

Chapter 758

(Senate Bill 910)

AN ACT concerning

Maryland Veterans Service Animal Program – Definitions – Therapy Horse

FOR the purpose of altering the definition of a “therapy horse” under the Maryland Veterans Service Animal Program; and generally relating to the Maryland Veterans Service Animal Program.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – State Government

Section 9–957(a)(1), (b), and (c)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2021 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – State Government

Section 9–957(a)(10)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2021 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – State Government

9–957.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(10) “Therapy horse” includes a horse determined appropriate for interactions with veterans by a stable licensed by the State that:

(i) is a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, International (PATH, Intl.) [premier accredited] member center; or

(ii) has Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA) certified professionals who provide services to veterans.

(b) There is a Maryland Veterans Service Animal Program in the Department.

(c) The purposes of the Program are to:

- (1) refer eligible veterans who inquire about participation in the Program to one or more nonprofit training entities;
- (2) provide additional funding mechanisms to assist veterans participating in the Program;
- (3) encourage successful Program participants to assist in outreach and referral of other eligible veterans who could benefit from participation in the Program;
- (4) assist in the reduction of the Maryland veteran suicide rate; and
- (5) identify potential capital projects and services to facilitate more services for veterans in the State.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2023.

Approved by the Governor, May 16, 2023.