

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND ELEVEN

—
H.P. 562 - L.D. 755

An Act To Strengthen the Laws Regarding Dangerous Dogs

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §3952, sub-§1, as corrected by RR 2009, c. 1, §9, is amended to read:

1. Procedure. Any person who is assaulted or threatened with imminent bodily injury by a dog or any person witnessing an assault or threatened assault against a person or domesticated animal or a person with knowledge of an assault or threatened assault against a minor, within 30 days of the assault or threatened assault, may make written complaint to the sheriff, local law enforcement officer or animal control officer that the dog is a dangerous dog. For the purposes of this chapter, "domesticated animal" includes, but is not limited to, livestock as defined in section 3907, subsection 18-A.

Upon investigation of the complaint, the sheriff, local law enforcement officer or animal control officer may issue a civil violation summons for keeping a dangerous dog.

If, upon hearing, the court finds that the dog is a dangerous dog as defined in section 3907, subsection 12-D, the court shall impose a fine and shall:

A. Order the dog confined in a secure enclosure except as provided in paragraph C or subsection 8. For the purposes of this paragraph, "secure enclosure" means a fence or structure of at least 6 feet in height forming or making an enclosure suitable to prevent the entry of young children and suitable to confine a dangerous dog in conjunction with other measures that may be taken by the owner or keeper, such as tethering the dangerous dog. The secure enclosure must be locked, be designed with secure top, bottom and sides and be designed to prevent the animal from escaping from the enclosure. The court shall specify the length of the period of confinement and may order permanent confinement; or

B. Order the dog to be euthanized if it has killed, maimed or inflicted serious bodily injury upon a person or has a history of a prior assault- or a prior finding by the court of being a dangerous dog; or

C. Order the dog to be securely muzzled, restricted by a tether not more than 3 feet in length with a minimum tensile strength of 300 pounds and under the direct control

of the dog's owner or keeper whenever the dog is off the owner's or keeper's premises.

The court may order restitution in accordance with Title 17-A, chapter 54 for any damages inflicted upon a person or a person's property.

Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §3952, sub-§8, as enacted by PL 2007, c. 170, §4, is amended to read:

8. Restriction of movement outside of a secure enclosure. An owner or keeper of a dog confined to a secure enclosure by a court under subsection 1, paragraph A or subsection 1-A, paragraph C may not allow the dog outside of the secure enclosure unless:

- A. It is necessary to obtain veterinary care for the dog or to comply with orders of the court; and
- B. The dog is securely muzzled, restrained by a tether not more than 3 feet in length with a minimum tensile strength of 300 pounds and under the direct control of the dog's owner or keeper.

In House of Representatives, 2011

Read twice and passed to be enacted.

..... Speaker

In Senate, 2011

Read twice and passed to be enacted.

..... President

Approved 2011

..... Governor