**South Carolina General Assembly**

126th Session, 2025-2026

**S. 427**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Senator Adams

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Introduced in the Senate on March 5, 2025

Currently residing in the Senate Committee on **Judiciary**

Summary: Mistreating Horses Prohibited

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

3/5/2025 Senate Introduced and read first time ([Senate Journal‑page 19](h:\sj\20250305.docx))

3/5/2025 Senate Referred to Committee on **Judiciary** ([Senate Journal‑page 19](h:\sj\20250305.docx))

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[03/05/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/427_20250305.docx)

A bill

TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING ARTICLE 11 OF CHAPTER 3, TITLE 47, RELATING TO TAUNTING, TORMENTING, INJURING, OR KILLING POLICE DOGS OR HORSES, SO AS TO EXPAND THE CONDUCT THAT RESULTS IN A VIOLATION, INCREASE THE PENALTIES, REQUIRE RESTITUTION TO THE LAW ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT OR AGENCY, AND MAKE TECHNICAL CHANGES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Article 11, Chapter 3, Title 47 of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

Article 11

Teasing, Maltreating, and Injuring Police Dogs or Horses Prohibited

Section 47‑3‑610. (A) It is unlawful for a person to wilfully and maliciously taunt, torment, tease, beat, strike, or administer or subject a desensitizing drug, chemical, or substance to a dog or horse used by a law enforcement department or agency in the performance of the functions or duties of the department or agency or when a dog is placed in a kennel off duty or a horse is placed in a stable off duty, or to interfere or meddle with a dog or horse used by a law enforcement department or agency in the performance of the functions or duties of the department or agency.

(B) A person who violates a provision of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than two thousand dollars nor more than five thousand dollars or imprisoned not less than thirty days nor more than five years, or both.

Section 47‑3‑620. (A) It is unlawful for a person to wilfully or maliciously torture, mutilate, injure, disable, poison, or kill a dog or horse used by a law enforcement department or agency in the performance of the functions or duties of the department or when a dog is placed in a kennel off duty or a horse is placed in a stable off duty. However, a police officer or veterinarian may perform euthanasia in emergency situations when delay would cause the dog or horse undue suffering and pain.

(B) A person who violates a provision of this section is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than two thousand dollars nor more than twenty thousand dollars, and imprisoned for not less than two years nor more than ten years. In addition to any other penalty provided in this section, the court shall order a person convicted of a violation of this section to pay restitution to the law enforcement department or agency in an amount that would cover the full cost of restoring or replacing the animal that was injured or killed, including all related purchase, training, and veterinary expenses incurred as a result of the incident; and the court also may sentence the person to one year of animal‑related community service.

Section 47‑3‑630. A person who violates any of the provisions of this article, except for Section 47‑3‑620, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than five hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not less than thirty days nor more than six months, or both. A person who violates the provisions of Section 47‑3‑620 is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than two thousand dollars nor more than five thousand dollars and imprisoned not less than one year nor more than five years. Nothing in this article may be construed to deny a person the right to assert the legal defense of self‑defense.

SECTION 2. The repeal or amendment by this act of any law, whether temporary or permanent or civil or criminal, does not affect pending actions, rights, duties, or liabilities founded thereon, or alter, discharge, release or extinguish any penalty, forfeiture, or liability incurred under the repealed or amended law, unless the repealed or amended provision shall so expressly provide.  After the effective date of this act, all laws repealed or amended by this act must be taken and treated as remaining in full force and effect for the purpose of sustaining any pending or vested right, civil action, special proceeding, criminal prosecution, or appeal existing as of the effective date of this act, and for the enforcement of rights, duties, penalties, forfeitures, and liabilities as they stood under the repealed or amended laws.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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