SENATE, No. 2213

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator VIN GOPAL
District 11 (Monmouth)

SYNOPSIS

Waives pet adoption fees for certain military personnel and veterans.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning pet adoption fees for military personnel and veterans and supplementing P.L.194, c.151 (4:19-15.1 et seq.).

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. No kennel, shelter, or pound, that is owned and operated by a local government unit, shall charge a pet adoption fee for a domestic companion animal to a person who is:

(1) an active member of the New Jersey National Guard who has completed Initial Active Duty Training;

(2) an active member of any branch or department of the Armed Forces of the United States, or a reserve component thereof; or

(3) a veteran.

b. The Secretary of Agriculture shall prescribe by rule or regulation the types of evidence that may be used to qualify a person for the benefit established pursuant to this section.

c. The owner or operator of a kennel, shelter, or pound may review the pet adoption fee and, if appropriate, adjust the pet adoption fee to offset any cost increases associated with forgoing the pet adoption fee for eligible individuals pursuant to subsection a. of this section.

d. As used in this section:

"Domestic companion animal" means any animal commonly referred to as a pet or one that has been bought, bred, raised or otherwise acquired, in accordance with local ordinances and State and federal law, for the primary purpose of providing companionship to the owner, rather than for business or agricultural purposes.

"Initial Active Duty Training" means Basic Military Training, for members of the New Jersey Air National Guard, and Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training, for members of the New Jersey Army National Guard.

"Kennel " means a kennel as defined in section 1 of P.L.1941, c.151 (C.4:19-15.1).

“Pet adoption fee” means any costs related to a veterinary wellness visit and exam, spaying or neutering, distemper vaccination, bordetella vaccination, rabies vaccination, deworming medication, flea and tick treatment, canine heartworm test, feline leukemia test, spay and neuter surgery, follow-up examination, collar and an identification tag, and administrative charges.

“Pound” means a pound as defined in section 1 of P.L.1941, c.151 (C.4:19-15.1).

“Shelter” means a shelter as defined in section 1 of P.L.1941, c.151 (C.4:19-15.1).

“Veteran” means any resident of the State who has been honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active military service in any of the Armed Forces of the

United States, or a reserve component thereof, or any honorably discharged member of the American Merchant Marine who served during World War II and is declared by the United States Department of Defense to be eligible for federal veterans' benefits and any officer, soldier, sailor, marine, airman, nurse or army field clerk, who has served in the active military or naval service of the United States and has or shall be discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would provide that the following persons would be entitled to adopt a domestic companion animal without paying a pet adoption fee from a licensed kennel, shelter, or pound: (1) an active member of the New Jersey National Guard who has completed Initial Active Duty Training; (2) an active member of any branch or department of the Armed Forces of the United States, or reserves component thereof; and (3) a veteran.

The bill authorizes the owner or operator of a kennel, shelter, or pound to review and adjust the pet adoption fee to offset any cost increases associated with forgoing the pet adoption fee for eligible military personnel and veterans.