

Article - Local Government

§13–129.

(a) (1) In St. Mary's County, on or before June 30 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 the fee for a dog or kennel license set by the County Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

(3) (i) The county commissioners shall appoint agents to collect dog and kennel license fees that are not paid by August 1 of each year.

(ii) A penalty of \$1.00 per license shall be assessed against dog owners whose dog or kennel license fees are not paid by August 1 each year.

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

(5) The county commissioners shall prepare and supply the form for a license issued under this subsection.

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

(7) A license expires on June 30 of the year after issuance.

(b) (1) In St. Mary's 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 County Commissioners of St. Mary's 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 (a) 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 county commissioners 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.

(c) (1) The County Commissioners may enact a local law to provide a comprehensive system for the regulation, humane treatment, and keeping of domestic animals and wild animals kept in captivity.

(2) A local law enacted in accordance with this subsection may include a schedule of fines for designated violations.

(3) A violation of a local law enacted in accordance with this subsection is a civil infraction under § 12–804 of this article.

(d) (1) The County Commissioners of St. Mary’s County may employ an animal control officer.

(2) The county shall determine the annual salary of the animal control officer employed under this section.

(3) An animal control officer employed under this section:

(i) has all the powers of a peace officer; and

(ii) shall seize and dispose of unlicensed dogs as prescribed by the county commissioners.

(e) (1) The County Commissioners of St. Mary’s County may provide an animal shelter for the placement of dogs seized by animal control officers.

(2) The county commissioners may enter into agreements with adjacent counties to establish an animal shelter to serve the counties.

(3) The county commissioners may contract with an animal welfare society, a humane society, or any other qualified person to:

- (i) establish an animal shelter; or
- (ii) seize, dispose of, or euthanize stray, injured, or sick dogs.

(4) (i) The County Commissioners of St. Mary's County may pay any expenses arising from the operation of this subsection.

(ii) Notwithstanding § 13–105(d) of this subtitle, the county commissioners may use proceeds from dog license fees to:

- 1. establish an animal shelter; or
- 2. collect, dispose of, or euthanize stray, injured, or sick dogs.