

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

H

1

HOUSE BILL 52

Short Title: Protect Those Who Serve & Protect Act of 2025. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Hastings, Cotham, Miller, and Pyrtle (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: State and Local Government, if favorable, Judiciary 2, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

February 5, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT ENACTING THE PROTECT THOSE WHO SERVE AND PROTECT ACT OF 2025.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the "Protect Those Who Serve and Protect Act of 2025."

SECTION 2. Article 8 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 14-34.7A. Assault on a public safety officer, law enforcement agency animal, or search and rescue animal by throwing, spraying, or otherwise projecting water or other substances.

(a) Definition. – The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Law enforcement agency animal. – As defined in G.S. 14-163.1.

(2) Public safety officer. – Any of the following:

a. A law enforcement officer.

b. A probation or parole officer.

c. A person who is employed at (i) a detention facility, as defined in G.S. 143B-805, or (ii) any other detention facility operated under the jurisdiction of the State or a local government.

d. A firefighter or rescue squad worker.

e. An emergency medical services personnel, as defined in G.S. 131E-155.

f. A hospital employee, medical practice employee, licensed health care provider, individual under contract to provide services at a hospital or medical practice, hospital security personnel, or other emergency health care provider not otherwise covered under sub-subdivision e. of this subdivision.

g. A member of the North Carolina National Guard.

h. A member of any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States.

i. A juvenile court counselor or chief court counselor, as those terms are defined in G.S. 143B-805.

j. An employee or volunteer at a school, as those terms are defined in subdivision (6) of subsection (c) of G.S. 14-33.

(3) Search and rescue animal. – As defined in G.S. 14-163.1.



* H 5 2 - V - 1 *

1 (b) Offense and Punishment. – Unless covered under some other provision of law
 2 providing greater punishment, a person is guilty of a Class I felony if the person commits an
 3 assault or battery on either of the following by throwing, spraying, or otherwise projecting, or
 4 causing to be thrown, sprayed, or otherwise projected, water or any other substance at:

5 (1) A public safety officer (i) while the public safety officer is discharging or
 6 attempting to discharge his or her official duties or (ii) because of the victim's
 7 status as a public safety officer.

8 (2) A law enforcement agency animal or a search and rescue animal (i) while the
 9 animal is in the performance of its duty or (ii) because of the animal's status
 10 as a law enforcement agency animal or search and rescue animal."

11 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 14-34.8 reads as rewritten:

12 **"§ 14-34.8. Criminal use of laser device.**

13 (a) The following definitions apply in this section:

14 (1) Laser. – Light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation.

15 (2) Law enforcement agency animal. – As defined in G.S. 14-163.1.

16 (3) Public safety officer. – As defined in G.S. 14-34.7A.

17 (4) Search and rescue animal. – As defined in G.S. 14-163.1.

18 (b) It is unlawful to intentionally point a laser device while the device is emitting a laser
 19 beam at:

20 (1) ~~Any of the following~~ A public safety officer (i) while the person is in the
 21 performance of his or her ~~duties~~ duties or (ii) because of the person's status as
 22 a public safety officer.

23 a. ~~A law enforcement officer.~~

24 b. ~~A probation or parole officer.~~

25 e. ~~A person whose employment duties include the custody,~~
 26 ~~transportation, or management of persons who are detained or~~
 27 ~~confined to a detention facility, youth development center, or~~
 28 ~~correctional institution operated under the jurisdiction of the State or~~
 29 ~~a local government.~~

30 d. ~~A firefighter.~~

31 e. ~~An emergency medical technician or other emergency health care~~
 32 ~~provider.~~

33 f. ~~A member of the North Carolina National Guard.~~

34 g. ~~A member of any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States.~~

35 h. ~~Court counselors whose employment duties include intake, probation,~~
 36 ~~post-release supervision, and court supervision services of juveniles.~~

37 (2) The head or face of any person not covered under subdivision (1) of this
 38 subsection.

39 (3) A law enforcement agency animal or a search and rescue animal (i) while the
 40 animal is in the performance of its ~~duty~~ duty or (ii) because of the animal's
 41 status as a law enforcement agency animal or search and rescue animal.

42"

43 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 14-32 reads as rewritten:

44 **"§ 14-32. Felonious assault with deadly weapon with intent to kill or inflicting serious**
 45 **injury; punishments.**

46 ...

47 (d) ~~Any~~ Unless covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment,
 48 any person who assaults ~~an emergency worker~~ a public safety officer with a deadly weapon and
 49 inflicts serious injury shall be punished as a Class D felon.

1 (e) ~~Any~~Unless covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment,
2 any person who assaults an emergency worker a public safety officer with a deadly weapon with
3 intent to kill shall be punished as a Class D felon.

4 (f) For the purposes of this section, an "emergency worker" is a law enforcement officer,
5 firefighter, emergency medical technician, or medical responder. a "public safety officer" is as
6 defined in G.S. 14-34.7A."

7 **SECTION 5.** G.S. 14-33(c)(4) reads as rewritten:

8 "(4) Assaults an officer or employee of the State or any political subdivision of the
9 State, State (i) when the officer or employee is discharging or attempting to
10 discharge his or her official duties; duties or (ii) because of the victim's status
11 as an officer or employee of the State or any political subdivision of the State."

12 **SECTION 6.** G.S. 14-34.2 reads as rewritten:

13 **"§ 14-34.2. Assault with a firearm or other deadly weapon upon governmental officers or**
14 **employees, company police officers, or campus police officers.**

15 Unless ~~a person's conduct is~~ covered under some other provision of law providing greater
16 punishment, any person who commits an assault with a deadly weapon upon an officer or
17 employee of the State or of any political subdivision of the State, a company police officer
18 certified pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74E of the General Statutes, or a campus police
19 officer certified pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74G, Article 1 of Chapter 17C or Chapter
20 116 of the General Statutes, (i) in the performance of an official duty or (ii) because of the victim's
21 status as an officer or employee of the State or of any political subdivision of the State, a company
22 police officer, or a campus police officer, is guilty of a Class E felony."

23 **SECTION 7.** G.S. 14-34.5 reads as rewritten:

24 **"§ 14-34.5. Assault with a firearm on a law enforcement, probation, or parole officer, or**
25 **on a member of the North Carolina National Guard, or on a person employed at**
26 **a State or local detention facility; public safety officer.**

27 (a) Any person who commits an assault with a firearm upon a ~~law enforcement officer,~~
28 ~~probation officer, or parole~~ public safety officer (i) while the officer is in the performance of his
29 or her duties or (ii) because of the victim's status as a public safety officer is guilty of a Class D
30 felony.

31 (a1) ~~Any person who commits an assault with a firearm upon a member of the North~~
32 ~~Carolina National Guard while the member is in the performance of his or her duties is guilty of~~
33 ~~a Class D felony.~~

34 (b) ~~Anyone who commits an assault with a firearm upon a person who is employed at a~~
35 ~~detention facility operated under the jurisdiction of the State or a local government while the~~
36 ~~employee is in the performance of the employee's duties is guilty of a Class D felony.~~

37 (c) For purposes of this section, the term "public safety officer" is as defined in
38 G.S. 14-34.7A."

39 **SECTION 8.** G.S. 14-34.6 is repealed.

40 **SECTION 9.** G.S. 14-34.7 reads as rewritten:

41 **"§ 14-34.7. ~~Certain assaults~~ Assault or affray on a law enforcement, probation, or parole**
42 **officer, or on a member of the North Carolina National Guard, or on a person**
43 **employed at a State or local detention facility; public safety officer; penalty.**

44 (a) Unless covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, a
45 person is guilty of a Class E felony if the person ~~assaults~~ commits an assault or affray on a law
46 enforcement officer, probation officer, or parole public safety officer (i) while the officer is
47 discharging or attempting to discharge his or her official duties or (ii) because of the victim's
48 status as a public safety officer, and inflicts serious bodily injury on the officer.

49 (a1) ~~Unless covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, a~~
50 ~~person is guilty of a Class E felony if the person assaults a member of the North Carolina National~~

1 Guard while he or she is discharging or attempting to discharge his or her official duties and
2 inflicts serious bodily injury on the member.

3 (b) ~~Unless covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, a~~
4 ~~person is guilty of a Class E felony if the person assaults a person who is employed at a detention~~
5 ~~facility operated under the jurisdiction of the State or a local government while the employee is~~
6 ~~in the performance of the employee's duties and inflicts serious bodily injury on the employee.~~

7 (c) Unless covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, a
8 person is guilty of a Class H felony if the person does any of the following:

9 (1) ~~Assaults a law enforcement officer, probation officer, or parole officer while~~
10 ~~the officer is discharging or attempting to discharge his or her official duties~~
11 ~~and inflicts physical injury on the officer.~~

12 (2) ~~Assaults a person who is employed at a detention facility operated under the~~
13 ~~jurisdiction of the State or a local government while the employee is in the~~
14 ~~performance of the employee's duties and inflicts physical injury on the~~
15 ~~employee.~~

16 (3) ~~Assaults a member of the North Carolina National Guard while he or she is~~
17 ~~discharging or attempting to discharge his or her official duties and inflicts~~
18 ~~physical injury on the member.~~ violates subsection (a) of this section and
19 inflicts physical injury on the officer.

20 (d) For the purposes of this ~~subsection, section, the term "public safety officer" is as~~
21 ~~defined in G.S. 14-34.7A and the term "physical injury" includes cuts, scrapes, bruises, or other~~
22 ~~physical injury which does not constitute serious injury."~~

23 **SECTION 10.** G.S. 14-69.3 reads as rewritten:

24 **"§ 14-69.3. Arson or other unlawful burning that results in serious bodily injury or serious**
25 **injury to a firefighter, law enforcement officer, public safety officer or fire**
26 **investigator, or emergency medical technician investigator.**

27 (a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

28 (1) ~~Emergency medical technician. – The term includes an emergency medical~~
29 ~~technician, an advanced emergency medical technician, and an emergency~~
30 ~~medical technician paramedic, as those terms are defined in G.S. 131E-155.~~

31 (2) Fire investigator. – The term includes any person who, individually or as part
32 of an investigative team, has the responsibility and authority to determine the
33 origin, cause, or development of a fire or explosion.

34 (3) Public safety officer. – As defined in G.S. 14-34.7A.

35 (b) Offense Involving Serious Bodily Injury. – A-Unless covered under some other
36 provision of law providing greater punishment, a person is guilty of a Class E felony if (i) the
37 person commits a felony under Article 15 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes and a firefighter,
38 law enforcement officer, public safety officer or fire investigator, or emergency medical
39 technician investigator suffers serious bodily injury while discharging or attempting to discharge
40 official duties on the property, or proximate to the property, that is the subject of the firefighter's,
41 law enforcement officer's, fire investigator's, or emergency medical technician's public safety
42 officer's or fire investigator's discharge or attempt to discharge his or her respective duties.
43 or (ii) the person commits a felony under Article 15 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes because
44 of the victim's status as a public safety officer or fire investigator and the public safety officer or
45 fire investigator suffers serious bodily injury.

46 (c) Offense Involving Serious Injury. – A-Unless covered under some other provision of
47 law providing greater punishment, a person is guilty of a Class F felony if (i) the person commits
48 a felony under Article 15 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes and a firefighter, law enforcement
49 officer, public safety officer or fire investigator, or emergency medical technician investigator
50 suffers serious injury while discharging or attempting to discharge official duties on the property,
51 or proximate to the property, that is the subject of the firefighter's, law enforcement officer's, fire

1 ~~investigator's, or emergency medical technician's public safety officer's or fire investigator's~~
2 ~~discharge or attempt to discharge his or her respective duties.~~ duties or (ii) the person commits a
3 felony under Article 15 of Chapter 14 of the General Statutes because of the victim's status as a
4 public safety officer or fire investigator and the public safety officer or fire investigator suffers
5 serious injury."

6 **SECTION 11.** G.S. 15A-266.3A(f)(4) reads as rewritten:

7 "(4) G.S. 14-28, Malicious castration; G.S. 14-29, Castration or other maiming
8 without malice aforethought; G.S. 14-30, Malicious maiming; G.S. 14-30.1,
9 Malicious throwing of corrosive acid or alkali; G.S. 14-31, Maliciously
10 assaulting in a secret manner; G.S. 14-32, Felonious assault with deadly
11 weapon with intent to kill or inflicting serious injury; G.S. 14-32.1(e),
12 Aggravated assault or assault and battery on an individual with a disability;
13 G.S. 14-32.2(a) when punishable pursuant to G.S. 14-32.2(b)(1), Patient
14 abuse and neglect, intentional conduct proximately causes death;
15 G.S. 14-32.3(a), Domestic abuse of disabled or elder adults resulting in injury;
16 G.S. 14-32.4, Assault inflicting serious bodily injury or injury by
17 strangulation; G.S. 14-33.2, Habitual misdemeanor assault; G.S. 14-34.1,
18 Discharging certain barreled weapons or a firearm into occupied property;
19 G.S. 14-34.2, Assault with a firearm or other deadly weapon upon
20 governmental officers or employees, company police officers, or campus
21 police officers; G.S. 14-34.4, Adulterated or misbranded food, drugs, etc.;
22 intent to cause serious injury or death; intent to extort; G.S. 14-34.5, Assault
23 with a firearm on a ~~law enforcement, probation, or parole officer or on a~~
24 ~~person employed at a State or local detention facility;~~ G.S. 14-34.6, Assault
25 ~~or affray on a firefighter, an emergency medical technician, medical~~
26 ~~responder, emergency department nurse, or emergency department physician;~~
27 public safety officer; G.S. 14-34.7, Assault ~~inflicting serious injury on a law~~
28 ~~enforcement, probation, or parole officer or on a person employed at a State~~
29 ~~or local detention facility;~~ or affray on a public safety officer; G.S. 14-34.9,
30 Discharging a firearm from within an enclosure; and"

31 **SECTION 12.** G.S. 131E-88.3(a) reads as rewritten:

32 "(a) Annually by September 1, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall report to the
33 Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Service Regulation, the number
34 of persons charged and convicted during the preceding calendar year of a crime under
35 G.S. 14-34.6.G.S. 14-34.7 committed against a person listed in sub-subdivisions d. through f. of
36 subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of G.S. 14-34.7A."

37 **SECTION 13.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2025, and applies to offenses
38 committed on or after that date.