



Ohio Revised Code

Section 959.131 Prohibitions concerning companion animals.

Effective: April 3, 2023

Legislation: Senate Bill 164

(A) As used in this section:

- (1) "Companion animal" means any animal that is kept inside a residential dwelling and any dog or cat regardless of where it is kept, including a pet store as defined in section 956.01 of the Revised Code. "Companion animal" does not include livestock or any wild animal.
- (2) "Cruelty," "torment," and "torture" have the same meanings as in section 1717.01 of the Revised Code.
- (3) "Residential dwelling" means a structure or shelter or the portion of a structure or shelter that is used by one or more humans for the purpose of a habitation.
- (4) "Practice of veterinary medicine" has the same meaning as in section 4741.01 of the Revised Code.
- (5) "Wild animal" has the same meaning as in section 1531.01 of the Revised Code.
- (6) "Federal animal welfare act" means the "Laboratory Animal Act of 1966," Pub. L. No. 89-544, 80 Stat. 350 (1966), 7 U.S.C.A. 2131 et seq., as amended by the "Animal Welfare Act of 1970," Pub. L. No. 91-579, 84 Stat. 1560 (1970), the "Animal Welfare Act Amendments of 1976," Pub. L. No. 94-279, 90 Stat. 417 (1976), and the "Food Security Act of 1985," Pub. L. No. 99-198, 99 Stat. 1354 (1985), and as it may be subsequently amended.
- (7) "Dog kennel" means an animal rescue for dogs, a boarding kennel, or a training kennel.
- (8) "Boarding kennel" and "animal rescue for dogs" have the same meanings as in section 956.01 of the Revised Code.



(9) "Training kennel" means an establishment operating for profit that keeps, houses, and maintains dogs for the purpose of training the dogs in return for a fee or other consideration.

(10) "Livestock" means horses, mules, and other equidae; cattle, sheep, goats, and other bovidae; swine and other suidae; poultry; alpacas; llamas; captive white-tailed deer; and any other animal that is raised or maintained domestically for food or fiber.

(11) "Captive white-tailed deer" has the same meaning as in section 1531.01 of the Revised Code.

(12) "Serious physical harm" means any of the following:

(a) Physical harm that carries an unnecessary or unjustifiable substantial risk of death;

(b) Physical harm that involves either partial or total permanent incapacity;

(c) Physical harm that involves acute pain of a duration that results in substantial suffering or that involves any degree of prolonged or intractable pain.

(B) No person shall knowingly torture, torment, needlessly mutilate or maim, cruelly beat, poison, needlessly kill, or commit an act of cruelty against a companion animal.

(C) No person shall knowingly cause serious physical harm to a companion animal.

(D) No person who confines or who is the custodian or caretaker of a companion animal shall negligently do any of the following:

(1) Torture, torment, or commit an act of cruelty against the companion animal;

(2) Deprive the companion animal of necessary sustenance or confine the companion animal without supplying it during the confinement with sufficient quantities of good, wholesome food and water if it can reasonably be expected that the companion animal would become sick or suffer in any other way as a result of or due to the deprivation or confinement;



(3) Impound or confine the companion animal without affording it, during the impoundment or confinement, with access to shelter from heat, cold, wind, rain, snow, or excessive direct sunlight if it can reasonably be expected that the companion animal would become sick or suffer in any other way as a result of or due to the lack of adequate shelter.

(E) No person who confines or who is the custodian or caretaker of a companion animal shall recklessly deprive the companion animal of necessary sustenance or confine the companion animal without supplying it during the confinement with sufficient quantities of good, wholesome food and water.

(F) No owner, manager, or employee of a dog kennel who confines or is the custodian or caretaker of a companion animal shall knowingly do any of the following:

(1) Torture, torment, needlessly mutilate or maim, cruelly beat, poison, needlessly kill, or commit an act of cruelty against the companion animal;

(2) Deprive the companion animal of necessary sustenance or confine the companion animal without supplying it during the confinement with sufficient quantities of good, wholesome food and water if it is reasonably expected that the companion animal would die or experience unnecessary or unjustifiable pain or suffering as a result of the deprivation or confinement;

(3) Impound or confine the companion animal without affording it, during the impoundment or confinement, with access to shelter from heat, cold, wind, rain, snow, or excessive direct sunlight if it is reasonably expected that the companion animal would die or experience unnecessary or unjustifiable pain or suffering as a result of or due to the lack of adequate shelter.

(G) No owner, manager, or employee of a dog kennel who confines or is the custodian or caretaker of a companion animal shall negligently do any of the following:

(1) Torture, torment, or commit an act of cruelty against the companion animal;

(2) Deprive the companion animal of necessary sustenance or confine the companion animal without supplying it during the confinement with sufficient quantities of good, wholesome food and water if



it can reasonably be expected that the companion animal would become sick or suffer in any other way as a result of or due to the deprivation or confinement;

(3) Impound or confine the companion animal without affording it, during the impoundment or confinement, with access to shelter from heat, cold, wind, rain, snow, or excessive direct sunlight if it can reasonably be expected that the companion animal would become sick or suffer in any other way as a result of or due to the lack of adequate shelter.

(H) Divisions (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), and (G) of this section do not apply to any of the following:

(1) A companion animal used in scientific research conducted by an institution in accordance with the federal animal welfare act and related regulations;

(2) The lawful practice of veterinary medicine by a person who has been issued a license, temporary permit, or registration certificate to do so under Chapter 4741. of the Revised Code;

(3) Dogs being used or intended for use for hunting or field trial purposes, provided that the dogs are being treated in accordance with usual and commonly accepted practices for the care of hunting dogs;

(4) The use of common training devices, if the companion animal is being treated in accordance with usual and commonly accepted practices for the training of animals;

(5) The administering of medicine to a companion animal that was properly prescribed by a person who has been issued a license, temporary permit, or registration certificate under Chapter 4741. of the Revised Code.

(I) Notwithstanding any section of the Revised Code that otherwise provides for the distribution of fine moneys, the clerk of court shall forward all fines the clerk collects that are so imposed for any violation of this section to the treasurer of the political subdivision or the state, whose county humane society or law enforcement agency is to be paid the fine money as determined under this division. The treasurer to whom the fines are forwarded shall pay the fine moneys to the county humane society or the county, township, municipal corporation, or state law enforcement agency in



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this state that primarily was responsible for or involved in the investigation and prosecution of the violation. If a county humane society receives any fine moneys under this division, the county humane society shall use the fine moneys either to provide the training that is required for humane society agents under section 1717.061 of the Revised Code or to provide additional training for humane society agents.