions is subject to a Class B forfeiture, or, if the person knows the animal is a police or fire dog, is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor. Any person who intentionally does any of those actions and causes injury to the animal is guilty of a Class I felony, and any person who intentionally does any of those actions and causes death of the animal is guilty of a Class H felony. Additionally, for such a violation, a sentencing court must require a criminal violator to pay restitution, including veterinary care expenses or the value of a replacement animal.

This bill expands this prohibition to include search and rescue dogs in addition to animals that are used by a law enforcement agency or fire department to perform agency or department functions or duties. Under the bill, "search and rescue dog" means a dog that has been trained or is being trained by a state or

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nationally recognized search and rescue agency to locate lost or missing individuals and victims of disasters in search and rescue activities.

Because this bill creates a new crime or revises a penalty for an existing crime, the Joint Review Committee on Criminal Penalties may be requested to prepare a report.

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***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

1       **SECTION 1.** 951.01 (4s) of the statutes is created to read:

2       951.01 (4s) “Search and rescue dog” means a dog that has been trained or is  
3       being trained by a state or nationally recognized search and rescue agency to locate  
4       lost or missing individuals and victims of disasters in search and rescue activities.

5       **SECTION 2.** 951.095 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

6       **951.095 (title) Harassment of police and fire animals and search and**  
7       **rescue dogs.**

8       **SECTION 3.** 951.095 (1) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

9       951.095 (1) (intro.) No person may do any of the following to any animal that  
10       is used by a law enforcement agency or fire department to perform agency or  
11       department functions or duties or to a search and rescue dog:

12       **SECTION 4.** 951.095 (2) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

13       951.095 (2) (b) Any act that is necessary for the training of an animal to  
14       perform functions or duties for a law enforcement agency, fire department, or state  
15       or nationally recognized search and rescue agency.

16       **SECTION 5.** 951.18 (2m) of the statutes is amended to read:

17       951.18 (2m) Any person who violates s. 951.095 is subject to a Class B  
18       forfeiture. Any person who intentionally or negligently violates s. 951.095, knowing

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1     that the animal that is the victim is used by a law enforcement agency or fire  
2     department to perform agency or department functions or duties or that the animal  
3     is a search and rescue dog, is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor. Any person who  
4     intentionally violates s. 951.095, knowing that the animal that is the victim is used  
5     by a law enforcement agency or fire department to perform agency or department  
6     functions or duties or that the animal is a search and rescue dog and causing injury  
7     to the animal, is guilty of a Class I felony. Any person who intentionally violates s.  
8     951.095, knowing that the animal that is the victim is used by a law enforcement  
9     agency or fire department to perform agency or department functions or duties or  
10    that the animal is a search and rescue dog and causing death to the animal, is  
11    guilty of a Class H felony.

12                                   **(END)**