



Ohio Revised Code

Section 955.11 Transfer of ownership.

Effective: March 20, 2026

Legislation: House Bill 247 - 136th General Assembly

(A) Upon the transfer of ownership of any dog, the seller of the dog shall give the buyer a transfer of ownership certificate that shall be signed by the seller. The certificate shall contain the registration number of the dog, the name of the seller, and a brief description of the dog. Blank forms of the certificate may be obtained from the county auditor. A transfer of ownership shall be recorded by the auditor upon presentation of a transfer of ownership certificate that is signed by the former owner of a dog and that is accompanied by a fee of five dollars.

(B) Except as provided in division (C) of this section, prior to the transfer of ownership or possession of a dog, upon the buyer's or other transferee's request, the seller or other transferor of the dog shall give to the person a written notice relative to the behavior and propensities of the dog.

(C) Within ten days after the transfer of ownership or possession of any dog, if the seller or other transferor of the dog has knowledge that the dog is a dangerous dog or vicious dog, the seller or other transferor shall give to the buyer or other transferee, the board of health for the district in which the buyer or other transferee resides, and the dog warden of the county in which the buyer or other transferee resides, a completed copy of a written form on which the seller shall furnish the following information:

- (1) The name and address of the buyer or other transferee of the dog;
- (2) The age, sex, color, breed, and current registration number of the dog.

In addition, the seller shall answer the following questions, which shall be specifically stated on the form as follows:

"Has the dog ever chased or attempted to attack or bite a person? If yes, describe the incident(s) in which the behavior occurred."

"Has the dog ever bitten a person? If yes, describe the incident(s) in which the behavior occurred."

"Has the dog ever seriously injured or killed a person? If yes, describe the incident(s) in which the behavior occurred."



"Has the dog previously been designated a nuisance, dangerous, or vicious dog? If yes, indicate the designation that was assigned, the date of designation, and in which county or city the designation was made."

The seller or other transferor shall obtain the signature of the buyer or other transferee after a statement on the form that the buyer or other transferee understands that such person is acquiring a dangerous or vicious dog.

The dog warden of the county in which the seller resides shall furnish the form to the seller at no cost.

(D)(1) No seller or other transferor of a dog shall fail to comply with the requirements of division (A) of this section. A violation of this division is a strict liability offense and section 2901.20 of the Revised Code does not apply.

(2) No seller or other transferor of a dog shall fail to comply with the requirements of division (B) or (C) of this section. A violation of this division is a strict liability offense and section 2901.20 of the Revised Code does not apply.

(E)(1) Whoever violates division (D)(1) of this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor.

(2) Whoever violates division (D)(2) of this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor on a first offense and of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree on each subsequent offense.

(F) Division (C) of this section does not apply to an animal shelter for dogs with respect to a dog concerning which it transferred ownership or possession to another person if both of the following apply:

(1) The animal shelter for dogs did not have knowledge and could not have reasonably ascertained that the dog is a dangerous or vicious dog.

(2) Before the transfer of the dog, the animal shelter for dogs asked the following questions of the dog's previous owner, keeper, or harbinger, if such person is known and if the dog was not impounded under section 959.132 of the Revised Code:

(a) "Has the dog ever chased or attempted to attack or bite a person? If yes, describe the incident(s) in which the behavior occurred."

(b) "Has the dog ever bitten a person? If yes, describe the incident(s) in which the behavior occurred."

(c) "Has the dog ever seriously injured or killed a person? If yes, describe the incident(s) in which the behavior occurred."



(d) "Has the dog previously been designated a nuisance, dangerous, or vicious dog? If yes, indicate the designation that was assigned, the date of designation, and in which county or city the designation was made."
