

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 140

Short Title: Civilian Traffic Crash Investigators. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Faircloth, Hardister, Lambeth, and Ross (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Judiciary 2, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

February 20, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT AUTHORIZING CITIES TO EMPLOY AND ALLOW CIVILIAN PERSONNEL TO
3 INVESTIGATE TRAFFIC CRASHES.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1. Article 21 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes is amended by
6 adding a new section to read:

7 **"§ 160A-499.6. Civilian traffic crash investigators.**

8 A city may employ and allow civilian personnel to investigate traffic crashes (hereinafter
9 "civilian investigator"). All of the following shall apply to civilian investigators employed by a
10 city to investigate traffic crashes:

- 11 (1) The city shall establish the minimum standards for employment as a civilian
12 investigator.
- 13 (2) Each civilian investigator shall attend a training program designed by the chief
14 of police, or the chief's designee, or, if applicable, the sheriff of the county
15 with which the city has contracted to provide law enforcement services, or the
16 sheriff's designee, in consultation with the North Carolina Justice Academy.
17 Upon completion of the training program, each civilian investigator shall
18 spend not less than four weeks of field training with a law enforcement officer
19 who has experience conducting traffic crash investigations.
- 20 (3) Each civilian investigator shall be issued credentials by the city identifying
21 the individual as a civilian traffic crash investigator. The civilian investigator
22 shall produce official credentials at any time when requested by a member of
23 the public involved in or a witness to a crash.
- 24 (4) Each civilian investigator shall be issued a uniform that is substantially
25 different in color and style from that of a law enforcement officer for the city.
26 The uniform shall have patches that clearly identify the individual as a civilian
27 investigator, and the individual's name shall be clearly displayed on the
28 uniform. Civilian investigators shall not be issued badges.
- 29 (5) Any vehicles issued to, or used by, a civilian investigator shall not bear
30 markings or symbols that identify the vehicle as a police vehicle. The vehicle
31 may have emergency equipment and lights installed but shall not use blue
32 lights in any manner or form. Red and amber lights are permissible.
- 33 (6) Civilian investigators shall not be issued or carry a weapon of any type.
- 34 (7) Civilian investigators shall have no authority to arrest or issue criminal
35 process.



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- 1 (8) Civilian investigators shall investigate crashes involving only property
2 damage. Civilian investigators shall comply with all provisions of
3 G.S. 20-166.1. A report completed by a civilian investigator shall be treated
4 the same as if it were completed by a law enforcement officer for purposes of
5 G.S. 20-166.1(i). A law enforcement officer shall investigate any crash
6 involving personal injury or a fatality.
7 (9) Civilian investigators shall have the same authority as law enforcement
8 officers to tow or remove a vehicle that is obstructing a public street or
9 highway and shall use the city's existing police towing rotation system if one
10 has been established."

11 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.