

Pennsylvania Dog Laws



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement

www.agriculture.state.pa.us



What Are Pennsylvania's Dog Laws?

1. All dogs three months of age or older must be licensed. Licenses are issued by the county treasurer. (A license application form is on the reverse side.)
2. All dogs must be under control and may not be allowed to run at large. Dogs are personal property and owners are responsible for damages caused by their dog.
3. It is illegal to mistreat or abuse any animal. Violations should be reported to the local humane organization or police.
4. You may not place any poison or harmful substance in any place where it may be easily found and eaten by dogs whether it be your property or elsewhere.
5. It is illegal to abandon or attempt to abandon any dog. Fines for abandonment range from \$300 to \$1,000 plus court costs.
6. No dog under eight weeks old may be bartered, traded, sold or transferred.
7. You must have a current kennel license if you operate a kennel in which at least 26 dogs are kept or transferred in a calendar year. All boarding and day care facilities require a kennel license.
8. It is illegal to interfere with an officer or employee of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture engaged in enforcement of dog laws.
9. Maximum fine for owning an unlicensed dog is \$300.

The Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement

- Enforces licensing and control of dogs.
- Seizes and detains any dog viewed running at large unaccompanied by the owner.
- Investigates dog bites.
- Enforces rabies law.
- Enforces kennel licensing and conduct inspections.
- Establishes and enforces quarantine of dogs, in certain areas.
- Inspects dangerous dog housing facilities.

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- Prosecutes dog law violations in court.
- Reimburses people for rabies-caused death to livestock—or coyote and dog-caused damage to livestock, poultry and domestic game birds.
- Provide educational services concerning dog ownership in Pennsylvania.

There Are Penalties for Violators

Ignoring Pennsylvania's rabies vaccination law can be costly—in more ways than one:

- The Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement conducts random checks to determine if rabies vaccinations are current. Authorities investigating complaints about strays, animal bites and disturbances also check for violations.
- Owners of dogs and house cats three months of age that are not vaccinated or have not received a booster shot at the required time can be fined up to \$300 in magisterial court.
- Failure to have a pet vaccinated jeopardizes its life by leaving it vulnerable to exposure to wildlife or domestic animals that may have contracted the disease. If your pet gets rabies, it cannot be saved.
- Unvaccinated pets exposed to positive rabies carriers may be placed under quarantine up to six months in an enclosure to insure there is no contact with other animals or humans.
- If an unvaccinated pet acquires rabies, it could pass the disease along to you, your family, neighbors or others through bites or scratches. The treatment to prevent rabies from developing in humans is costly, and once rabies develops it is nearly always fatal.

Dangerous Dogs

Article V of the Dog Law was enacted to provide greater protection to persons attacked by a "dangerous dog," and to provide for greater control by owners of dogs considered to be dangerous.

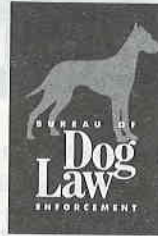
Listed below is a brief description of the provisions of the Dangerous Dog Law.

1. A dangerous dog is defined as one which has attacked a human being without provocation, or has killed or has inflicted severe injury to a domestic

animal without provocation while off an owner's property. Furthermore, a dog is considered dangerous if it killed or has inflicted severe injury to a human being, or if it was involved in committing a crime.

2. The act does not apply to police dogs, guide dogs for the blind, hearing dogs for the deaf, aide dogs for the handicapped, or farm dogs (under certain circumstances). The act does not apply where a person attacked, provoked the animal, or was committing willful trespass or another unlawful act for which civil suit can be brought.
3. If a dog attacks a person, the person (or anyone acting on his/her behalf), the state dog warden or a police officer may file a complaint with a Magisterial District Justice charging the owner or keeper with harboring a dangerous dog.
4. If the dog is deemed dangerous by the Magisterial District Justice, the owner must:
 - Register the animal with Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement and re-register on an annual basis. Registration fee is \$500 per calendar year for the life of the dog plus an additional amount as set by the Department to cover administrative costs.
 - Confine the dog in a proper enclosure.
 - Post a warning sign with a symbol that warns children of the presence of a dangerous dog.
 - Keep the dog muzzled and leashed when outside the proper enclosure.
 - Spay or neuter the dog.
 - Microchip the dog.
 - Be compliant with court ordered restitution.
 - Post a bond or purchase and maintain liability insurance in the amount of \$50,000 to pay for injuries inflicted by the dog.
 - Agree not to cancel the liability insurance during the licensed period unless he/she disposes of the dog.
 - Sign a statement providing that he/she will notify the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement, state dog warden and local police if the dog is loose, attacks a human or an animal, dies or is sold/donated.

5. A dangerous dog could be confiscated under certain circumstances (i.e., the dog is not properly registered or not kept in a proper enclosure). The owner would be guilty of a criminal offense ranging from a summary offense to a first-degree misdemeanor.
6. All known incidents of dog attacks by dangerous dogs must be reported to the state dog warden, who must investigate all reports.
7. The state Dangerous Dog Law overrides all local ordinances relating to dangerous dogs.
8. Police are authorized to enforce all aspects of the Dog Law.



For Additional information, please contact
 the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement
 717-787-3062

Clip and mail to your county treasurer

ADLEB 14-18 rev.5/2010
 License # _____ Year of license _____

DOG LICENSE APPLICATION

DATE	DOG'S NAME	DOG'S AGE	BREED
COLOR OF DOG	SPOTTED <input type="checkbox"/>	WHITE <input type="checkbox"/>	BLACK <input type="checkbox"/>
	BROWN <input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER-INDICATE <input type="checkbox"/>	
If the license is issued by an agent of the COUNTY TREASURER, an additional 50¢ will be charged. ALL PRICES INCLUDE SERVICE FEES ALLOWED BY LAW.			
REGULAR FEE			
MALE \$8.45 <input type="checkbox"/>	NEUTERED MALE \$6.45 <input type="checkbox"/>	FEMALE \$8.45 <input type="checkbox"/>	SPAYED FEMALE \$6.45 <input type="checkbox"/>
PERSON WITH DISABILITY OR SENIOR CITIZEN FEE			
MALE \$6.45 <input type="checkbox"/>	NEUTERED MALE \$4.45 <input type="checkbox"/>	FEMALE \$6.45 <input type="checkbox"/>	SPAYED FEMALE \$4.45 <input type="checkbox"/>
PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU ARE APPLYING FOR A LICENSE THAT REQUIRES THE DOG OWNER BE A SENIOR CITIZEN, AGE 65 AND OLDER, OR A PERSON WITH DISABILITY, YOU MUST PROVIDE PROOF OF AGE OR DISABILITY TO THE COUNTY TREASURER OR AGENT.			
OWNER'S NAME		TELEPHONE NO.	OWNER'S DATE OF BIRTH
			MO DAY YR.
STREET OR R.D. NO.		TOWNSHIP/BOROUGH	
CITY		STATE PA	ZIP CODE
E-MAIL ADDRESS			
I HEARBY VERIFY THAT I AM THE OWNER OF THE DOG THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS DOG LICENSE APPLICATION. I MAKE THIS STATEMENT SUBJECT TO THE CRIMINAL PENALTIES OF 18 Pa. § SECTION 4904 (RELATING TO UNSWORN FALSIFICATION TO AUTHORITIES).			
_____ SIGNATURE OF DOG OWNER/APPLICANT REQUIRED			
_____ IF APPLICANT IS A MINOR, SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN IS REQUIRED MAIL TO COUNTY TREASURER'S OFFICE			