

# PENNSYLVANIA DOG LAWS

## It Is Unlawful

- \* To keep or harbor any dog three months 6  
age or older without a current Pennsylvania dog  
license ( due on or before January 1).
- \* To own a dog three (3) months of age or  
older without a current vaccination against  
rabies administered by a licensed veterinarian.
- \* To allow your dog to run at large. All  
dogs must be under control. Owners  
are responsible for all damages caused  
by their dog(s).
- \* To mistreat or abuse any animal. Report  
violations to your local humane organization  
or police.
- \* To place any poison or harmful substance in  
any place, on your own property or elsewhere,  
where it may be easily found and eaten by  
dogs.
- \* To abandon or attempt to abandon any  
dog. Fines for abandonment range from  
\$300 to \$1,000 plus court costs.
- \* To barter, trade sell or transfer any dog  
under seven weeks old.
- \* To operate a kennel that keeps, harbors,  
boards, shelters, sells, gives away or transfers  
a total of 26 or more dogs in any one calendar  
year without a current kennel license.
- \* For any person to interfere with an officer or  
employee of the Department in the  
enforcement of the Dog Law.

## Responsibilities of the Bureau of Dog Law

- \* For any person to knowingly make any false  
statement or to conceal any fact required to be  
disclosed under any of the provisions of the  
State Dog Law (Act 225).

**Summary violations of the dog law cost up  
to a maximum of \$300 plus court costs.**

**Misdemeanor violations of the dog law cost  
up to \$2,000 plus court costs.**

## About Dogs

Owning a dog is one of the great American pastimes  
and privileges. Dogs fill the role of a companion,  
guide, hunter, guardian, herdsman and entertainer. But  
owning a dog is a major responsibility as well. That  
responsibility extends not only to proper care and  
training of you dog, but also to your responsibility for  
the dog's behavior. A proper understanding of the  
responsibilities of dog ownership is necessary in  
today's complex society.

**All Dogs over 3 months of age MUST be  
LICENSED.**

ALL DOGS must be UNDER CONTROL. This means  
that when your dog is not on your property, it must be  
under the DIRECT CONTROL of you or a handler.  
The best way to control your dog is with a LEASH.  
Remember, dogs are PERSONAL PROPERTY. You  
are RESPONSIBLE for any DAMAGE caused by your  
dog.

## Ignoring Pennsylvania's Rabies Vaccination Law Can Be Costly--In More Ways Than One.

- \* The Agriculture Department's Bureau of Dog  
**Enforcement (Cont.)**

Law Enforcement conducts random checks to  
determine if rabies vaccinations are current.  
Authorities investigating complaints about  
strays, animals bites and disturbances also  
check for violations.

- \* Owners of dogs and house cats 3 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 magistrate's court.
- \* Failure to have a pet vaccinated jeopardizes its  
life by leaving it vulnerable to exposure to  
rabid animals -- either 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.

## Some Responsibilities of the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement

- \* Reimburse people for dog-caused damage to  
livestock, poultry and domestic game birds.
- \* Enforce licensing and control of dogs
- \* Seize and detain any dog seen running at  
large, investigate dog bites.
- \* Enforce kennel licensing and inspection.

- \* Establish and enforce quarantine of dogs, in certain areas.
- \* Fund counties and humane organizations to establish dog control facilities.
- \* Provide education services concerning dog ownership in Pennsylvania.
- \* Enforce rabies law.
- \* Reimburse people for rabies caused death to livestock.

**Responsibilities of Police in The Dog Law.**

- \* Assist in the enforcement of the Dog Law, including licensing and control.
- \* Seize and detain any dog viewed running at large, unaccompanied by the owner, investigate dog bites.

**DOG LAW REGIONAL SUPERVISORS**

**Region 1**  
13410 Dunham Road, Meadville PA 19335  
814-332-6890

**Region 2**  
2130 County Farm Road-Suite 2 - Montoursville 17754  
717-433-2640

**Region 3**  
Rt.. 92 South Box C - Tunkhannock 18657  
717-836-2181

**Region 4**  
5349 Wm. Flynn Hwy. - Gibsonla 15044  
412-443-1585

**Region 5**  
Executive Plaza-615 Howard Avenue - Altoona 16601  
814-946-7315

**Region 6**  
2301 N. Cameron St. Rm 102, Harrisburg 17110  
717-787-4833

**Region 7**  
Route 113 Box 300 Creamery 19430  
(Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh,  
Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Schuylkill  
Counties)  
610-489-1003

**BUREAU OF DOG LAW ENFORCEMENT**

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE  
2301 NORTH CAMERON STREET  
HARRISBURG, PA 17110-9408  
717-787-4833**

**Send your Dog License in to:**  
Chester County Government Services Center  
Treasurer's Office  
Two North High Street  
West Chester, PA 19380