

# VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2002 SESSION

## CHAPTER 418

*An Act to amend and reenact § 3.1-796.104:1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to animal control officers; training in recognizing suspected child abuse.*

[H 773]

Approved April 2, 2002

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 3.1-796.104:1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 3.1-796.104:1. Training of animal control officers.

A. After April 1, 1999, every locality appointing animal control officers shall require that every animal control officer and deputy animal control officer completes the following training:

1. Within two years after appointment, a basic animal control course that has been approved by the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the State Veterinarian, *which shall include training in recognizing suspected child abuse and neglect and information on how complaints may be filed*; and

2. Every three years, additional training approved by the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the State Veterinarian, fifteen hours of which shall be training in animal control and protection.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services and the State Veterinarian shall develop criteria to be used in approving training courses and shall provide an opportunity for public comment on proposed criteria before the final criteria are adopted.

Subdivision 1 of this subsection shall not apply to animal control officers or deputy animal control officers appointed before July 1, 1998. The State Veterinarian may grant exemptions from the requirements of subdivision 1 to animal control officers appointed on or after July 1, 1998, based on the animal control officer's previous training.

B. Upon cause shown by a locality, the State Veterinarian may grant additional time during which the training required by subsection A may be completed by an animal control officer in such locality.

C. Any animal control officer that fails to complete the training required by subsection A shall be removed from office, unless the State Veterinarian has granted additional time as provided in subsection B.