

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

**HOUSE BILL 975
RATIFIED BILL**

AN ACT TO ALLOW EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL, WHILE ON DUTY, TO CARRY PEPPER SPRAY OPENLY OR CONCEALED, AND TO PROVIDE AN EXEMPTION TO THE PRACTICE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE FOR EMERGENCY PERSONNEL WHO RENDER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES TO AN INJURED K-9 POLICE ANIMAL OR AN INJURED SEARCH AND RESCUE DOG AT THE SCENE OF AN EMERGENCY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. ALLOW EMS PERSONNEL TO CARRY PEPPER SPRAY

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 131E-158 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(c) The North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services and the Commission shall adopt rules to permit emergency medical services personnel to carry, openly or concealed, any pepper spray consistent with G.S. 14-401.6(a)(7). The rules adopted may require emergency medical services personnel to complete training which shall not exceed NC Basic Law Enforcement Training standards in the use of pepper spray and obtain the approval of the affiliated EMS provider pursuant to its policy regarding use prior to carrying pepper spray and prohibit the discharge of pepper spray in the ambulance compartment during transport of the patient. For purposes of this subsection, the term "pepper spray" means a chemical irritant such as mace, oleoresin capsicum or pepper spray, or tear gas."

SECTION 1.(b) This Part becomes effective July 1, 2025.

PART II. ALLOW EMS PERSONNEL TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY AID AND TRANSPORT TO INJURED POLICE K-9 UNITS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE DOGS

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 90-187.10 reads as rewritten:

"§ 90-187.10. Necessity for license; certain practices exempted.

No individual shall engage in the practice of veterinary medicine without having a veterinary license from the Board. No person, as defined in G.S. 90-181(5), may own a veterinary facility without having a veterinary facility permit from the Board.

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to prohibit:

...

(13) Emergency medical services personnel, as defined in G.S. 131E-155, except that individuals solely credentialed as emergency medical dispatchers shall not be considered emergency medical services personnel for purposes of this subdivision, who may provide emergency medical transport or emergency medical services to an injured K-9 police unit animal or an injured certified search and rescue dog deployed by or contracted to work with a federal, State, or local agency or department at the scene of an emergency."

SECTION 2.(b) Article 7 of Chapter 131E of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 131E-155.2. Emergency medical treatment for K-9 unit or search and rescue dog; limited immunity.



Notwithstanding any other provision of law, emergency medical services personnel shall not be prosecuted for providing emergency medical transport or emergency medical services to an injured K-9 police unit animal or an injured search and rescue dog if the emergency medical services personnel acted in good faith when providing emergency medical transport or emergency medical services to an injured K-9 police unit animal or an injured search and rescue dog at the scene of an emergency. The immunity established by this section does not extend to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing that would otherwise be actionable. For purposes of this section, a search and rescue dog is defined as a dog certified by any national certification organization that is deployed by or contracted to work with a federal, State, or local agency or department, and individuals solely credentialed as emergency medical dispatchers shall not be considered emergency medical services personnel."

SECTION 2.(c) This Part is effective 30 days after becoming law and applies to acts on or after that date.

PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 3. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 25th day of June, 2025.

s/ Rachel Hunt
President of the Senate

s/ Destin Hall
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Josh Stein
Governor

Approved _____m. this _____ day of _____, 2025