



# 2025 Acts Affecting Criminal Justice and Public Safety

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## Notice to Readers

This report provides summaries of new laws (public acts and special acts) significantly affecting criminal justice and public safety enacted during the 2025 regular legislative session. OLR's other Acts Affecting reports, including Acts Affecting Seniors and Acts Affecting Health Professions, are, or will soon be, available on [OLR's website](#).

Each summary indicates the public act (PA) or special act (SA) number. Not all provisions of the acts are included. The report does not include vetoed acts unless the veto was overridden. Complete summaries of public acts are, or will soon be, available on [OLR's website](#).

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the [General Assembly's website](#) or the Connecticut State Library.

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## **Controlled Substances and Other Regulated Products**

### ***Cannabis, Hemp, and Tobacco Sales***

A new law enhances the state's enforcement laws on cannabis, hemp, and tobacco sales. Among other things, the new law:

1. requires the local police chief to send written comments for a cigarette dealer license renewal and the Department of Revenue Services to respond in writing, under certain circumstances;
2. requires the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) to establish a Cannabis Control Division and requires the division to organize and conduct comprehensive compliance initiatives (i.e. coordinated efforts by multiple government agencies to conduct unannounced compliance checks);
3. establishes a Statewide Cannabis and Hemp Enforcement Policy Board and requires it to meet quarterly to identify enforcement opportunities;
4. broadens the circumstances under which a municipality may prohibit a business from operating by adding additional items to what is considered an "immediate threat to public health and safety;"
5. generally limits the hours a cannabis retailer, hybrid retailer, or certain micro-cultivators may sell cannabis to 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sundays and 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. any other day; and
6. increases the penalties for a cannabis establishment licensee selling or delivering cannabis to someone under age 21 and makes it a class E felony for them to sell or deliver synthetic cannabinoids to anyone (as described below).

The law also makes various changes related to e-cigarettes, including changes to e-cigarette dealer requirements, such as requiring certain signs, prohibiting underaged individuals on the business premises under certain circumstances, and increasing license application fees and certain penalties ([PA 25-166](#), various effective dates).

### ***Controlled Substance Designation***

Federal law classifies marijuana (cannabis) as a schedule I controlled substance; Connecticut classifies it in schedule II. Under a new law, if marijuana is federally reclassified as a schedule III, IV, or V controlled substance or if it is unscheduled, then the DCP commissioner must adopt the federal schedule.

The same law also requires the DCP commissioner to amend its regulations to designate certain substances (e.g., kratom) as controlled substances and classify each in the appropriate schedule ([PA 25-101](#), § 4, effective upon passage).

### ***Definition of Cigarettes Under the Cigarette Tax Law***

This session, the legislature modified the definition of “cigarette” under the cigarette tax law to (1) generally align it with the definition in the tobacco master settlement agreement law (the 1998 agreement between Connecticut and leading tobacco companies) and (2) explicitly include any roll, stick, or capsule of tobacco, regardless of its shape or size, that is generally intended to be heated. By modifying the definition of cigarette for purposes of the cigarette tax, the bill potentially expands the products subject to this tax and also potentially expands the distributors, retailers, and manufacturers subject to the existing laws and restrictions on selling cigarettes in Connecticut ([PA 25-168](#), § 394, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***E-Cigarette Shipping and Transporting Restrictions and Age Verification Requirements***

This session, the legislature placed restrictions on in-state shipping and transporting of e-cigarettes that are like those in law for cigarettes.

The new law specifically requires sellers and their agents or employees to ask all prospective e-cigarette buyers to present a driver’s license, passport, or ID card to prove that they are 21 or older. A similar requirement applies under existing law to cigarette and tobacco product purchases. Relatedly, it allows sellers to use an electronic scanner to check a passport’s validity, just as existing law allows them to do for driver’s licenses and ID cards.

Lastly, the new law increases the maximum fines that may be imposed on anyone who sells, gives, or delivers an e-cigarette to someone under age 21 (as described below) and authorizes the DCP commissioner to suspend or revoke an e-cigarette dealer’s registration for violating any provision of the age verification laws ([PA 25-166](#), §§ 5, 6 & 44-45; and [PA 25-168](#), §§ 395 & 396, generally effective July 1, 2025).

### ***Vehicle Stops for Cannabis Use***

A law passed this session allows police to stop a motor vehicle for a violation of the laws against using cannabis in a vehicle if the officer sees the operator actively consuming it and smells burnt cannabis. Prior law prohibited an officer from stopping a vehicle if the cannabis violation would be the only reason for the stop ([PA 25-19](#), §§ 7 & 8, effective October 1, 2025).



## **Crimes, Penalties, Violations, and Fines**

### ***Driver's License Suspension for Failure to Pay or Failure to Appear***

A new law codifies the requirement to suspend a person's driver's license for failure to pay or appear related to a motor vehicle violation and sets a 60-day notice period before the suspension takes effect. It requires the Department of Motor Vehicles, after receiving a report from the court, to send a suspension notice (1) informing the person that his or her license will be suspended within 60 days after the notice date unless the person reopens judgment with the court of jurisdiction during this time period and (2) giving instructions on how to file a motion to reopen and apply for a fee waiver within the court ([PA 25-159](#), § 60, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Driving and Boating Under the Influence Penalties***

A new law imposes reciprocal driver's license, boating certificate, and personal watercraft certificate suspension penalties for convictions of driving under the influence (DUI) and boating under the influence (BUI) and related administrative per se violations. Generally, the new law applies the credential suspension penalties for one offense to the equivalent offense in the other law (e.g., a second DUI offense also subjects a person to the certificate suspension that applies for a second BUI offense). For driver's license suspensions, a required period of ignition interlock device use applies as a condition of license restoration, regardless of whether the offense triggering the suspension was committed in a motor vehicle or a boat ([PA 25-159](#), §§ 12-19, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Failure to Appear Violations***

The legislature reduced, from a class A to a class D misdemeanor, the penalty for a first offense of willfully failing to appear at a court hearing related to a misdemeanor offense or a motor vehicle violation for which imprisonment may be imposed ([PA 25-29](#), § 3, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Failure to Yield to Pedestrians***

A new law increases, from \$500 to \$750, the maximum fine for drivers who (1) fail to yield to pedestrians crossing the road at a crosswalk or (2) commit other related violations ([PA 25-65](#), § 15, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Intentional Projection of a Laser on or at an Aircraft***

A new law generally prohibits anyone from intentionally projecting a laser on or at an aircraft or its flight path. It makes violations a class A misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000, up to

364 days in prison, or both. The act exempts members of the U.S. and state armed forces and police officers performing their official duties ([PA 25-65](#), § 28, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Liquor Control Act Penalties***

A provision in a new law increases the penalty for Liquor Control Act violations without a specified penalty from permit penalties and a civil fine to a class C misdemeanor (punishable by up to three months in prison, a fine up to \$500, or both) for a first offense and a class B misdemeanor (punishable by up to six months in prison, a fine up to \$1,000, or both) for subsequent ones ([PA 25-29](#), § 10, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***“Move Over” Law Violation or Aggravated Endangerment of a Highway Worker***

This session, the legislature increased the enhanced penalties for violations of the “move over” law and the law on endangering highway workers that result in the injury or death of an emergency vehicle driver or occupant or a highway worker.

The state’s “move over” law generally requires drivers to move over when approaching a slow or stationary emergency vehicle. Violators are subject to higher fines if the violation results in an emergency vehicle driver’s or occupant’s injury or death. The act increases the maximum penalties from \$2,500 to \$5,000 in the case of injury and from \$10,000 to \$20,000 in the case of death.

By law, drivers commit the offense of “aggravated endangerment of a highway worker” if they are convicted of specified offenses in a highway work zone that result in a highway worker’s serious physical injury or death. The act increases the maximum penalties for this offense from up to \$5,000 to up to \$10,000 in the case of injury and from \$10,000 to \$20,000 in the case of death ([PA 25-159](#), §§ 64 & 65, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Parking Near a Fire Hydrant***

This session, the legislature established a fine of up to \$200 for subsequent violations of existing law’s prohibition on vehicles remaining stationary within 10 feet of any fire hydrant. These violations are processed through the Centralized Infractions Bureau. First violations remain infractions, as was the case for all violations under prior law ([PA 25-65](#), §§ 4 & 31, effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Penalties for Violating Price Caps on Identified Prescription Drugs***

A new law, among other things, (1) caps the price at which pharmaceutical manufacturers or wholesale distributors may sell identified prescription drugs (e.g., generic drugs or biological products) in the state and (2) generally imposes a civil penalty on violators, which the Department of Revenue Services commissioner must collect. Under the new law, certain individuals who disobey or refuse to cooperate in the commissioner's enforcement efforts may be committed to a community correctional center or be prosecuted for certain crimes, as described below.

***Commitment to Community Correctional Center.*** If anyone disobeys the process or appears but refuses to answer the commissioner's or his agent's questions, the commissioner or the agent may apply to the Superior Court stating this and the court or judge must cite the person to appear to answer the question or produce the books, papers, or other documentary evidence and, if they refuse to do so, must commit the person to a community correctional center until they testify, but not for more than 60 days.

***Willful Delivery or Disclosure of Fraudulent or False Material.*** Any officer or employee who owes a duty, on the manufacturer's or distributor's behalf, to deliver or disclose to the commissioner, or his authorized agent, any list, statement, return, account statement, or other document and willfully delivers or discloses one the officer or employee knows is fraudulent or false in any material matter is guilty of a class D felony, in addition to any other penalty provided by law. (A class D felony is punishable by a fine up to \$5,000, up to five years in prison, or both.)

Under the new law, an officer or employee may not be charged with an offense under both provisions above in relation to the same civil penalty but may be charged and prosecuted for both offenses based on the same information ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 345-347, effective July 1, 2025).

***Willful Failure to Perform.*** A pharmaceutical manufacturer's or wholesale distributor's officer or employee who (1) owes a duty, on the manufacturer's or distributor's behalf, to pay the civil penalty, file the required statement with the commissioner, keep records, or supply information to the commissioner and (2) willfully fails to do so must, in addition to any other penalty provided by law, be fined up to \$1,000, imprisoned up to one year, or both. The new law sets a three-year statute of limitations for prosecuting officers or employees for violations of these provisions committed on or after January 1, 2026.

## ***Reckless Driving Penalties***

A new law establishes enhanced penalties under the reckless driving law for drivers who drive faster than 100 mph, including increased fines and impounding the driver's vehicle for subsequent offenses ([PA 25-19](#), §§ 9-14, effective October 1, 2025).

Another new law requires drivers to attend an operator's retraining program upon their first conviction of reckless driving. Under prior law, attendance after a reckless driving conviction was required only if the driver had accumulated four total moving violations ([PA 25-65](#), § 23, effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Sale Ban on Nonreplaceable, Nonremovable Battery Smoke Detectors***

A new act generally bans the sale, offer of sale, and distribution of, smoke detection and warning equipment that is only powered by batteries, unless the batteries are nonreplaceable, nonremovable, and capable of lasting at least 10 years.

The ban starts on October 1, 2025, but people may sell smoke detectors banned under this act after then if they already possess them as of October 1, 2025, or placed an order for them before that date. Violators may be fined up to \$100 for the first violation, and up to \$500 for subsequent violations ([PA 25-123](#), effective upon passage).

## ***Sale, Gift, or Delivery of E-Cigarettes to Persons Under Age 21***

A new law increases the maximum fines that may be imposed on anyone who sells, gives, or delivers an e-cigarette to someone under age 21 to \$1,000 for each offense, rather than the prior maximum fines of (1) \$300 for a first offense; (2) \$750 for a second offense committed within 24 months of the first offense; and (3) \$1,000 for each subsequent offense committed within those same 24 months. It also authorizes the DCP commissioner to suspend or revoke an e-cigarette dealer's registration for violating any provision of the age verification laws ([PA 25-166](#), § 44, effective July 1, 2025).

## ***Sale or Delivery of Cannabis to Persons Under Age 21***

A new law modifies the penalties for cannabis establishment licensees (or their agents) to sell or deliver cannabis or cannabis paraphernalia to someone under age 21. Specifically, the new law increases the penalty for selling or delivering cannabis to someone under age 21 from a class A misdemeanor, which is punishable by up to 364 days in prison, a fine up to \$2,000, or both, to a class E felony, which is punishable by up to three years in prison, a fine up to \$3,500, or both. It simultaneously decreases the penalty for selling or delivering cannabis paraphernalia to someone

under age 21, from a class A misdemeanor to a class C misdemeanor, which is punishable by up to three months in prison, a fine up to \$500, or both.

The new law also makes it a class E felony for them to sell or deliver synthetic cannabinoids to anyone ([PA 25-166](#), §§ 41 & 42, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Street Takeovers and the Illegal Use of Vehicles***

A new law makes several changes in laws related to street takeovers and the illegal use of certain motor vehicles, including:

1. changing the license penalties for violating a state law against illegal street racing and street takeovers, including setting a two-year license suspension for a third or subsequent violation;
2. authorizing municipalities to adopt ordinances that penalize street takeovers;
3. allowing municipalities to destroy all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), dirt bikes, and mini-motorcycles that are seized and forfeited for violating a municipal ordinance and allowing all municipalities, not just those over a certain size, to adopt ordinances for the seizure and forfeiture of dirt bikes or mini-motorcycles for violations; and
4. setting a minimum \$2,000 fine for a subsequent offense of (a) evading responsibility in an accident causing property damage or (b) driving a vehicle for an illegal race, contest, demonstration, or street takeover ([PA 25-80](#), most provisions effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Unlawful Dissemination of an Intimate Synthetic Image***

A new law establishes a new crime of unlawful dissemination of an intimate synthetically created image that is generally similar to the existing crime of unlawful dissemination of an intimate image. As under the existing crime, the act's new crime applies to the intentional dissemination of images of a person in certain degrees of nudity or engaged in sexual intercourse and does not apply in certain circumstances, such as if the image resulted from voluntary exposure in public. The law's penalties vary from a class A misdemeanor to a class D felony based on (1) how the person distributed the image (including the number of recipients and how it was sent) and (2) whether the person intended to harm the victim ([PA 25-168](#), § 261, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Vehicle Equipment Violations***

A new law decreases the standard for what constitutes certain license plate, headlight, or windshield equipment violations and is subject to a motor vehicle stop ([PA 25-19](#), §§ 1-5, effective October 1, 2025).

## **Criminal Procedure**

### ***Affirmative Defense for Minor Victims in Misdemeanor Cases***

In misdemeanor cases in Superior or Juvenile courts, a new law makes it an affirmative defense that (1) the defendant was a minor (under age 18) at the time he or she committed the offense and (2) his or her participation in the offense was a result of having been a human trafficking victim ([PA 25-139](#), § 16, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Bail Enforcement***

A new law prohibits bail bondsmen and surety bail bond or bail enforcement agents from taking or trying to take the principal on a bond into custody on the premises, grounds, or campus of certain health care facilities or offices, schools, higher education institutions, and houses of worship. It also expands the scope of the law requiring the court to vacate an order forfeiting a bond and release the bondsman, agent, and insurer, to apply when the principal on the bond is at the health care facilities or offices ([PA 25-25](#), effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Criminal Protective Orders for Electronic Stalking***

By law, upon arrest for certain crimes, the court may issue a criminal protective order against the offender. Under existing law, an arrest for certain crimes subjects the offender to a criminal protective order at the court's discretion, such as an arrest for a violation of 1st, 2nd, or 3rd degree stalking. A new law also allows the court to issue a criminal protective order against someone arrested for the crime of electronic stalking ([PA 25-91](#), § 18, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Electronic Format to Direct Process to a State Marshal***

A new law allows an attorney-at-law or public agency to direct process to a state marshal electronically in certain cases and gives state marshals immunity from civil liability in those cases. It establishes requirements for things such as format, content, and fees; and applies to any writ, summons, complaint, subpoena, attachment, execution, application, order, notice, motion, or petition ([PA 25-78](#), § 13, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Probation Period for Animal Abuse Conviction***

A new law adds conviction of animal cruelty to the list of crimes for which the law provides a probation period and sets the probation period for that crime at five years ([PA 25-91](#), §§ 27 & 28, effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Sentence Reduction***

A provision in a new law on criminal justice related matters requires that an individual who was confined in another state's correctional institution, police station, county jail, courthouse lockup, or other form of imprisonment due to an extradition demand to face Connecticut criminal charges, and who is subsequently imprisoned for the extradited offense, receive a sentence reduction for their imprisonment in the other state. The reduction equals the number of days the person was imprisoned in the other state solely for the extradition proceedings ([PA 25-29](#), § 5, effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Sexual Assault Evidence Collection***

The legislature set a new process for creating, with the victim's consent, a label for designating sexual assault evidence collection kits, based on whether the victim wants to be identified and wants to report the assault to law enforcement at the time of evidence collection. The new law with this process requires the health care facility that collects the evidence to contact law enforcement to receive it and transfer it to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) for analysis, which must return it to law enforcement after analysis in a way that preserves its integrity ([PA 25-29](#), § 2, effective October 1, 2025).

## ***State Forfeiture of Virtual Currency***

An act passed this session establishing a new process for state forfeiture of virtual currency and virtual currency wallets possessed, controlled, designed, or used to commit larceny or that are proceeds of a larceny. It requires the forfeited currency and wallets to be used to compensate victims with money-related loss from the involved crime. Among other things, this act also explicitly includes the virtual currency and virtual currency wallets in the property subject to existing laws on (1) issuing a search warrant or seizing property associated with an arrest or under a search warrant and (2) forfeiting property related to drug and money laundering, identity theft, and sexual exploitation, prostitution, and human trafficking crimes. ([PA 25-41](#), effective July 1, 2026).

## ***Victim Statement on Plea Agreement***

A new law allows (1) crime victims to make a statement to the prosecutor and the court on any plea agreement, not just in those situations in which the defendant pleads to a lesser offense and (2) victim notifications to be sent electronically ([PA 25-91](#), §§ 21 & 22, effective October 1, 2025).



## **Department of Correction (DOC)**

### ***Correction Officers' Use of Force***

The legislature passed requirements for reporting to a higher authority when a correction officer witnesses or is aware of another officer using objectively unreasonable, excessive, or illegal use of force. The legislation also (1) establishes certain rights for correction officers to review recordings of an incident; (2) requires DOC to develop a plan to implement the use of body-worn recording equipment in correctional facilities; and (3) requires the correction ombuds and the attorney general to publish on their offices' websites a list of certain cases filed against DOC for excessive use of force or medical neglect ([PA 25-161](#), §§ 5 & 6, effective October 1, 2025, except the case listing requirement is effective January 1, 2026).

### ***Correction Ombuds***

The legislature passed a new law reforming the role of the correction ombuds and how its office operates. Among other things, the new law (1) increases the ombuds' term from two to four years; (2) expands the ombuds' duties by requiring him to issue public decisions on a complaint's merits after an investigation, allowing him to conduct surveys of incarcerated individuals or corrections employees, allowing him to administer oaths, and, if the ombuds is an attorney, to issue subpoenas; and (3) grants the office certain protections against changes to its budget request and reductions in its allotments ([PA 25-161](#), §§ 1-3, effective upon passage).

### ***Documenting Assaults Against Correctional Staff***

Under a new law, the DOC commissioner must develop a protocol to fully document any assault by incarcerated people against correctional staff. Starting on October 1, 2025, DOC must fully document these assaults under the protocol ([PA 25-168](#), § 269, effective upon passage).

### ***Health Care Services***

A new law specifically requires DOC's plan for health care services to ensure that various requirements are met, rather than to include guidelines for implementing them. It adds certain components to the plan, including interviewing incarcerated people at intake about their mental health history and providing evidence-based services by a mental health provider or therapist, as needed, within two business days of a determination of need upon intake.

The act requires the state's correction ombuds to evaluate the provision of health care services for incarcerated people, including medical, dental, and mental health care and substance use disorder treatment services. The act specifies certain steps that he may take when doing so, such as (1) investigating and responding to related complaints or (2) employing or contracting with licensed



health care professionals to provide independent clinical reviews of these complaints. It also adds certain health care-related topics to the ombuds' existing annual reporting. Under the act, if the correction ombuds intends to access an incarcerated person's medical record, he must first tell the person the reason why he is doing so.

Under the act, the DOC commissioner also must ensure that everyone in DOC custody is given a form allowing them to authorize someone else to access their medical records that would otherwise be subject to nondisclosure under HIPAA ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 187, 264, 266 & 272, various effective dates).

### ***In-Prison Postsecondary Education Program Enrollment and Accounts Receivable Holds Policy Updates***

A new law requires the UConn Board of Trustees and Board of Regents for Higher Education, in consultation with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), to examine and, by January 1, 2026, update their policies and procedures on accounts receivable holds to ensure that students in prison can enroll in postsecondary programs without delay ([PA 25-119](#), § 4, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***Palatable Meals and Ban on Nutraloaf***

A new law specifically requires the DOC commissioner to provide palatable and nutritious meals to everyone in the department's custody. It also bars him from allowing anyone to be fed (1) nutraloaf as a form of discipline or (2) any other diet used for punishment purposes. "Nutraloaf" is a mixture of foods blended together and baked into a solid loaf ([PA 25-168](#), § 265, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Postsecondary Education Programs***

A provision in the legislation implementing the biennial budget requires OPM's Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division to develop and implement policies for statewide delivery of postsecondary education programs in correctional facilities, including those on federal Pell grants and prison education programs ([PA 25-168](#), § 62, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***Private Ownership and Operation of State Correctional Facilities***

Under a new law, private entities generally cannot own, operate, or manage a state correctional facility, community correctional center, or community reintegration center. Exempt from the ban are federal facilities and community-based service programs. This new law exclusively gives the DOC commissioner and his employees the duty to keep custody of and supervise the individuals detained at the non-exempt state facilities or centers ([PA 25-32](#), effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Service of Process on DOC Correctional Officer or Employee***

A new law allows a writ of summons in a civil action naming a DOC correctional officer or employee to be served upon a person the DOC commissioner designates at the facility where the correctional officer or employee is assigned. The designated person must act as the agent of the person named in the writ.

These provisions do not apply when service can be made as in actions against the state (e.g., served upon the attorney general) ([PA 25-78](#), § 12, effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Staffing Levels and Recruitment***

A new law specifically requires the DOC commissioner to ensure that each correctional facility under his jurisdiction is staffed at a level to protect the safety of staff, visitors, contractors, and incarcerated people. It also requires him, by January 1, 2026, to develop and actively use a program for correctional officer recruitment and retention. Starting by January 1, 2027, the commissioner must annually report to the Judiciary Committee on efforts to comply with these requirements, including any shortcomings in doing so. The report may include recommendations for additional resources needed to comply ([PA 25-168](#), § 268, effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Strip and Cavity Search Reports***

A new law establishes an annual reporting requirement for the DOC commissioner on strip and cavity searches of incarcerated people in DOC facilities. The report must include (1) how many of these searches occurred in the prior year in each facility; (2) if there were any related lawsuits filed in the prior year, with the status or outcome of each; and (3) a copy of the current policy for doing these searches, including any training requirements for correctional officers. The first report is due by January 1, 2027, to the Government Oversight and Judiciary committees.

Additionally, the bill requires the DOC commissioner to submit a report by February 15, 2027, to these same committees that evaluates current directives and procedures for strip and cavity searches in the state's correctional institutions. The evaluation must compare the directives and procedures to those of other northeastern states and federal policies ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 270 & 271, effective upon passage).

# **Domestic and Family Violence, Sexual Assault, and Human Trafficking Victims**

## ***Coerced Debt***

By law, coerced debt is any debt incurred in the name of a debtor who is a victim of domestic violence when the debt was incurred in response to any duress, intimidation, threat of force, force, or undue influence used to specifically coerce the debtor into incurring the debt. The law prohibits anyone from knowingly causing another person to incur coerced debt and subjects any violator to civil liability. For purposes of the collection of coerced debt, a new law changes the lookback period for debt to be eligible to be waived as coerced debt, by requiring that the debt be less than 10 years old rather than more than 10 years old as under prior law ([PA 25-91](#), § 25, effective upon passage).

## ***Confidentiality of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Shelter Locations***

A new law expands confidentiality protections for the locations of shelters or transitional housing for victims of domestic violence or sexual assault by explicitly prohibiting public agencies from disclosing any information indicating these locations, regardless of the state Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Prior law specified that FOIA did not require a public agency to disclose any information indicating the location of a shelter or transitional housing for domestic violence victims, and was silent on shelters or housing for sexual assault victims ([PA 25-70](#), effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Domestic Violence Victim Eligibility for Cash Assistance***

This year, the budget implementer act eliminated a separate, shorter process for domestic violence victims to receive cash assistance payments. Under prior law, domestic violence victims who requested diversion assistance (a short-term Temporary Family Assistance cash payment) could forgo certain requirements and the Department of Social Services had to exclude income from household members credibly accused of domestic violence. The act eliminates these provisions, applying the same eligibility requirements to domestic violence victims as other applicants ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 325 & 326, effective July 1, 2025).

## ***Human Trafficking Awareness Course***

A new law allows the mandatory human trafficking awareness course to be provided in any format, rather than only by video. By law, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) in consultation with DESPP, must develop and provide this training program for specified professionals, such as

law enforcement officers, judges, public defenders, and certain other professionals ([PA 25-139](#), § 17, effective upon passage).

### ***Motor Vehicle Data Privacy for Certain Victims***

A new law allows survivors of certain crimes (e.g., domestic violence) to submit a connected vehicle service request to a motor vehicle manufacturer to take certain actions to prevent an abuser from remotely obtaining data from, or sending commands to, a vehicle. The manufacturer must take certain actions (e.g., terminate or disable the connected vehicle services account associated with the abuser) within two business days of receiving the request ([PA 25-113](#), § 19, effective July 1, 2026).

### ***Service of Process for Restraining Orders***

The law allows any family or household member who is the victim of domestic violence by another family or household member to apply to the Superior Court for a civil restraining order. If the court issues an ex-parte order (i.e. without a hearing) the applicant must notify the respondent about the hearing date.

A new law generally allows the restraining order applicant to transmit the hearing notice and other required documents electronically to a proper officer for service using a new electronic format. The applicant must also include the respondent profile form which is available on the judicial branch's website. The new law also prohibits an officer from charging any fee directly to a restraining order applicant. By law, the judicial branch is responsible for paying these fees ([PA 25-78](#), § 14, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Sexual Assault and Trafficking in Persons Victim Status Protected Classes Under Antidiscrimination Laws***

A new law makes sexual assault victim status and trafficking in persons victim status protected classes under the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) antidiscrimination laws. It does so by prohibiting various forms of discrimination based on someone's status as a sexual assault or human trafficking victim, such as in employment, public accommodations, housing sales or rentals, granting credit, and several other areas. In several cases, the new law classifies discrimination on this basis as a "discriminatory practice" under the CHRO laws. By doing so, it allows CHRO or individuals aggrieved by these violations to file a complaint with CHRO alleging discrimination and allows CHRO to investigate the complaint ([PA 25-139](#), §§ 2-15, effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Trafficking in Persons Council***

A new law changes the composition of the Trafficking in Persons Council by (1) increasing its membership, from 36 to 37, by adding the Department of Transportation commissioner, or his designee and (2) removing the specified qualifications of one of the governor's four appointees ([PA 25-139](#), § 1, effective upon passage).

## **Emergency Preparedness**

### ***Civil Preparedness Plan***

By law, the DESPP commissioner must prepare a comprehensive state plan and program for civil preparedness, subject to the governor's approval. Beginning October 1, 2028, a new law requires the plan and program to consider observed and projected climate trends related to extreme weather events, drought, coastal and inland flooding, storm surge, wildfire, extreme heat, and any other hazards the commissioner deems relevant ([PA 25-33](#), § 15, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***Emergency Preparedness Program for Solar Photovoltaic Facilities***

A new law requires the DESPP commissioner to establish a solar photovoltaic facility emergency preparedness program, which must include (1) the development of a solar photovoltaic facility emergency response plan facilities with a generating capacity greater than one megawatt, and (2) annual training of state and local emergency response personnel related to emergencies at these facilities. It also establishes an account to fund the program ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 273 & 274, effective October 1, 2025).

## **Firearms**

### ***Firearm Credentials and Disqualifying Misdemeanors***

A new law shortens the look-back period, from 20 to 8 years, for certain in-state misdemeanor convictions that disqualify someone from being issued various firearm credentials. It also adds certain misdemeanor convictions from other jurisdictions to the list of disqualifying offenses for these credentials, such as misdemeanors involving violence or (with certain exceptions) drug possession ([PA 25-43](#), §§ 4-6, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Firearm Industry Liability***

This session, the legislature passed a law allowing civil lawsuits against firearm industry members that fail to (1) establish, implement, and enforce certain measures ("reasonable controls") related to product sales and marketing or (2) comply with certain related restrictions. For example, the controls must be designed to prevent in-state firearm sales to people banned by law from

possessing them. Under the new law, a case can be brought by someone harmed by a violation of these provisions, a municipality, or the state. (While federal law generally prohibits lawsuits against gun manufacturers, sellers, or trade associations for the criminal or unlawful misuse of firearms or ammunition by third parties, this legislation seeks to apply to one of the exceptions provided by the federal law.) ([PA 25-43](#), §§ 1-3, effective October 1, 2025, and applicable to civil actions filed on or after that date.)

### ***Firearm Seizure or Recovery Federal eTrace Requirement***

A new law requires law enforcement agencies to opt into sharing information on recovered firearms through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives' electronic tracking system (eTrace). When a law enforcement agency seizes or recovers a firearm, current law requires that agency to take all appropriate steps to identify and trace the firearm's history.

The act requires law enforcement agencies to (1) submit all available information on the firearm's identify to eTrace; (2) opt into allowing information to be shared via eTrace; and (3) if the firearm was stolen or missing, enter information into the Connecticut Online Law Enforcement Communications Teleprocessing (COLLECT) system ([PA 25-157](#), § 1, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Local Permitting Authority for the Administration of Gun Laws in Municipalities***

A new law establishes a uniform definition for "local permitting authority," which generally refers to officials that are responsible for administering various gun laws on the municipal level. Under the new law, a "local permitting authority" is a chief of police, or where there is no chief of police, the chief executive officer, or the resident state trooper serving the municipality if designated by the chief executive officer, or the state police officer of the state police troop that has jurisdiction over the municipality ([PA 25-18](#), effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Project Longevity Initiative***

By law, the "Project Longevity Initiative" is a comprehensive, community-based initiative to reduce gun violence in the state's municipalities. Prior law required its implementation in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New London, Norwich, and Waterbury. A newly enacted law removes Norwich from the initiative. By law, the chief court administrator must consult with various state officials and local stakeholders (e.g., clergy members, nonprofits, and community leaders) in implementing the initiative ([PA 25-168](#), § 70, effective July 1, 2025).

## ***Requirements for Transfers of Handguns and Long Guns***

Prior law generally required handgun buyers (or other transferees) to (1) complete a DESPP firearms purchase application and (2) after the transaction is approved, sign a receipt with specified information. A new law combines these requirements into one DESPP-provided form called a “transfer document.” The new law also requires federally licensed firearms dealers to retain the transfer document for at least 20 years, or until they go out of business (non-federally licensed firearms dealers are required to keep the transfer document for only five years). These requirements do not apply to transfers between federally licensed firearms dealers, importers, manufacturers, or for transfers that involve antique handguns.

Under prior law, the procedures for long gun sales and transfers differed for gun dealers versus other sellers. Under the new law, private long gun transfers must go through the same process as transfers by gun dealers. Similar to the handgun provision, the new law also combines separate requirements for long gun transaction applications and receipts into one transfer document and sets record retention requirements ([PA 25-157](#), §§ 5-7, effective October 1, 2025).

## ***Statutory Handgun Purchasing Limits***

Legislation passed this session expands the persons and entities that may purchase more pistols and revolvers (i.e. handguns) than otherwise permitted under statutory 30-day purchasing limits (i.e. generally six for certain firearms instructors and three for anyone else that does not have an exception). The act exempts from the purchasing limit any firearm transferred to a defense contractor, nuclear-powered submarine manufacturer, aerospace company, or nuclear power generating facility through an agreement with a federal agency or applicable federal regulations for the purpose of training armed security force personnel or providing or maintaining an armed security force ([PA 25-18](#), § 8, effective October 1, 2025).

Relatedly, prior law generally prohibited the DESPP commissioner from issuing more than three authorization numbers for the retail sale of handguns to any transferee within a 30-day period (or six authorization numbers if the transferee is a certified firearms instructor). A new law excludes any firearm transferred by bequest, intestate succession, or those that move to and from a trust upon the death of a testator or settlor from counting toward these purchasing limits ([PA 25-157](#), § 5, effective October 1, 2025).



## **Juvenile Justice**

### ***Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee***

Passed in the budget implementer act, the legislature (1) expanded the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee's (JJPOC) membership by including the housing and emergency services and public protection commissioners or their designees and (2) established an advisory council within JJPOC to help the state develop its juvenile justice plan. The act also requires the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) and JJPOC to develop a statewide uniform youth diversion policy and a youth diversion training curriculum for police and establishes the following four new annual reporting requirements related to juvenile justice policy:

1. the education department to report to JJPOC on each school district with an attendance review team;
2. each municipality with a juvenile review board or other youth diversion program to report to the Children and Judiciary committees and the State's Attorney about diversions;
3. DCF to report to JJPOC on its implementation of the updated group home program for children removed from their homes due to high-risk; and
4. OPM to report to JJPOC on the reentry success plan ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 245-251, effective upon passage).

### ***Use of Handcuffs on Children***

The legislature enacted a new law that generally prohibits police officers from using handcuffs to restrain any child the officer knows is under age 14. This prohibition begins at the point of the child's initial contact with the police officer and applies as long as the child has not been adjudicated a delinquent. The new law makes exceptions when handcuffing is:

1. necessary for public safety;
2. necessary because the child is using or threatening to use physical force on a police officer who is engaging with the child; or
3. ordered by the court under its existing policy on using mechanical restraints in court ([PA 25-163](#), effective October 1, 2025).

## **Immigration**

### ***Civil Immigration Detainers***

Provisions in a new law on criminal justice matters expands who is considered a "law enforcement officer" under the civil immigration detainer law to include, among others, juvenile probation



officers and prosecutors. The law also broadens the circumstances under which a person can be arrested or detained under a civil immigration detainer to apply to people convicted of one of 13 specified crimes. It also allows federal immigration authorities to interview a person in state or local law enforcement custody under these circumstances ([PA 25-29](#), §§ 4 & 6, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Interactions Between School Personnel and Immigration Authorities***

A new law requires (1) public school superintendents to designate at least one administrator at each school to be responsible for interacting with federal immigration authorities and (2) boards of education to update their school security and safety plans with procedures on interacting with immigration authorities. The law (1) permits the designated administrator to request certain information from the immigration authorities including whether they have a judicial warrant and (2) provides school staff with protection against discipline for following its provisions ([PA 25-1](#), §§ 1-4, most provisions effective upon passage).

## **Law Enforcement Conduct**

### ***Chokeholds by Law Enforcement***

A provision in a new law on criminal justice reforms expands the circumstances under which law enforcement may use a chokehold or similar restraint methods to include defending a third person from the use or imminent use of deadly physical force ([PA 25-29](#), § 9, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Peace Officers' Use of Electronic Defense Weapons***

Provisions in a new criminal justice related law exclude electronic defense weapons used by peace officers from being considered deadly force for purposes of an investigation into whether an officer's use of force was justifiable. It correspondingly excludes these weapons from being considered a "deadly weapon" when a peace officer uses them ([PA 25-29](#), §§ 7 & 8, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Police Officers' DUI Arrest Incident Reports***

A new law eliminates the specific deadline for police officers to mail reports to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) after DUI arrests. The reports contain the grounds for arrest and chemical test results, among other information, and DMV uses them when imposing administrative licensing sanctions on those arrested for DUI. Prior law required that officers prepare this report and send it within six business days after the arrest. Under the new law, the report must be prepared within this timeframe, but mailing it within this timeframe is not required ([PA 25-159](#), § 61, effective July 1, 2025).

## ***Police Officer Review and Public Disclosure of Body-worn Camera or Dashboard Camera Footage***

This session, the legislature passed a law that alters the procedure for a police officer's review of body-worn or dashboard camera recording equipment. It also modifies the circumstances by which certain body-worn camera and dashboard camera footage must be disclosed upon request to the public within specified time constraints. The specified disclosure timeframe (1) no longer applies to disciplinary proceedings and (2) only includes recordings that capture the use of force ([PA 25-100](#), effective October 1, 2025).

## **Record Erasure and Expungement and Wrongful Incarceration**

### ***Criminal History Records***

The legislature enacted (1) a limited fee waiver for criminal history record or fingerprint searches for certain individuals whose records were required to be erased and (2) changes to the process by which DESPP handles criminal records erasure requests. Under the act, the process is now started by the submission of an application and a hearing is only needed when relief cannot be immediately granted ([PA 25-161](#), §§ 7 & 8, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***Nonqualifying Samples***

A provision in a new law on criminal justice related matters requires DESPP to disclose information from nonqualifying samples in the DNA data bank to the chief state's attorney before expunging them. And if the information is exculpatory to anyone charged with or convicted of a crime, the new law requires that it be disclosed to the person or the person's attorney ([PA 25-29](#), § 1, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Wrongful Incarceration Claims Process***

A new law establishes a process by which a wrongful incarceration claimant and the attorney general may agree or stipulate to facts and a compensation award that is presented to the claims commissioner, who then determines if the facts show that the claimant is eligible for compensation. If the commissioner agrees, the new law requires him to approve the agreement or stipulation and order immediate payment. It exempts these compensation awards from being submitted to the legislature for review if they are for \$1.5 million or less. This new law also changes the evidence that a claimant presents to the commissioner to show eligibility for a claim ([PA 25-57](#), effective July 1, 2025).

## ***Wrongful Incarceration Presettlement Funding Study***

The legislature passed a law requiring the Department of Banking commissioner, or his designee, to study and report on presettlement funding provided to individuals seeking compensation from the state for wrongful incarceration. The study and report must have recommended legislative changes needed to (1) increase consumer protections for individuals who enter into agreements to be repaid upon receiving a wrongful incarceration award and (2) have a process to appoint a trustee for an individual awaiting this award ([SA 25-20](#), effective upon passage).

## **Security Officers**

### ***Fingerprinting Requirement***

Current law requires applicants for security officer licenses or renewals of security officer licenses to submit to a state and national criminal history background check. Prior law required the submission of two sets of fingerprints for only the initial application, but not any following renewal. A new law removes the exception for renewals, instead requiring fingerprints to be submitted for renewal or initial security officer licenses.

Prior law exempted applicants of renewals of security officer licenses from fees; the act limits this to only fingerprint search or fingerprinting fees ([PA 25-157](#), § 3, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Special Permit for Electronic Defense Weapons***

A new law requires security officers (e.g., those employed by security firms or other entities) to obtain a special permit from DESPP to carry electronic defense weapons while working or directly traveling to and from work. DESPP is authorized to issue (1) permits for persons who have completed a DESPP approved training course, and (2) temporary permits while the application is pending. DESPP is also required to adopt regulations governing training courses. Additionally, all security officers using electronic defense weapons are required to undergo an annual refresher course and safety training, as required by the DESPP commissioner ([PA 25-157](#), § 2, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Training Requirement for Carrying Less Lethal Weapons***

A new law requires that applicants for security officer licenses who intend to carry less lethal weapons (i.e. a baton or pepper spray) while on duty to receive and complete DESPP-approved training. The training must teach the security officer how to use the weapon legally and in line with the manufacturer's recommendations. Active military members, and veterans within two years of a discharge, are exempt from the training requirement if they received equivalent training while serving ([PA 25-157](#), §§ 3 & 4, effective October 1, 2025).

## **Studies, Task Forces, Working Groups, and Reports**

### ***Correctional Center Relocation Study***

A new law requires the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) commissioner, in consultation with the DOC commissioner, to study the feasibility of relocating the Bridgeport and New Haven (Whalley Avenue) correctional centers to locations that would reduce the impact on neighborhoods. The DAS commissioner must submit the study to the Judiciary Committee by January 1, 2027 ([PA 25-168](#), § 267, effective upon passage).

### ***Data Sharing With the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division***

A new law requires UConn and the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities to provide data, on request and in compliance with the federal Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), to OPM's Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division when necessary for the division's duties (the division works with various state agencies to promote a more effective and cohesive criminal justice system) ([PA 25-119](#), § 3, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***EnCon Officer Study***

A new act requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to prepare a report for the legislature by February 1, 2026, on its environmental conservation (EnCon) police officers. The report must look at (1) the number of officers appointed in the last four years; (2) service call statistics; (3) statistics on EnCon officer enforcement of statutes and regulations; and (4) benchmarking this information to comparable states ([SA 25-23](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Intelligent Speed Assistance Devices Study***

Under a new law, the Vision Zero Council and the chief state's attorney must jointly study the feasibility of addressing speeding and reckless driving violations with intelligent speed assistance devices (which, when installed in a vehicle, limit the vehicle's speed based on the speed limit) and report its findings by January 15, 2026. Among other things, the study must consider the devices' accuracy and reliability and consider whether to recommend their use to the legislature. Any recommendation must outline a regulatory framework for their use, including the types and number of violations for which they may be required ([PA 25-65](#), § 22, effective upon passage).

### ***Report on Background Checks for Early Childhood Educators***

This session, the legislature enacted a new law that requires the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), in consultation with DESPP, to develop a report on background checks for early childhood educators,

including ways to improve background check processing time. OEC must submit the report to the legislature by July 1, 2026 ([PA 25-82](#), § 6, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***Task Force to Review Habeas Corpus Proceedings***

A new law establishes a task force to review the habeas corpus procedures used by the federal government and other states and requires it to report its findings and recommendations for best practices to the Judiciary Committee by January 15, 2027 ([PA 25-91](#), § 24, effective upon passage).

### ***Working Group to Study the Codes and Standards Committee***

Legislation passed this session requires the establishment of a working group within DAS to study the Codes and Standards Committee (e.g., its membership and procedures). It must submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the Public Safety and Security Committee by July 1, 2026. By law, the Codes and Standards Committee works with the state building inspector and state fire marshal to enforce the state building and fire codes ([PA 25-157](#), § 12, effective from passage).

## **Miscellaneous**

### ***Drones***

A new law generally prohibits, beginning on varying dates between October 1, 2025, and October 1, 2028, state agencies, municipalities, and those who contract with either from purchasing or using certain unmanned aircraft (i.e. drones) assembled or manufactured by a covered foreign entity (e.g., China or Russia). The same act also prohibits, with certain exceptions, (1) operating drones in close proximity to critical infrastructure facilities or to surveil these facilities or (2) equipping an aircraft or drone with a deadly weapon or certain other dangerous devices ([PA 25-1](#), §§ 5-8, various effective dates).

### ***Judicial Branch's Office of Information Privacy***

A new law establishes the Office of Information Privacy (OIP) within the judicial branch and authorizes it to take steps, upon request, to direct a public agency to remove a protected person's (e.g., judges and their dependents who live together) personal information from the agency's website or not publish it. The new law establishes OIP's powers and duties and specifies the steps that the office must take in carrying out its duties ([PA 25-91](#), § 1, effective January 1, 2026).

### ***Law Enforcement and Social Work Educational Projects***

A new law passed requires DESPP, in consultation with POST, to establish (1) a social work and law enforcement project at Southern Connecticut State University, and (2) a crime scene processing,

forensic evidence, and criminal investigations police training center at Central Connecticut State University ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 137 & 138, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***Motorcycle Helmets Safety Standards***

A new law increases, from age 18 to 21, the age under which all motorcycle and motor-driven cycle drivers and passengers must wear a helmet meeting federal helmet safety standards. A violation of this provision is an infraction subject to a minimum fine of \$90 ([PA 25-65](#), § 19, effective October 1, 2025).

### ***Payment for Treatment Under Certain Pretrial Programs***

A new law requires a person's insurance (specifically private, Medicaid, or Medicare), rather than the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), to cover the costs of substance use treatment under the pretrial Drug Intervention and Community Service Program or pretrial Impaired Driving Intervention Program if (1) the court finds the person is indigent and unable to pay, (2) the court waives the costs, and (3) these costs are a covered benefit under the person's insurance. DMHAS must continue to pay other program-related treatment costs not covered by insurance ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 113 & 114, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***State Marshal Commission***

A new law makes changes to the State Marshal Commission's duties, including requiring it to issue administrative bulletins at least quarterly covering things such as changes to laws affecting marshals, topics that refresh their knowledge in areas affecting their duties, and topics related to marshals' safety and nature of complaints filed against them ([PA 25-78](#), § 5, effective October 1, 2025).

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