

# DOG LICENSING

In October 2023, Gov Shapiro Signed the bipartisan Dog Law Modernization Bill to protect PA dogs, consumers, and communities. This new law takes effect January to March 2024.

## WHY LICENSE YOUR DOG?

Dog license sales fund Pennsylvania dog wardens' work upholding high standards of care in kennels; shutting down illegal kennels; and keeping communities safer by holding dangerous dog owners responsible. Kennel fees had not increased in nearly 60 years and the price of a license had not increased in nearly 30 years, severely straining funds to support enforcement of Pennsylvania's Dog Law.

Dog licenses, required in Pennsylvania, help make dogs readily identifiable if they are lost. Even if a dog has a chip, a license on their collar is clearly visible, and helps ensure they make it home rather than ending up in a shelter.

Dog wardens license and inspect boarding and breeding kennels and shelters across the state to uphold the standards, which are among the nation's highest.

## WHAT HAS CHANGED?

- **ALL** dogs in Pennsylvania will now be required to be licensed at the time of purchase (legal at eight weeks), or by three months old, whichever comes first. You may need an annual license until your pet has a microchip.
- Those selling or adopting dogs will be required to provide a dog license application along with the dog.
- The fee for an annual dog license will increase to \$8.70 on March 1, 2024 for all dogs. Currently \$6.70 for spayed or neutered dogs, and \$8.70 for others.
- Lifetime license fees will increase to \$52.70 on March 1, 2024. Currently \$31.70 for neutered animals, and \$51.70 for others.
- The law enables the Sec. of Agriculture to increase fees again by \$2 on December 1, 2025, and \$1 on December 1, 2027.
- Fines for unlicensed dogs will range from \$100 to \$500, plus court costs.
- The criminal penalties for all other violations of the dog law have increased to \$500 to \$1,000 for summary offenses and \$1,000 to \$5,000 for misdemeanor offenses plus court costs.
- The annual registration for harboring a dangerous dog will increase from \$500 to \$1,000 for any dog deemed dangerous after 90-days.
- Owners of dogs already declared dangerous that attack again, will be required to find and pay a kennel to house the dog during court proceedings, to ensure the community remains safe until a final determination is made.
- License fees for kennels will increase on March 1, 2024.
- Kennels and shelters that offer dogs for sale or adoption must include their kennel license number in advertisements.
- Kennels selling or adopting dogs at retail to the public are responsible for disclosing breeder information, vaccination and medical documentation, and any known bite attacks on a human or a domestic animal.
- Dogs imported into PA kennels must be isolated for at least 14 days.

## HOW DO I LICENSE?

- Licenses can be purchased through Pennsylvania's county treasurers. Lifetime licenses are available for dogs with a microchip (or tattoo for racing greyhounds mostly). Otherwise licenses are annual.
  - Discounts are available for qualifying senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Each license fee includes \$1.70 postage and administrative costs.
- <https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Animals/DogLaw/pa-dog-laws/Pages/County-Treasurers.aspx>
  - Forms are available on this site – must be signed by CCVH
- The microchip must be checked by an accredited source with a scanner (like CCVH) and certified that it matches. We have to scan BEFORE we sign the form so your pet does need to come into the office.
- Call us with any questions or concerns!