



Fiscal Note

Fiscal Services Division



[HF 2521](#) – Abandonment of Cats and Dogs, Delivery to Shelters (LSB6006HV)
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Fiscal Note Version – New

Description

[House File 2521](#) narrows an exception for the crime of abandonment of cats and dogs under Iowa Code section [717B.8](#). Under the Bill, for the delivery of a cat or dog to an animal shelter or pound to be an exception to the crime of abandonment of the cat or dog, an employee or volunteer of the animal shelter or pound must physically accept the delivery of the animal.

Background

Under Iowa Code section 717B.8 (Abandonment of Cats and Dogs — Penalties), a person commits animal abandonment if the person owns or has custody of a cat or dog and relinquishes all rights in and duties to care for the cat or dog. However, under current law (Iowa Code section 717B.8), the crime of abandonment of cats and dogs does not apply if the cat or dog is delivered to an animal shelter or pound.

Under Iowa Code section 717B.8, a person who commits animal abandonment:

- Is guilty of a simple misdemeanor if the delivery or relinquishment does not cause injury or death to an animal,
- Is guilty of a serious misdemeanor if delivery or relinquishment causes injury other than serious injury or death to an animal, and
- Is guilty of an aggravated misdemeanor if delivery or relinquishment causes serious injury or death to an animal.

In FY 2025, there were 21 convictions under Iowa Code section 717B.8 involving 16 individuals.

A simple misdemeanor is punishable by confinement for up to 30 days in lieu of a fine or in addition to a fine of up to \$855. A serious misdemeanor is punishable by confinement for up to one year and a fine of at least \$430 but not more than \$2,560. An aggravated misdemeanor is punishable by confinement for up to two years and a fine of at least \$855 but not more than \$8,540.

Assumptions

- The following will not change over the projection period: charge, conviction, and sentencing patterns and trends; prisoner length of stay (LOS); revocation rates; plea bargaining; and other criminal justice system policies and practices.
- County jail data is unavailable. For purposes of this analysis, the marginal cost for county jails is assumed to be \$50 per day.
- Conviction data reflects the total number of convictions in adult court, which may include multiple convictions per individual. Not all convictions lead to incarceration, and there may be a delay between conviction and prison admission, which can contribute to differences in totals.
- A six-month delay is assumed from the effective date of the Bill to the date the first offender will enter the correctional system.

- Offender-based convictions are a count of individuals convicted of the same offense. Each offender is counted only once per Iowa Code section, regardless of the number of individual convictions.
- Admissions are a count of individuals newly admitted to the Department of Corrections (DOC) for supervision during a selected time period, based on the most serious offense committed.

Correctional Impact

The correctional impact of the Bill cannot be determined because the number of new convictions cannot be estimated, but is anticipated to be minimal. **Figure 1** shows estimates for sentencing to State prison, parole, probation, or Community-Based Corrections (CBC) residential facilities; LOS in months under those supervisions; and supervision marginal costs per day for a serious misdemeanor and aggravated misdemeanor.

Figure 1 — Sentencing Estimates and Length of Stay (LOS) in Months

Conviction Offense Class	Percent Ordered to State Prison	FY 2025 Avg LOS in Prison (All Releases)	Marginal Cost Per Day Prison	Percent Ordered to Probation	FY 2025 Field Avg LOS on Probation	Avg Cost Per Day Probation	Marginal Cost Per Day CBC	Marginal Cost Per Day Jail	FY 2025 Field Avg LOS on Parole	Marginal Cost Per Day Parole
Serious Misdemeanor	2.3%	7.3	\$23.07	44.8%	21.0	\$8.00	\$16.35	\$50.00	N/A	\$8.00
Aggravated Misdemeanor Non-Persons	31.1%	9.3	\$23.07	37.1%	28.4	\$8.00	\$16.35	\$50.00	11.2	\$8.00

Refer to the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) memo addressed to the General Assembly, [Cost Estimates Used for Correctional Impact Statements](#), dated January 12, 2026, for information related to the correctional system.

Minority Impact

The minority impact cannot be determined since it is not known how many additional convictions would result from the changes under the Bill. Refer to the LSA memo addressed to the General Assembly, [Minority Impact Statements](#), dated January 12, 2026, for information related to minorities in the criminal justice system.

Fiscal Impact

The fiscal impact of the Bill cannot be determined, but is anticipated to be minimal. **Figure 2** shows the average State cost per relevant offense. The estimated impact to the General Fund includes operating costs incurred by the Judicial Branch, the Indigent Defense Fund, and the DOC. The costs would be incurred across multiple fiscal years for prison and parole supervision.

Figure 2 — Average State Cost Per Offense

Offense Class	Average Cost
Simple Misdemeanor	\$30 to \$420
Serious Misdemeanor	\$350 to \$6,200
Aggravated Misdemeanor	\$8,300 to \$12,200

Sources

Department of Corrections
 Division of Data, Planning, and Improvement (DPI), Department of Management (DOM)

/s/ Jennifer Acton

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