



Ohio Revised Code Section 955.02

Effective: March 20, 2026

Legislation: House Bill 247

(A)(1) Except as otherwise provided in this section or in sections 955.021, 955.022, and 955.16 of the Revised Code, every person who owns, keeps, or harbors a dog more than three months of age shall file, on or after the first day of the applicable December, but before the thirty-first day of the applicable January, in the office of the county auditor of the county in which the dog is kept or harbored, an application for registration for a period of one year or three years or an application for a permanent registration. The board of county commissioners, by resolution, may extend the period for filing the application. The applicant shall state the age, sex, color, character of hair, whether short or long, and breed, if known, of the dog and the name and address of the owner of the dog on the application. Along with the application, the applicant shall submit a registration fee of two dollars for each year of registration for a one-year or three-year registration or twenty dollars for a permanent registration for each dog. However, the fee may exceed that amount if a greater fee has been established under division (A)(2) of this section or under section 955.14 of the Revised Code.

(2) A board of county commissioners may establish a registration fee higher than the one provided for in division (A)(1) of this section for a dog more than nine months of age that has not been spayed or neutered, except that the higher registration fee permitted by this division does not apply if the person registering the dog furnishes any of the following with the application:

(a) A certificate from a licensed veterinarian verifying that the dog should not be spayed or neutered because of its age or medical condition;

(b) A certificate from a licensed veterinarian verifying that the dog should not be spayed or neutered because the dog is used or intended for use for show or breeding purposes;

(c) A certificate from the owner of the dog declaring that the owner holds a valid hunting license issued by the division of wildlife of the department of natural resources and that the dog is used or intended for use for hunting purposes.



(3) If the board establishes a fee under division (A)(2) of this section, the application for registration shall state whether the dog is spayed or neutered, and whether a licensed veterinarian has certified that the dog should not be spayed or neutered or the owner has stated that the dog is used or intended to be used for hunting purposes. The board may require a person who is registering a spayed or neutered dog to furnish with the application a certificate from a licensed veterinarian verifying that the dog is spayed or neutered.

(B) If the application for registration is not filed and the registration fee paid, on or before the thirty-first day of the applicable January of each year or, if the board of county commissioners by resolution has extended the date to a date later than the thirty-first day of January, the date established by the board, the auditor shall assess a penalty in an amount equal to the registration fee for one year upon the owner, keeper, or harborer, which shall be paid with the registration fee.

(C) A person who is the owner, keeper, or harborer of a dangerous dog or vicious dog shall register the dog in accordance with division (A) and division (D) of this section with the county auditor.

(D)(1) A person who is the owner, keeper, or harborer of a dangerous dog or vicious dog shall apply for a dangerous dog registration to the county auditor and submit all of the following to the county auditor:

(a) A fee of one hundred dollars;

(b) The person's address, telephone number, and other appropriate means for the county auditor to contact the person, along with proof that the person is eighteen years of age or older;

(c) With respect to the person and the dog for which the dangerous dog registration is required, all of the following:

(i) Either satisfactory evidence of the dog's current rabies vaccination or a statement from a licensed veterinarian that a rabies vaccination is medically contraindicated for the dog;

(ii) Either satisfactory evidence of the fact that the dog has been neutered or spayed or a statement from a licensed veterinarian that neutering or spaying of the dog is medically contraindicated;



- (iii) Satisfactory evidence of the fact that the person has posted and will continue to post clearly visible signs at the person's residence warning both minors and adults of the presence of a dangerous dog on the property;
- (iv) Satisfactory evidence of the fact that the dog has been permanently identified by means of a microchip and the dog's microchip number.

(2) The person shall renew the dangerous dog registration annually for the same fee and in the same manner as the initial registration was obtained.

(3) If a dangerous dog registration holder relocates to a new county, the holder shall follow the procedure in division (F) of this section and, upon the expiration of the registration issued in the original county, shall renew the registration in the new county.

(E) Upon submission in accordance with division (D) of this section, the county auditor shall issue a dangerous dog registration to the person. The county auditor also shall provide the owner with a uniformly designed tag that identifies the animal as a vicious or dangerous dog.

(F)(1) If the owner of a vicious or dangerous dog for whom a dangerous dog registration has previously been obtained relocates to a new address within the same county, the owner shall provide notice of the new address to the county auditor within ten days of relocating to the new address.

(2) If the owner of a vicious or dangerous dog for whom a dangerous dog registration has previously been obtained relocates to a new address within another county, the owner shall do both of the following within ten days of relocating to the new address:

- (a) Provide written notice of the new address and a copy of the original dangerous dog registration to the county auditor of the new county;
- (b) Provide written notice of the new address to the county auditor of the county where the owner previously resided.



(G) An animal shelter that keeps or harbors a dog more than three months of age is exempt from any registration requirements imposed under this section if it is a nonprofit organization that is exempt from federal income taxation under subsection 501(a) and described in subsection 501(c)(3) of the "Internal Revenue Code of 1986," 100 Stat. 2085, 26 U.S.C. 1.

(H) No owner, keeper, or harborer of any dog shall fail to file the application for registration and pay the associated fee as required under division (A) of this section or, if applicable, fail to pay the penalty prescribed in division (B) of this section. A violation of this division is a strict liability offense and section 2901.20 of the Revised Code does not apply.

(I) No owner, keeper, or harborer of a vicious or dangerous dog shall fail to present a valid dangerous dog registration upon request of any law enforcement officer, dog warden, or public health official charged with enforcing this section. A violation of this division is a strict liability offense and section 2901.20 of the Revised Code does not apply.

(J) No owner, keeper, or harborer of a dangerous or vicious dog shall fail to do any of the following:

- (1) Obtain a dangerous dog registration from the county auditor pursuant to this section;
- (2) Affix a tag that identifies the dog as a dangerous or vicious dog to the dog's collar;
- (3) Ensure that the dog wears the collar and tag at all times.

A violation of division (J) of this section is a strict liability offense and section 2901.20 of the Revised Code does not apply.

(K) No person shall recklessly furnish a certificate under division (A)(2) of this section that the person knows to be false.

(L)(1) Whoever violates division (H) of this section shall be fined not less than twenty-five dollars or more than one hundred dollars on a first offense, and on each subsequent offense shall be fined not less than seventy-five dollars or more than two hundred fifty dollars and may be imprisoned for not more than thirty days.



AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #495208

- (2) Whoever violates division (I) of this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor.
- (3) Whoever violates division (J) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree and a misdemeanor of the third degree on each subsequent offense.
- (4) Whoever violates division (K) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.