



### **Law: Abandoning a Domestic Animal is a Crime**

**Why?:** It is our responsibility to provide for the domestic animals we have brought into our lives. Because domesticated animals rely on their owners to survive it is illegal to abandon them or leave them without care. Owning an animal comes with legal responsibilities, as does caring for an animal on behalf of another person. That includes making a plan for an animal's continued care if you are no longer able to keep them. Abandoning an animal or making false reports about where an animal came from can result in prosecution and up to a \$1,000 fine.

### **Law: All Dogs Must be on a Leash No Longer Than 6 Feet When in Public**

**Why?:** Out of respect for other dog owners and everyone's safety. By not restraining your dog you are placing them and other community members at risk. Not all dogs like other dogs, and some dogs may attack or bite a dog who gets too close to them. If your dog is not on a leash and they run up to greet a strange dog, you, your dog, and the other owner could end up getting hurt. Long leashes make it difficult to control your dog's movement effectively. No matter how well trained or behaved your dog is, they can still be frightened by strange situations or loud noises. Having them on a leash prevents them from getting lost, running into traffic, and potentially causing an accident. Bottom line: a leash is an essential tool of restraint and protection for your dog, which is why it is a requirement for them to be in use everywhere except public dog runs (where signs permitting off-leash play are clearly posted).

### **Law: Owners Must Pick up and Dispose of Dog Waste (poop!)**

**Why?:** Pet waste is full of bacteria and parasites that can cause illness and disease in other animals and humans. Dogs can be severely sickened and even die from contagious diseases contracted from pet waste. It's also dirty, smelly, and has a negative impact on everyone's quality of life. To keep our communities healthy and clean, you are required to pick up your dog's waste. If you don't you could get a ticket and have to pay a \$250 fine or go to court. Please be a good neighbor and pick up after your dog.

### **Law: Live Animals are Not Allowed in Restaurants or Retail Food Establishments**

**Why?:** This is a New Jersey State law meant to prevent animals (and animal waste) from coming into contact with food (service dogs are exempt from this law). Some restaurants permit people to dine with their animals outside, but this is up to each restaurant to decide. Please be respectful of State law and restaurant owners when bringing your pet to a food establishment.

### **Law: Animal Bites to a Person Must Be Reported to the Health Department**

**Why?:** Animal bites can transmit disease, and it's the Health Department's job to monitor situations where potential human exposure occurs. Animals who have bitten a person must be quarantined by their owners for 10 days in order to watch for signs of rabies, even if they have a current rabies vaccine. During this time the pet is to be kept separate from all other animals and humans, and dog walking should be limited. If the animal shows signs of illness during the quarantine period the owner must notify the Health Officer immediately. Quarantine usually occurs in the owner's home, but owners can request the Health Officer allow them to board their animal at a commercial kennel. The shelter does not quarantine owned animals.



**Law: All Dogs Must Be Licensed and Wear Their License Tag**

**Why?:** Licensing allows cities to collect important information about the animals who live within their borders, and to ensure those animals are vaccinated against rabies. It helps cities plan for future investment in public amenities like dog runs and parks, track population changes, and alert animal owners in the event of an emergency. Jersey City and Hoboken require all pet dogs over the age of 7 months to be licensed with the city, but some towns require cats to be licensed as well. The fees from animal licenses are used to pay for local rabies prevention initiatives. You can be ticketed for not licensing your animal, which is why all dogs should wear their license tag on their collar. Download and print the Jersey City license application [here](#), and the Hoboken license [here](#).

**Law: You May Not Feed Wildlife**

**Why?:** Wild animals serve an important purpose in urban environments. We live side by side with many different kinds of creatures, including raccoons, opossums, ground hogs, skunks, rabbits, birds, etc. They are important to our ecosystem. It is important we let them do their jobs with minimal interference; we do not train them to approach humans for food; and we do not encourage them to live in close proximity to us. This is why many cities in New Jersey do not allow residents to feed wildlife and encourage people to take preventative measures (covering garbage cans, removing scraps and debris) to make their properties less attractive to wild animals. Please note that cats are not wildlife; feeding cats is not breaking the law.

**Law: Found Animals Must Be Reported to Animal Control and the Shelter**

**Why?:** State law requires that stray animals picked up by Animal Control be immediately brought to a licensed animal shelter to be held for 7 days. It is the shelter's legal responsibility to hold these animals so that their owners know where to find them. Although keeping a stray animal temporarily may sound tempting, it sometimes makes it more difficult to reunite them with their owner. If you find a stray animal, immediately contact the Animal Response Team and the shelter to report the animal as found. Fostering the animal (caring for it in your home on behalf of the shelter), may be possible with shelter permission. For more on what to do if you find a pet, see [LHS's website](#).

**Law: Stray Domestic Animals Are to be Held for 7 Days Before a Shelter Makes Them Available for Adoption**

**Why?:** If you lose your pet State law gives you a 7 day period ("stray hold") in which to reclaim them before ownership of the animal transfers to the agency caring for them. Some states do not have a stray holding requirement; others mandate different lengths of time. In New Jersey, this means that 7 days after a lost pet is found you are no longer legally considered the owner or decision maker for that animal, and the animal can be put up for adoption or transferred to someone else. That's why it is important to notify the shelter and Animal Response Team immediately if your animal is lost; we want to you get them back. Waiting longer than 7 days means your animal could legally be in the custody of a new owner.

**Animal Response Team Contact Information** (Report law violations and animal bites here)  
201.547.4888