

TOWN OF PRINCETON
CHAPTER XII - DOG RESTRAINT AND REGULATIONS
(From the TOWN OF PRINCETON GENERAL BYLAWS-updated 2022)

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS

The following words and phrases as used in this By-Law, unless the context otherwise requires, shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Dog": Shall mean all animals of canine species, both male and female.

(b) "Owner": Shall mean any person or persons, firm, association, or corporation owning, keeping or harboring a dog, as herein defined.

(c) "Nuisance dog": A dog that:

1) By excessive barking or other disturbance, is a source of annoyance to a sick person residing in the vicinity: OR

2) By excessive barking, causing damage or other interference, a reasonable person would find such behavior disruption to one's quiet and peaceful enjoyment: OR

3) Has threatened or attacked livestock, a domestic animal, or a person, but such a threat or attack was not a grossly disproportionate reaction under all circumstances: OR

4) Is elsewhere than on the premises of its keeper unless such dog

(a) is then under control of a person competent to control and restrain such dog or

(b) is not a threat to public safety, OR

5) Any unspayed female dog in season and not confined.

(Amended at Annual Town Meeting May 14, 2014)

(d) "Animal Control Officer (ACO)": Shall mean a person appointed by the Selectboard to Enforce M.G.L. Chapter 140 sections 136A-174E, inclusive and this bylaw.

(Amended at the Annual Town Meeting - May 12, 2009, Amended May 13, 2014)

(e) "License Period": Shall mean the time between January first and the following December thirty-first, both dates inclusive.

(f) "Dog License": Shall mean an annual license issued for all dogs over six months of age. The owner shall securely attach the town's license tag to their dog.

(g) "Kennel" – a pack or collection of dogs on a single premise, including a commercial boarding or training kennel, Commercial breeder kennel, domestic charitable corporation, personal kennel, or veterinary kennel per M.G. L. Chapter 140, Section 136A. *(Adopted at Annual Town Meeting May 13, 2014)*

SECTION 2. PROHIBITION

No keeper of a dog shall permit such dog(s) to be a nuisance dog in the Town of Princeton.
(Amended at Annual Town Meeting May 13, 2014)

SECTION 3. ENFORCEMENT

The Animal Control Officer shall enforce the provisions of this By-Law and to that end he shall have the authority to seek complaints in the District Court for violations thereof. He shall investigate complaints of alleged violations of this By-Law. He shall also apprehend any dog found by him to be a nuisance dog and impound such dog in a suitable place or order the keeper thereof to restrain it.
(Amended at Annual Town Meeting May 13, 2014)

SECTION 4. PROCEDURE FOLLOWING IMPOUNDMENT

(a) Notice to Owner: The Animal Control Officer shall immediately notify the owner of any dog impounded by him under the provisions of this By-Law if such owner is known to him. If such owner is not known by him no notice shall be necessary.

(b) Redemption of Impounded Dogs: The owner of any dog(s) impounded under the provisions of this By-Law may redeem such dog provided he first

1) reimburse the Town for its expenses for initial handling of such dog plus an amount for each day of impoundment thereof according to fees set annually by the Town of Rutland, and
(Amended at Annual Town Meeting May 13, 2014)

2) procures, from the Town Clerk's office, a license and tag for any such dog not licensed.

SECTION 5. DISPOSITION OF UNCLAIMED DOGS

Any dog which has been impounded under the provision of this by-law and has not been redeemed by the owner within seven (7) days and/or the owner is unknown, the dog may be disposed of as provided by Section 151A, Chapter 140 of the General Laws as amended. If the dog owner is known, the identified owner shall be liable for all costs for impounding incurred by the town or the owner of the impounding facility. *(Amended at the Annual Town Meeting – May 12, 2009, Amended May 13, 2014)*

SECTION 6. ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

The Animal Control Officer shall keep an account of all monies received by him under the provisions of this by-law.

SECTION 7. PENALTY

Violations of Section 2: Any person violating the provisions of Section 2 of this by-law shall be liable to fine in accordance with the procedure prescribed in Section 172A of Chapter 140 of the General Laws, as amended, at a schedule of fines set by the Selectboard.

Owners of Dogs who receive three (3) or more notices of violation of this by-law shall be subject to a hearing before the Selectboard under the provisions of Chapter 140, Section 157 of the General Laws. *(Amended at the Annual Town Meeting – May 12, 2009)*

SECTION 8. UNLICENSED DOG FINES

Under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 140, Section 141 a fine of not less than \$50.00 shall be imposed on the owner of a dog who has not licensed such dog on or before the close of the last business day in the month of April of each year, postmark is not acceptable. Such fine may be enforced by non-criminal disposition pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 21D. *(Amended at the Annual Town Meeting - May 15, 200, Amended May 13, 2014)*

SECTION 9. DISPOSITION OF FUNDS

Any funds collected pursuant to the provisions of this by-law by the Animal Control Officer or persons authorized to license dogs in the Town, shall be accounted for and paid over to the Town Treasurer in a timely manner.

SECTION 10. FEES

The Selectboard will set the fee rate for dog licenses, impounding fees and offense or violation fees. The current fee schedule (Appendix A) is as follows:

DOG FEES:

1. Annual License:	Male	\$15.00
	Female	\$15.00
	Spayed/Neutered	\$10.00
	Transfer Fee	\$ 2.00
	Replacement Tag	\$ 1.00
	Service Animal *	\$ 0

*As defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act or regulations promulgated thereunder. *(Amended at Special Town Meeting – March 10, 2009, Amended May 13, 2014)*

2. Late Fee: A late fee of \$25.00 per dog shall be imposed on the owner of a dog who has not licensed such dog on or before the last business day of April of each year; postmark is not acceptable. *(Amended May 9, 2017)*

3. Impound Fees:

Initial handling (pick-up)	\$ 25.00
Each day of confinement	\$ 25.00 (per day)

(Amended at Annual Town Meeting May 13, 2014)

4. Penalty for violation of by-laws:

First Offense	\$10.00
Second Offense	\$25.00
Third and subsequent offenses	\$50.00

(Amended at the Annual Town Meeting - June 3, 1996, and at the Annual Town Meeting – May 12, 2009)

SECTION 11. KENNEL LICENSES

Under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 140, Section 137A, no kennel license will be issued until the kennel has passed inspection by the Animal Control Officer.

Kennel Types are defined by M.G.L. Chapter 140, Section 136A

- Personal Kennel – a pack or collection of more than 4 dogs, 3 months or older, owned or kept under single ownership, for private personal use.
- Commercial Boarding or Training Kennel
- Commercial Breeder Kennel
- Domestic Charitable Corporation Kennel
- Veterinary Kennel

To determine the amount of the license fee for a kennel, a dog under the age of 6 months shall not be counted in the number of dogs kept in a kennel.

Fees for all kennel types are as follows:

Four (4) dogs: \$ 40.00

Five (5) to ten (10) dogs: \$ 60.00

Eleven (11) or more dogs: \$100.00

(Adopted at the Annual Town Meeting, May 16, 2000, Amended May 13, 2014)