



# Information Series

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## Pet Laws

**A**nimal Services enforces laws designed to protect and control animals in Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater and unincorporated areas of Thurston County. Each jurisdiction has passed its own ordinances, available upon request or on our website at [www.jointanimalservices.org](http://www.jointanimalservices.org)

### Restraint

Dogs in city limits must be restrained - either by leash, voice command, cabling or fencing. All parks have leash laws.

Cats in city limits are not permitted to be on property where the property owner or tenant objects to the presence of the cat.

In unincorporated county, ordinance states that pets must remain on their owner's property. Animal Services accepts strays brought to us by county residents, and will pick up confined strays, but does not patrol county areas for loose pets.

### Pet Waste

In City limits, persons accompanying a pet on public or private property are required to remove animal fecal material from that property. Failure to do so is an infraction. No provision exists in County Ordinance.

### Licensing

Dogs in all cities and in Thurston County are required to wear a license tag, purchased annually through Animal Services. In Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater, cats who are microchipped must still be licensed, but are not required to wear the tag.

### Barking

Dogs are not permitted to habitually or continually disturb the peace and quiet of any individual or neighborhood by barking, whining, howling or making other noise.

### Nuisance Behavior

Pets in Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater are not permitted to:

1. damage or destroy landscaping or property of another person;
2. destroy wildlife purposefully attracted to another person's property;
3. soil or defecated on public or private property other than the owner's;
4. be in heat without being confined within a structure to prevent access to male cats or dogs, except for planned breeding;
5. chase people or vehicles, or molest or interfere with people or other animals on public or private property other than the owner's; or
6. trespass on private property where the property owner or tenant supplies a written complaint to Animal Services.

### Dangerous Dogs

Dogs and other pets can be declared potentially dangerous or dangerous for certain behaviors, including but not limited to:

1. biting a human, pet or domestic animal unprovoked;
2. chasing or approaching a person in a menacing fashion;
3. inflicting severe injury on a human being without provocation; or
4. killing a pet or domestic animal without provocation while off its owner's property.

Once a pet has been declared potentially dangerous or dangerous, certain conditions regarding restraint and insurance are enforced. Violation of those conditions may result in seizure of the pet and penalties and/or jail time to the owner. Animal Service does not enforce animal to animal issues in unincorporated county. The Sheriff's Office may assist if call loads allow.

### Animal Cruelty

Animals may not be beaten, cruelly ill-treated, tormented, overworked, deliberately injured, deliberately denied humane care, abused, inhumanely killed, or used in cockfighting, dog

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fighting or other combat. Animal Services also enforces the state's animal cruelty laws.

### **Trapping**

A pet animal cannot be trapped in any manner that may harm the animal. A humane box trap may be set on a complainant's property for the purpose of trapping nuisance pet animals. The animal must be returned to the owner or taken to Animal Services.

### **Venomous & Constrictor Reptiles**

Constrictor reptiles over 8 feet in length and all venomous reptiles must be registered with Animal Services and kept in a humane and secure facility. Escape of any venomous or constrictor-type reptile must be immediately reported to Animal Services.

### **Impound & Reclaim of Animals**

Generally, dogs are impounded by Animal Services because they are running loose. Pets may also be impounded under certain circumstances when it is deemed necessary for the pet's safety, the public's safety or for the safety of other pet or domestic animals. Concerned people often bring stray animals to the shelter. Any time an animal is impounded or a lost pet is brought to the shelter, Animal Services makes a reasonable effort to notify the owner, if known. Animals currently in the Shelter are also listed on the Lost Pet Hotline at 352-2510, option 4.

Owners may reclaim their pets by paying a reclaim fee and a licensing fee if required. Pets not reclaimed by their owners within 48 hours of arriving at the shelter may be made available for adoption.

### **Adoptions**

Stray animals not reclaimed by their owners may be made available for adoption after a 48-hour holding period, excluding Sundays and holidays.

Animals adopted through Animal Services are required to be spayed or neutered. The adoption fee includes the cost of this service, as well as the pet's first vaccination (not including rabies), worming, microchip identification and license. A feline leukemia test is included for cat adoptions.

### **Euthanasia**

Some unclaimed animals may not be appropriate for adoption because of unsuitable temperament, illness, age or lack of space at the Shelter. Such animals may be humanely

destroyed after the required holding period of 4 days, exclusive of Sundays or holidays.

Some unidentified gravely injured or ill animals may not be held. Animals receive any treatment the shelter can provide, but severe trauma or illness may require that the animal be euthanized immediately.

Animals that are surrendered to the shelter by their owners may or may not be made available for adoption for the same reasons noted above. These animals may be euthanized immediately.

Animal Services also provides euthanasia for pet owners wishing to end their pet's suffering. This service is provided for a nominal fee, but no suffering animal is turned away if the owner is unable to afford the fee.