

TOWN OF STOUGHTON

DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS

Provided by:

Office of the Town Clerk
Cheryl A. Mooney, Town Clerk
10 Pearl Street
Stoughton, MA 02072
781-341-1300

**All dog licenses expire annually on
December 31**

- \$10 for every altered male or spayed female dog.
- \$15 for every unaltered male or unspayed female dog.

Kennel Fees:

1-3 dogs - \$26

4-10 dogs - \$51

More than 10 dogs - \$101

Dog owners whose pets are not licensed on or before May 1st (each year) are subject to a \$25.00 late fee.

Dogs not licensed by June 1st will have to pay a \$25 FINE for VIOLATING STATUTE in addition to late fees and licensing fee.

General Bylaws

Chapter 78

§ 78-1. Pasturing prohibited.

The pasturing of cattle or other animals, with or without a keeper, in or upon any street or public way in the Town is hereby forbidden.

§ 78-2. Animals on sidewalks.

No person shall lead or drive any horse, goat, swine or neat animal upon any sidewalk so as to interfere with the convenient use of the same by pedestrians.

§ 78-3. License fees.

The annual fee for every dog license, except as otherwise provided by law (\$1

additional), shall be established by the state. No fee shall be charged for a license for a dog specially trained to lead or serve a blind person, provided that the Division of the Blind certifies that such dog is so trained and actually in the services of a blind person. No license fee or part thereof shall be refunded because of the subsequent death, loss, spaying or removal from the Commonwealth or other disposal of the dog, nor shall any license fee or part thereof paid by mistake be paid or recovered back after it has been paid over to the county under MGL c. 140, § 147.

§ 78-4. Disturbing the peace.

No person shall own or keep in the Town any dog which by biting, excessive barking, howling or in any other manner disturbs the quiet of the public.

§ 78-5. Nuisance complaints.

If any person shall make a complaint in writing to the Dog Officer that any dog owned or harbored within his jurisdiction is a nuisance by reason of vicious disposition or excessive barking or other disturbance, the Dog Officer shall investigate such complaint, which may include an examination under oath of the complainant, and submit a written report to the Selectmen of his findings and recommendations, together with the written complaint. Upon receipt of such report and examinations of the complainant under oath, the Selectmen may make such order concerning the restraint, muzzling or disposal of such dog as may be deemed necessary. The Dog

Officer, after investigation, may issue an interim order that such dog be restrained or muzzled for a period not to exceed 14 days to enable the Selectmen to issue their order following receipt of the report of the Dog Officer. If the Selectmen fail to act during the period of the interim order, upon expiration of the period the interim order is automatically vacated.

§ 78-6. Running at large.

No person owning or harboring a dog shall suffer or allow it to run at large in any of the streets or public places in the Town of Stoughton or allow it upon any of the streets or public places in the Town of Stoughton or allow it upon the premises of anyone other than the owner or keeper of such dog without the permission of the owner or occupant of such premises. No dog shall be permitted in any street or public place within the Town of Stoughton unless it is effectively restrained by a chain or leash not exceeding 10 feet in length.



§ 78-7 Seizure and impounding.

It shall be the duty of the Dog Officer to apprehend any dog found running at large in any street or public place within the Town of Stoughton or in violation of any of the provisions of this article, and to impound such dog in the place provided therefore. The Dog Officer, upon receiving any such dog, shall make a complete registry, entering the breed, color, and sex of such dog and whether licensed. If licensed, he shall enter the name and address of the owner and the number of the license tag. The owner, if known, shall be notified as soon as possible that the dog has been impounded. The owner of any dog so impounded may reclaim such dog upon payment of the license fee, if unpaid, and of all costs and charges incurred by the Town for impounding and maintenance of such dog as provided by law.

§ 78-8. Muzzling or confinement of dogs.

- A. The Dog Officer may order a dog to be muzzled or confined to its owner’s premises, whichever in his judgment may be required, for any of the following reasons:
 - (1) If found at large or unmuzzled, as the case may be, while an order of the Board of Selectmen for the confinement or muzzling of such dog is in effect.

- (2) If found in a school, schoolyard or public recreational area.
- (3) For having bitten any person.
- (4) For having killed or maimed or otherwise damaged any other domesticated animal.
- (5) For chasing any vehicle upon any public way or way open to public travel in the Town.
- (6) For any violation of §78-4 or 78-6.

B. A person aggrieved by an order of the Board of Selectmen or the Dog Officer may seek judicial review in the manner provided in MGL c. 140 § 157.

§ 78-9. Hunting dogs.

For the purposes of this article, a dog, when in the presence of its owners, who is being trained for hunting shall be considered leashed and under control.

§ 78-10. Late fee.

Except for violations of § 78-6 which are punishable in accordance with the schedule of fines set forth therein, should any owner or keeper of a dog failure to license that dog, on or before May 1, that owner or keeper shall pay a late fee of \$25, said fee to be in addition to the license fee for all dogs licensed on or after May 1 of any year, excepting a dog brought into the Town as provided in MGL c. 140, § 138, this late fee shall be applicable from the 61st day after arrival of such dog; and in

addition, should any owner or keeper of a dog fail to comply with the provisions of this article or any order of the Dog Officer issued pursuant to this article, that owner or keeper shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$25 for each offense.

§ 78-11. Muzzle required for certain dogs.

- A. No owner of, or person having the care of, any American Staffordshire Terrier, a/k/a American Pit Bull Terrier or Bull Terrier, shall permit it to be off his own premises, whether leashed or unleashed, unless it is wearing a muzzle.
- B. In this section, the word “muzzle” means a device that is used commercially with greyhounds.
- C. The muzzle must be made in a manner which will not cause injury to the dog or interfere with its vision or respiration, but must prevent it from biting any person or animal.

§ 78-12. Violations and penalties.

Except for violations of § 78-10 which are punishable in accordance with the fee set forth therein, the provisions of this chapter shall be enforced by the Animal Control Officer or any regular Stoughton police officer, by noncriminal complaint pursuant to the provisions of MGL c. 40, §21D. Each day on which a violation exists shall be deemed to be a separate offense. The penalty for violation of any provision of this chapter for purposes of noncriminal disposition shall be \$50.



Adopted Annual Town Meeting

February 6, 1939

Town Meeting Actions

April 24, 1972; October 3, 1983; August 11, 1987; and April 30, 1979.

Approved by Attorney General

November 1, 1972; July 25, 1979; December 7, 1983; October 26, 1987; and September 18, 1992