

## Article - Local Government

§13–123.

(a) (1) The governing body of Harford County, by resolution or ordinance, may provide for a comprehensive system for the regulation of dogs.

(2) The resolution or ordinance may provide for:

(i) the licensing and control of dogs;

(ii) the establishment of separate dog control districts with separate resolutions or ordinances applicable solely within each district;

(iii) seizing and disposing of dogs found to be dangerous to persons and property; and

(iv) reasonable penalties for a violation of a resolution or ordinance enacted in accordance with this section.

(b) (1) In Harford County, on or before December 31 of each year, a person owning or keeping a dog shall apply to the county tax collector for a license for the dog if the dog is at least 6 months old.

(2) At the time of application, the applicant shall pay a fee of:

(i) \$1 for a license for a male or spayed female dog;

(ii) \$3 for a license for an unspayed female dog;

(iii) \$10 for a kennel license for a person owning or keeping 25 or fewer dogs; or

(iv) \$20 for a kennel license for a person owning or keeping more than 25 dogs.

(3) Except as provided in § 13–108 of this subtitle, the licenses and fees required under this section are the only licenses and taxes required for owning or keeping a dog.

(4) The governing body of Harford County shall prepare and supply the form for a license issued under this subsection.

(5) A dog license shall contain the date of issuance, a serial number, and a description of the dog licensed.

(6) A license expires on December 31 of the year after issuance.

(c) (1) In Harford County, the county tax collector shall issue a tag with each

dog license to a person owning or keeping a dog when the person pays the license fee for the dog.

(2) The governing body of Harford County shall prepare and supply tags to the county tax collector each year.

(3) The tags shall be:

(i) composed of metal;

(ii) imprinted with a serial number corresponding to the number on the license issued to the owner under subsection (b) of this section;

(iii) imprinted with the calendar year for which the tag is issued;

(iv) 1 inch or less in length; and

(v) equipped with a substantial metal fastener.

(4) The governing body shall change the general shape of the tags each year.

(5) Tags supplied to owners of kennels shall contain the word “kennel”.

(6) The person owning or keeping a dog shall attach the tag to a substantial collar and keep the collar and tag on the dog for which the license was issued at all times, except when the dog is:

(i) confined in a kennel; or

(ii) hunting under the charge of an attendant.

(7) The county tax collector shall replace a lost tag on:

(i) application by the person to whom the original license was issued;

(ii) the production of the license; and

(iii) payment of a fee of 25 cents.

(d) (1) In Harford County, a person may not own or keep a dog that disturbs the peace of a neighborhood or is vicious and bites any individual.

(2) The barking of a hunting dog in pursuit of game is not a disturbance of the peace for the purpose of this subsection.

(3) A person who violates paragraph (1) of this subsection or a court order issued under paragraph (4) of this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$25 for each offense.

(4) (i) The District Court in Harford County shall issue a summons to the owner or keeper of a dog to appear before the District Court if a sworn complaint is received from a person alleging that the dog:

1. disturbs the peace of a neighborhood in the county; or
2. is vicious and has bitten an individual.

(ii) After a finding that the dog disturbs the peace of a neighborhood or is vicious and has bitten an individual, the District Court may require the owner or keeper to surrender the dog to be euthanized in the most humane manner possible or remove the dog permanently from the neighborhood.

(iii) If the District Court requires the owner or keeper to surrender the dog to be euthanized or removed in accordance with subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, and the owner or keeper fails to comply, a police officer or an agent of the county shall seize the dog and cause it to be euthanized in the most humane manner possible.

(iv) The District Court may order the dog restrained or issue any other appropriate order.

(e) (1) In Harford County, the owner of a female dog that is in heat may not allow the dog to be outdoors either loose or on a leash.

(2) A person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to:

- (i) for a first violation, a fine of \$25; and
- (ii) for each subsequent violation, a fine of not less than \$100 and not exceeding \$200.

(f) The governing body of Harford County may designate persons to assist the county tax collector to collect license fees and issue licenses and tags under this subtitle.

(g) In Harford County, a law enforcement officer who witnesses a violation of a resolution or an ordinance enacted in accordance with this section may issue a citation for that violation and bring the violator before the District Court in Harford County.