

2024 -- S 2539

=====  
LC005014  
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

—————  
A N A C T

RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY -- DOGS

Introduced By: Senator David P. Tikoian

Date Introduced: March 01, 2024

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 4-13-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 4-13 entitled "Dogs" is hereby  
2 amended to read as follows:

3 **4-13-1. Regulatory ordinances — Enforcement and penalties.**

4 (a) City or town councils may make any ordinances concerning dogs in their cities or towns  
5 as they deem expedient, to be enforced by the destruction or disposition of the animal, or by  
6 pecuniary penalties not exceeding ten dollars (\$10.00) for the first offense, not exceeding fifteen  
7 dollars (\$15.00) for the second offense within a year, not exceeding twenty-five dollars (\$25.00)  
8 for the third and any subsequent offense within a year to be recovered by action of debt, or by  
9 complaint and warrant, to use as that city council or town council may prescribe.

10 (b)(1) Barrington town council is authorized to enact an ordinance:

11 (i) Permitting the animal control officer in the town to issue citations to the owners of dogs  
12 for violation of any animal control ordinance which may be paid by mail; and

13 (ii) To prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

14 (A) A fine of not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense within a  
15 calendar year;

16 (B) A fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
17 year;

18 (C) A fine of not more seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for the third and each subsequent  
19 offense within a calendar year.

1           (2)(i) Bristol town council is authorized to enact an ordinance permitting the dog officer in  
2 that town to issue citations to the owners of dogs for the violation of any dog ordinance which may  
3 be paid by mail, and to prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

4           (A) A fine not exceeding twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense within a calendar  
5 year;

6           (B) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
7 year;

8           (C) A fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) for the third and each subsequent  
9 offense within a calendar year.

10          (ii) The Bristol town council may by ordinance prescribe the number of licensed dogs and  
11 their breeds which may be kept at any single-family residence other than a breeding kennel licensed  
12 under § 4-13-10, and may enforce those ordinances by pecuniary penalties not exceeding two  
13 hundred fifty dollars (\$250).

14          (3) Coventry town council is authorized to enact ordinances permitting the dog officer in  
15 the town to issue citations to the owners of dogs for the violation of any dog ordinance which may  
16 be paid by mail.

17          (4)(i) Cumberland town council may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

18           (A) A fine not exceeding twenty dollars (\$20.00) for the first offense within a calendar  
19 year;

20           (B) A fine not exceeding thirty dollars (\$30.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
21 year;

22           (C) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the third and each subsequent offense  
23 within a calendar year.

24          (ii) The town council of the town of Cumberland is authorized to enact an ordinance  
25 permitting the animal control officer or any police officer in that town to issue citations to the  
26 owners of dogs for the violation of any dog ordinance which may be paid by mail.

27          (iii) The town council of the town of Cumberland is authorized to enact an ordinance  
28 establishing the expense of the impoundment of dogs as determined by the town council and  
29 providing for the payment to the town of the impoundment expense by the dog owner prior to  
30 removal of the dog from the pound.

31          (5) Gloucester town council is authorized to enact an ordinance to prescribe pecuniary  
32 penalties as follows:

33           (i) A fine not more than twenty dollars (\$20.00) for the first offense within a calendar year;

34           (ii) A fine not more than thirty dollars (\$30.00) for the second offense within a calendar

1 year;

2 (iii) A fine not more than thirty-five dollars (\$35.00) for the third offense and each  
3 subsequent offense within a calendar year.

4 (6) Jamestown town council may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

5 (i) A fine not exceeding twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense within a calendar  
6 year;

7 (ii) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
8 year;

9 (iii) A fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) for the third and each subsequent  
10 offense within a calendar year.

11 (7)(i) Middletown may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows for the violation of animal  
12 control ordinances on any beach within the town of Middletown:

13 (A) A fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) for the first (1st) offense within the  
14 calendar year;

15 (B) A fine not exceeding one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) for the second (2nd) offense  
16 within a calendar year;

17 (C) A fine not exceeding two hundred dollars (\$200) for the third (3rd) and each subsequent  
18 offense within a calendar year.

19 (ii) Middletown may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows for the violation of animal  
20 control ordinances anywhere else within the town:

21 (A) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the first offense within a calendar year;

22 (B) A fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) for the second offense within a  
23 calendar year;

24 (C) A fine not exceeding one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) for the third and each subsequent  
25 offense within a calendar year.

26 (iii) The Middletown town council is authorized to enact an ordinance permitting the dog  
27 officer in that town to issue citations to the owners of dogs for the violation of any dog ordinance  
28 which may be paid by mail.

29 (8) Narragansett town council is authorized to enact an ordinance:

30 (i) Permitting the animal control officer in the town to issue citations to the owners of dogs  
31 for the violation of any animal control ordinance which may be paid by mail; and

32 (ii) Establishing the expense of the impoundment of dogs as determined by the town  
33 council and providing for the payment to the town of the impoundment expense by the dog owner  
34 prior to removal of the dog from the pound; and

1 (iii) Prescribing pecuniary penalties as follows:

2 (A) A fine of not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense within a  
3 calendar year;

4 (B) A fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
5 year;

6 (C) A fine of not more than seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for the third and each subsequent  
7 offense within a calendar year.

8 (9) Newport city council is authorized to enact an ordinance:

9 (i) Permitting the animal control officer, and his or her agents, in that city to issue citations  
10 to the owners of dogs for violation of any animal control ordinance which may be paid by mail;

11 (ii) To prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

12 (A) A fine of not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense within a  
13 calendar year;

14 (B) A fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
15 year;

16 (C) A fine of not more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for the third and each subsequent  
17 offense within a calendar year.

18 (10) North Providence town council is authorized to enact an ordinance permitting the  
19 animal control officer in that town to issue citations to the owners of dogs for the violation of any  
20 dog ordinance which may be paid by mail.

21 (11)(i) Portsmouth may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

22 (A) A fine not exceeding twenty dollars (\$20.00) for the first offense within a calendar  
23 year;

24 (B) A fine not exceeding thirty dollars (\$30.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
25 year;

26 (C) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the third and each subsequent offense  
27 within a calendar year.

28 (ii) The Portsmouth town council is authorized to enact an ordinance permitting the dog  
29 officer in that town to issue citations to the owners of dogs for the violation of any dog ordinance  
30 which may be paid by mail.

31 (iii) The Portsmouth town council may, by ordinance, prescribe the number of licensed  
32 dogs which may be kept at any single family residence other than a breeding kennel licensed under  
33 § 4-13-10 and may enforce those ordinances by pecuniary penalties not exceeding twenty-five  
34 dollars (\$25.00).

1 (12) The Richmond town council is authorized to enact ordinances:

2 (i) Establishing the following penalties for animal control offenses:

3 (A) A fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the first offense within one year;

4 (B) A fine of not more than seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for the second offense within one  
5 year of the first offense;

6 (C) A fine of not more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for the third and each subsequent  
7 offense within one year of the first offense.

8 (ii) Permitting the animal control officer or any police officer to issue citations for violation  
9 of any animal control ordinance punishable by a fine of five hundred dollars (\$500) or less, and to  
10 provide for payment of those fines by mail.

11 (13)(i) Scituate town council may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

12 (A) A fine not exceeding twenty dollars (\$20.00) for the first offense within a calendar  
13 year;

14 (B) A fine not exceeding thirty dollars (\$30.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
15 year;

16 (C) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the third and each subsequent offense  
17 within a calendar year.

18 (ii) Scituate town council is authorized to enact ordinances permitting the dog officer in  
19 the town to issue citations to the owners of dogs for the violation of any dog ordinance which may  
20 be paid by mail.

21 (14)(~~i~~) Smithfield town council ~~may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows~~ is authorized  
22 to enact an ordinance:

23 ~~(A) A fine not exceeding twenty dollars (\$20.00) for the first offense within a calendar~~  
24 ~~year;~~

25 (i) Permitting the animal control officer in the town to issue citations to the owners of dogs  
26 for the violation of any animal control ordinance which may be paid by mail; and

27 ~~(B) A fine not exceeding thirty dollars (\$30.00) for the second offense within a calendar~~  
28 ~~year;~~

29 (ii) To prescribe penalties for violation of the provisions of revised general ordinances,  
30 town of Smithfield, Rhode Island 2003, as amended, chapter 126, entitled "animals".

31 ~~(C) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the third and each subsequent offense~~  
32 ~~within a calendar year.~~

33 ~~(ii) The Smithfield town council is authorized to enact an ordinance permitting the animal~~  
34 ~~control warden in the town to issue citations which may be paid by mail to the owners of dogs for~~

1 ~~the violation of any dog ordinance in that town.~~

2 (15) Tiverton town council may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

3 (i) A fine not exceeding twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense;

4 (ii) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense;

5 (iii) A fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) for the third and each subsequent  
6 offense.

7 (16) Warwick city council may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

8 (i) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the first offense within a calendar year;

9 (ii) A fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) for the second offense within a  
10 calendar year;

11 (iii) A fine not exceeding two hundred dollars (\$200) for the third and each subsequent  
12 offense within a calendar year; and

13 (iv) A fine not exceeding three hundred dollars (\$300) for the fourth and each subsequent  
14 offense within a calendar year.

15 (17) Westerly town council is authorized to enact an ordinance:

16 (i) Permitting the animal control officer in the town to issue citations to the owners of dogs  
17 for the violation of any animal control ordinance which may be paid by mail; and

18 (ii) Establishing the expense of the impoundment of dogs as determined by the town  
19 council and providing for the payment to the town of the impoundment expense by the dog owner  
20 prior to removal of the dog from the pound; and

21 (iii) Prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

22 (A) A fine of not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense within a  
23 calendar year;

24 (B) A fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
25 year;

26 (C) A fine of not more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for the third and each subsequent  
27 offense within a calendar year.

28 (18) West Greenwich town council is authorized to enact an ordinance:

29 (i) Permitting the animal control officer in the town to issue citations to the owners of dogs  
30 for the violation of any animal control ordinance which may be paid by mail; and

31 (ii) Establishing the expense of the impoundment of dogs as determined by the town  
32 council and providing for the payment to the town of the impoundment expense by the dog owner  
33 prior to removal of the dog from the pound; and

34 (iii) Prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

1 (A) A fine of not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense within a  
2 calendar year;

3 (B) A fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
4 year;

5 (C) A fine of not more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for the third and each subsequent  
6 offense within a calendar year.

7 (19) The town council of the town of Exeter is authorized to enact any ordinance  
8 prescribing fines and penalties, in addition to those otherwise allowed by law, as follows:

9 (i) Providing a fine of up to twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense;

10 (ii) Providing a fine of up to one hundred dollars (\$100) for the second offense; and

11 (iii) Providing a fine of up to two hundred dollars (\$200) for the third and for any  
12 subsequent offenses within a one-year period. In addition, the town may require proof of owners  
13 liability insurance for a twelve-month (12) period insuring against injury and damages caused by  
14 the dog. That insurance shall be in the amount of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) and  
15 shall name the town as a named insured for the purposes of notice.

16 (20) West Warwick town council may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

17 (i) A fine not exceeding fifteen dollars (\$15.00) for the first offense;

18 (ii) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense;

19 (iii) A fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) for the third and each subsequent  
20 offense.

21 (21) Woonsocket city council is authorized to enact an ordinance:

22 (i) Permitting the animal control office of the city to issue citations to the owners of dogs  
23 for the violation of any animal control ordinance which may be paid by mail;

24 (ii) Establishing the expense of the impoundment of dogs as determined by the city council  
25 and providing for the payment to the city for the impoundment expense by the dog owner prior to  
26 removal of the dog from the pound; and

27 (iii) Prescribing pecuniary penalties as follows:

28 (A) A fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the first offense within a calendar  
29 year;

30 (B) A fine of not more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for the second offense within a  
31 calendar year;

32 (C) A fine of not more than one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) for the third and each  
33 subsequent offense within a calendar year.

34 (22) Pawtucket city council is authorized to prescribe pecuniary penalties directly related

1 to its ordinance banning the owning or keeping of pit bulls in the city as follows:

2 (i) For a pit bull properly licensed according to the city ordinance:

3 (A) A fine not exceeding two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for the first offense;

4 (B) A fine not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500) on a second offense;

5 (C) A fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000) on a third offense.

6 (ii) For a pit bull that is not licensed pursuant to the exceptions in the city ordinance:

7 (A) A fine not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500) on a first offense;

8 (B) A fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000) on a second or subsequent offense.

9 (iii) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, Pawtucket may through its  
10 municipal court impose a sentence of imprisonment not exceeding thirty (30) days in addition to  
11 the fines in subsection (b)(22)(ii)(A) or (B).

12 (23)(i) The Lincoln town council is authorized to prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

13 (A) A fine of not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense within a  
14 calendar year;

15 (B) A fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
16 year;

17 (C) A fine of not more than one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$125) for the third and each  
18 subsequent offense within a calendar year.

19 (ii) The Lincoln town council is authorized to enact an ordinance permitting the dog officer  
20 and police officers in that town to issue citations to the owners of dogs for the violation of any dog  
21 ordinance, which citation may be paid by mail.

22 (24) The East Providence city council is authorized to enact an ordinance permitting the  
23 animal control officer or any police officer in that city to issue citations to persons in violation of  
24 any animal ordinances, which may be paid by mail, and to prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

25 (i) A fine of not more than thirty dollars (\$30.00) for the first offense within a calendar  
26 year;

27 (ii) A fine of not more than sixty dollars (\$60.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
28 year;

29 (iii) A fine of not more than one hundred twenty dollars (\$120) for the third offense within  
30 a calendar year; and

31 (iv) A fine of not more than three hundred dollars (\$300) for the fourth offense and any  
32 subsequent offense within a calendar year.

33 (25) The Warren town council is authorized to enact an ordinance permitting the animal  
34 control officer in the town to issue citations to the owners of animals for violation of any animal



1 control ordinance which may be paid by mail, and to prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

2 (i) A fine of not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense within a  
3 calendar year;

4 (ii) A fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
5 year;

6 (iii) A fine of not more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for the third and each subsequent  
7 offense within a calendar year.

8 (26) The Burrillville town council is authorized to enact an ordinance:

9 (i) Permitting the animal control officer in the town to issue citations to the owners of dogs  
10 for the violation of any animal control ordinance which may be paid by mail; and

11 (ii) To prescribe penalties for violation of the provisions of revised general ordinances,  
12 Town of Burrillville, Rhode Island, 2004, as amended, Chapter 4, entitled "Animals"; and

13 (iii) Establishing an expense not to exceed ten dollars (\$10.00) for the day during which  
14 impoundment occurs plus five dollars (\$5.00) every day the animal is detained and providing for  
15 the payment to the town of the impoundment expense by the dog owner prior to removal of the dog  
16 from the animal control facility.

17 (27) The Foster town council is authorized to enact ordinances permitting the dog officer  
18 in the town to issue citations to the owners of dogs for the violation of any dog ordinance, which  
19 may be paid by mail, and may prescribe pecuniary penalties as follows:

20 (i) A fine not exceeding twenty dollars (\$20.00) for the first offense within a calendar year;

21 (ii) A fine not exceeding thirty dollars (\$30.00) for the second offense within a calendar  
22 year;

23 (iii) A fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the third and each subsequent offense  
24 within a calendar year.

25 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

=====  
LC005014  
=====

EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY -- DOGS

\*\*\*

1           This act would permit the town of Smithfield to enact ordinances that would allow the  
2 animal control officer to issue citations which could be paid my mail and to prescribe penalties for  
3 violations of the town's ordinances regulating dogs.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

=====  
LC005014  
=====