



Ohio Revised Code

Section 955.21 Requirement to properly confine or restrain a dog.

Effective: March 20, 2026

Legislation: House Bill 247 - 136th General Assembly

(A) Except as provided in division (F) of this section, no owner, keeper, or harborer of any dog shall fail at any time to do either of the following:

(1) Keep the dog physically confined or restrained upon the premises of the owner, keeper, or harborer by a leash, tether, adequate fence, supervision, or secure enclosure to prevent escape;

(2) Keep the dog under the reasonable control of some person.

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

(B) Whoever commits a violation of this section that involves a dog that is not a nuisance dog, dangerous dog, or vicious dog 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. Additionally, the court may order the offender to personally supervise the dog that the offender owns, keeps, or harbors, to cause that dog to complete dog obedience training, or to do both.

(C) Whoever commits a violation of this section that involves a nuisance dog is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree on the first offense and of a misdemeanor of the third degree on each subsequent offense involving the same dog. Additionally, the court may order the offender to personally supervise the nuisance dog that the offender owns, keeps, or harbors, to cause that dog to complete dog obedience training, or to do both.

(D) Whoever commits a violation of this section that involves a dangerous dog is guilty of a misdemeanor of the third degree on a first offense and of a misdemeanor of the second degree on each subsequent offense. Additionally, the court may order the offender to do either or both of the



following:

- (1) Personally supervise the dangerous dog that the offender owns, keeps, or harbors;
- (2) Cause that dog to complete dog obedience training.

The court, in the alternative, may order the dangerous dog to be humanely destroyed by a licensed veterinarian or the county dog warden at the owner's expense.

Until the court makes a final determination and during the pendency of any appeal and at the discretion of the dog warden, the dog shall be confined or restrained in accordance with division (A) of section 955.24 of the Revised Code or at the county dog pound at the owner's expense.

(E) Whoever commits a violation of this section that involves a vicious dog is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree on a first offense and of a misdemeanor of the first degree on each subsequent offense. Additionally, the court shall order the offender to do both of the following:

- (1) Personally supervise the vicious dog that the offender owns, keeps, or harbors;
- (2) Cause that dog to complete dog obedience training.

The court, in the alternative, may order the vicious dog to be humanely destroyed by a licensed veterinarian or the county dog warden at the owner's expense.

Until the court makes a final determination and during the pendency of any appeal and at the discretion of the dog warden, the dog shall be confined or restrained in accordance with division (A) of section 955.24 of the Revised Code or at the county dog pound at the owner's expense.

(F) Division (A) of this section does not apply when a dog that has not been designated as a dangerous or vicious dog is lawfully engaged in either of the following:

- (1) Hunting, provided the dog is accompanied by the owner, keeper, harborer, or handler of the dog;



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(2) Field trials.