

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

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HOUSE BILL 1024
Committee Substitute Favorable 6/14/22

Short Title: Durham Traffic Crash Investigators.

(Local)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

May 25, 2022

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF DURHAM TO EMPLOY TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATORS FOR WRECKS INVOLVING ONLY PROPERTY DAMAGE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) This act applies to the City of Durham only.

SECTION 1.(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the City of Durham is hereby authorized to employ and allow nonsworn personnel to investigate traffic crashes. The nonsworn personnel shall be known as "Traffic Crash Investigators."

SECTION 1.(c) The City of Durham shall establish the minimum standards for employment as a Traffic Crash Investigator.

SECTION 1.(d) Each Traffic Crash Investigator shall attend a training program designed by the Durham Police Department, in consultation with the North Carolina Justice Academy. Upon completion of the training program, a Traffic Crash Investigator shall spend not less than four weeks of field training with a law enforcement officer who has experience conducting traffic crash investigations.

SECTION 1.(e) Each Traffic Crash Investigator shall be issued credentials by the City of Durham identifying the individual as a Traffic Crash Investigator. The Traffic Crash Investigator shall produce official credentials at any time when requested by a member of the public involved in or as a witness to a crash. A Traffic Crash Investigator shall be issued a uniform that is substantially different in color and style from that of a law enforcement officer for the City of Durham. The uniform shall have patches that clearly identify the individual as a Traffic Crash Investigator. The individual's name shall be clearly displayed on the uniform. Traffic Crash Investigators shall not be issued badges.

SECTION 1.(f) Vehicles issued to, or used by, a Traffic Crash Investigator shall not bear markings or symbols that identify the vehicle as a police vehicle. The vehicle may have emergency equipment and lights installed but shall not use blue lights in any manner or form. Red and amber lights are permissible.

SECTION 1.(g) Traffic Crash Investigators shall investigate crashes involving only property damage. A Traffic Crash Investigator shall comply with all provisions of G.S. 20-166.1. A report completed by a Traffic Crash Investigator shall be treated the same as if it were completed by a law enforcement officer for the purposes of G.S. 20-166.1(i). A law enforcement officer shall investigate any crash involving personal injury or a fatality.

SECTION 1.(h) A Traffic Crash Investigator shall have no authority to arrest or issue criminal process. A Traffic Crash Investigator shall not be issued a weapon of any type.

SECTION 1.(i) A Traffic Crash Investigator shall have the same authority as a law enforcement officer to tow or remove a vehicle that is obstructing a public street or highway.



1 **SECTION 1.(j)** Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a Traffic Crash
2 Investigator shall have the same authority as a law enforcement officer to direct all traffic in
3 conformance with law and, in the event of a fire or other emergency or to expedite traffic or to
4 ensure safety, to direct traffic as conditions may require.

5 **SECTION 2.** Not later than December 31, 2023, the City of Durham shall submit to
6 the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety and the
7 Senate Committee on Appropriations on Justice and Public Safety a written report on the training
8 and use of Traffic Crash Investigators for the period commencing on the effective date of this act
9 and concluding November 1, 2023.

10 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.