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## ATTORNEY GENERAL

- Specifies that an active duty member of the U.S. armed forces who is at least 18:
  - Does not need a concealed handgun license to carry a handgun concealed if the member is carrying valid military identification and a certificate indicating successful small arms qualification; and
  - May be sold or furnished a handgun if the member has received military or equivalent small arms training.
- Repeals the journalist access exception to the general prohibition against the release of confidential records a sheriff keeps relative to the issuance, renewal, suspension, or revocation of a concealed handgun license.
- Requires the Attorney General to adopt rules governing the training of peace officers on companion animal encounters and behavior and specifies what the rules must include.
- Requires the peace officer basic training program and the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy to include training on companion animal encounters and behavior.
- With respect to entities that receive state economic development awards, requires the Attorney General to determine compliance with the terms of the award, including the performance metrics, at the end of the year by which the entity is required to meet one of those metrics, rather than annually, as required under current law.
- Requires the Attorney General to enter into an agreement with the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to participate in the federal Treasury Offset Program for the collection of outstanding state income tax and unemployment debts.

### **Handguns – active duty armed forces member with small arms training**

(R.C. 1547.69, 2923.12, 2923.121, 2923.122, 2923.123, 2923.126, 2923.16, and 2923.21)

#### **Concealed handguns**

The bill makes the following changes in the law related to concealed handguns, regarding a person who is an active duty member of the U.S. armed forces, is 18 or



older, and is carrying a valid military identification card and a certificate issued by the person's applicable service branch indicating that the person has successfully completed small arms qualification (hereafter, a "qualifying active member of the military"):

(1) It specifies that a qualifying active member of the military has the same right to carry a concealed handgun in Ohio as a person who was issued a standard concealed handgun license and is subject to the same restrictions as apply under the Concealed Handgun Law to a person who was issued such a license. Under continuing law, a concealed handgun licensee generally may carry a concealed handgun anywhere in Ohio if the licensee also carries a valid license and valid identification when in possession of the concealed handgun. But a license does not authorize a licensee to carry a concealed handgun in any manner prohibited under the offenses of "carrying concealed weapons" or "improperly handling firearms in a motor vehicle," or into any of a list of specified prohibited places, including, for example, specified law enforcement premises; a school safety zone, courthouse, institution of higher education, a place of worship, specified day-care premises, or an aircraft or government facility.

(2) It expands exemptions in certain criminal offenses that currently apply to a concealed handgun licensee so that the exemptions also apply to a qualifying active member of the military. The exemptions currently specify that a person who is carrying a handgun, is carrying a valid concealed handgun license, is not in a prohibited place (see above), and in most cases satisfies one or more other specified criteria of an offense is not subject to the offense. The offenses that provide such an exemption are: knowingly transporting or having a loaded firearm in a vessel; "carrying concealed weapons" involving a handgun other than a dangerous ordnance; "illegal possession of a firearm in liquor permit premises"; "illegal conveyance or possession of a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance in a school safety zone"; "illegal conveyance of a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance into a courthouse"; "illegal possession or control of a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance in a courthouse"; and "improperly handling firearms in a motor vehicle" involving the transportation or possession of a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle.

(3) It expands, so that they apply to a qualifying active member of the military: special penalties under the offense of "carrying concealed weapons" that currently apply to a person who has been issued, but cannot immediately produce, a concealed handgun license; special duties imposed upon a person who has been issued a concealed handgun license, has a loaded handgun in a motor vehicle, and is approached by a law enforcement officer after a law enforcement stop; and penalties that apply to person who violates any of those special duties.

## **Improperly furnishing firearms to a minor**

The bill specifies that the existing prohibitions against selling a firearm to a person who is under 18 or selling a handgun to a person who is under 21 do not apply to the sale or furnishing of a handgun to a person who is at least 18 and under 21 if the person to whom the handgun is furnished is an active member of the U.S. armed forces who has received small arms training from the armed forces or the equivalent small arms training. Continuing law provides an exemption from the prohibitions for a law enforcement officer in specified circumstances, and specifies that a violation of either prohibition is the offense of "improperly furnishing firearms to a minor," a fifth degree felony.

## **Concealed Handgun Law – repeal of journalist access exception**

(R.C. 2923.129)

The bill repeals a provision of existing law that, in specified circumstances, provides an exception to the general prohibition against release of records that a sheriff keeps with respect to concealed handgun licenses. Under the exception, a "journalist" may view the name, county of residence, and date of birth of each person to whom the sheriff has issued, renewed, or issued a replacement for, or for whom the sheriff has suspended or revoked, a standard or temporary emergency concealed handgun license (CHL).

Currently, notwithstanding the state's Public Records Law but subject to the journalist's access exception described below, the records that a sheriff keeps relative to the issuance, renewal, suspension, or revocation of a CHL are confidential and are not public records. Except with respect to the journalist's access exception, no person may release or otherwise disseminate any such confidential records unless required to do so pursuant to a court order. A violation of the prohibition is "illegal release of confidential concealed handgun license records," a fifth degree felony with a possible separate \$1,000 civil fine and authorized civil action in specified circumstances.

Under the existing journalist's access exception, a journalist (see below) may submit to a sheriff a signed, written request to view the name, county of residence, and date of birth of each person to whom the sheriff has issued, renewed, issued a replacement for, or for whom the sheriff has suspended or revoked, a CHL. The request must include the journalist's name and title and the name and address of the journalist's employer, and state that disclosure of the information sought would be in the public interest. Upon receipt of the request, the sheriff must grant it. The journalist may not copy the name, county of residence, or date of birth of a person to or for whom the sheriff has issued, suspended, or revoked a CHL. As used in the exception, "journalist"



means a person engaged in, connected with, or employed by any news medium, including a newspaper, magazine, press association, news agency, or wire service, a radio or television station, or a similar medium, for the purpose of gathering, processing, transmitting, compiling, editing, or disseminating information for the general public.

### **Training of peace officers on companion animal encounters**

(R.C. 109.747, 109.77, and 109.79)

The bill requires the Attorney General to adopt administrative rules governing the training of peace officers on companion animal encounters and behavior. The rules must include all of the following:

(1) A specified amount of training that is necessary for satisfactory completion of basic training programs at approved peace officer training schools, other than the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy;

(2) The time within which a peace officer is required to receive that training, if the peace officer is appointed as a peace officer before receiving that training;

(3) A requirement that the training include training in all of the following:

- Handling companion animal-related calls or unplanned encounters with companion animals, with an emphasis on canine-related incidents and the use of nonlethal methods and tools in handling an encounter with a canine;
- Identifying and understanding companion animal behavior;
- State laws and municipal ordinances related to companion animals;
- Avoiding a companion animal attack;
- Using nonlethal methods to defend against a companion animal.

The bill also requires that the training provided in the peace officer basic training program and provided by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy include training on companion animal encounters and behavior.



## Monitoring compliance with economic development awards

(R.C. 125.112)

Under current law, entities that receive a state award for economic development (such as a grant, loan, or other similar form of financial assistance or a contract, purchase order, or other similar transaction) must comply with certain terms and conditions, including performance metrics. The Attorney General is required to monitor the compliance of such entities with the terms and conditions of their awards and submit an annual report to the General Assembly regarding the level of compliance of each entity.

The bill would eliminate the requirement that compliance by such entities be monitored annually. Instead, the Attorney General must determine the extent to which an entity has complied with the terms and conditions of its award, including the performance metrics, *at the end of the calendar year by which the entity is required to meet a performance metric under the award* (referred to as the "closeout year.") Annually, the Attorney General would report on the compliance levels of only those entities.

## Treasury Offset Program

(R.C. 131.025)

The bill requires the Attorney General to enter into an agreement with the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to participate in the federal Treasury Offset Program for the collection of state income tax obligations and unemployment compensation debts that have been certified to the Attorney General for collection pursuant to continuing law.

Under the Treasury Offset Program, an individual's or an entity's federal tax refund can be reduced by the amount the individual or entity owes for specified government debt, including unemployment compensation debt and state income tax obligations.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> 26 U.S.C. 6402(e) and (f) and 31 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) 285.8.

