



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

Raised Bill No. 5393

LCO No. 1967



Referred to Committee on PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduced by:
(PD)

AN ACT CONCERNING DOG LICENSES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 22-338 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

3 (a) Each owner or keeper of a dog of the age of six months or older,
4 except dogs kept under a kennel license as provided in section 22-342,
5 shall cause such dog to be licensed in the town clerk's office in the town
6 where such dog is kept, or, in the alternative, electronically with the
7 Department of Agriculture, on or before June thirtieth, [annually] every
8 three years, or at such time as such dog becomes six months old, and
9 [annually] every three years thereafter, on or before June thirtieth. The
10 owner or keeper shall pay to such town clerk or the Department of
11 Agriculture for such license the sum of [seven] fifteen dollars for each
12 [neutered male or spayed female] dog [and the sum of twelve dollars
13 for each unneutered male dog and each unspayed female dog,] and, as
14 applicable, one additional dollar [in each case] as the town clerk's fee for
15 issuing a tag and license as provided in section 22-340, as amended by
16 this act. [Two dollars from] Twenty-five per cent of each license fee

17 collected for a [neutered or spayed] dog shall be deposited into the
18 animal population control account, established under section 22-380g. If
19 an owner or keeper of a dog fails to procure a license as required by this
20 section, such owner or keeper shall pay the appropriate license fee
21 specified in this section, the town clerk's fee, as applicable, and a penalty
22 of one dollar for each month or fraction thereof the dog remains
23 unlicensed.

24 (b) Any owner or keeper applying for a license for a dog under
25 subsection (a) of this section, except for those owners or keepers
26 possessing a rabies vaccination exemption certificate, or a copy thereof,
27 issued pursuant to section 22-339b, shall submit to the town clerk or the
28 Department of Agriculture, as applicable, a rabies certificate signed by
29 a licensed veterinarian, or a copy thereof, stating that such dog has been
30 vaccinated against rabies, the date of the vaccination and the duration
31 of the immunity provided by the vaccine. No license shall be issued
32 unless the certificate indicates that the immunity provided by the
33 vaccine is effective at the time of licensing.

34 (c) Any owner or keeper applying for a license for a dog pursuant to
35 subsection (a) of this section that has been exempted from vaccination
36 against rabies pursuant to section 22-339b shall submit to the town clerk
37 or the Department of Agriculture, as applicable, a rabies vaccination
38 exemption certificate issued by the department, or a copy thereof, in lieu
39 of a rabies certificate.

40 (d) This section shall not apply to any dog which is imported into this
41 state for exhibition purposes and which does not remain in this state for
42 more than thirty days. Any person may import, from another state, any
43 licensed dog with collar, tag and rabies vaccination certificate, and keep
44 the same in this state for not more than thirty days, without complying
45 with the provisions of this section.

46 Sec. 2. Section 22-339 of the general statutes is repealed and the
47 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

48 Any person upon becoming the owner or keeper of any unlicensed
49 dog of the age of six months or older shall cause such dog to be licensed
50 within thirty days thereof until the thirtieth day of the ensuing June in
51 the manner and subject to the terms and conditions provided in section
52 22-338, as amended by this act. If the new owner has written proof of
53 purchase or transfer and the license is obtained within thirty days, [he]
54 such new owner shall not be required to pay any penalties as provided
55 by said section for failure to secure a license for a dog over six months
56 of age. Any person becoming the owner of a licensed dog shall present
57 the license and tag of such dog to the town clerk of the town in which
58 [he] such person resides and, for a fee of one dollar, such town clerk
59 shall issue, in lieu thereof, a new license and tag, which shall be recorded
60 in the name of the new owner. Such town clerk shall retain the old
61 license and tag. [in his possession.]

62 Sec. 3. Section 22-339a of the general statutes is repealed and the
63 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

64 (a) The town clerk of any town and the Commissioner of Agriculture,
65 as applicable, may individually or jointly deputize any employees of
66 any dog pound in such town as agents for the issuance of dog licenses
67 and tags, provided the town clerk shall be solely responsible for
68 compliance with the provisions of the statutes relating to the duties of
69 the town clerk in connection with such licenses and tags and the moneys
70 received therefor.

71 (b) Any person acquiring an unlicensed dog from a dog pound shall
72 be issued a temporary license by the town clerk or the Department of
73 Agriculture, as applicable, or [his] the town clerk's or department's
74 agent deputized pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, which shall
75 expire thirty days after the issuance thereof. Prior to the expiration of a
76 temporary license, the person holding the license shall apply for a
77 license for the remainder of the license [year] period, pay the
78 appropriate license fee specified in section 22-338, as amended by this
79 act, and submit a certificate signed by a veterinarian, or a copy or

80 electronic copy, as applicable, thereof, stating (1) that the dog has been
81 vaccinated against rabies, (2) the date of the vaccination and (3) the
82 duration of the immunity provided by the vaccine. No license shall be
83 issued unless the certificate indicates that the immunity provided by the
84 vaccine is effective at the time of licensing.

85 Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 22-339c of the general statutes is
86 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
87 *1, 2026*):

88 (a) A certificate of rabies vaccination shall be (1) a form approved by
89 the National Association of Public Health Veterinarians, (2) any form
90 approved by the State Veterinarian, or (3) any form that has the
91 following information regarding the vaccinated animal: (A) The name
92 and address of its owner; (B) a description of the animal which specifies
93 its species, breed, age, color or markings and sex; (C) the date of the
94 vaccination, the duration of the immunity provided by the vaccination,
95 the producer of the vaccine and the vaccine serial number; (D) the rabies
96 tag number; and (E) the signature and license number of the
97 veterinarian administering the vaccination. Such certificate shall be the
98 official proof of rabies vaccination submitted to a town clerk or the
99 Department of Agriculture, as applicable, in accordance with the
100 provisions of section 22-338, as amended by this act, or 22-339a, as
101 amended by this act.

102 Sec. 5. Section 22-340 of the general statutes is repealed and the
103 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

104 (a) Each person complying with the provisions of section 22-338, as
105 amended by this act, 22-339, as amended by this act, or 22-342 shall
106 receive from the town clerk or the Department of Agriculture, as
107 applicable, a license on a form prescribed by the commissioner, which
108 license shall contain a description of the dog and the number under
109 which such dog is licensed. The town clerk or the Department of
110 Agriculture, as applicable, shall issue to such person a tag or plate of

111 material prescribed by the commissioner, upon which shall be distinctly
112 marked [the name of the town in which such dog is licensed,] the license
113 number and the year [of] such license was issued. [No town clerk shall
114 issue such license or tag to any person for any neutered male or spayed
115 female dog not previously licensed as such unless the person causing
116 the dog to be licensed exhibits to the town clerk a certificate from a
117 licensed veterinarian stating that such veterinarian has neutered or
118 spayed the dog or that, after examining the dog, he finds that the dog
119 has been neutered or spayed.]

120 (b) The town clerk shall provide for the issuance and renewal through
121 the mail of licenses issued under sections 22-338, as amended by this act,
122 and 22-339, as amended by this act. The [town clerk] Department of
123 Agriculture shall provide for the electronic issuance and renewal of
124 licenses issued by the department pursuant to sections 22-338, as
125 amended by this act, and 22-339, as amended by this act, and may make
126 information concerning the department's electronic dog licensing
127 system and applications for such licenses available at such facilities as
128 kennels, pet stores, veterinarian offices, humane society offices and pet
129 grooming establishments.

130 Sec. 6. Subsection (a) of section 22-341 of the 2026 supplement to the
131 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
132 thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

133 (a) Each owner or keeper of a licensed dog shall keep around its neck
134 or body a collar or harness of leather or other suitable material, to which
135 shall be securely attached a tag or plate issued to such person by the
136 town clerk or Department of Agriculture, as applicable. If any such tag
137 or plate is lost, the owner or keeper of such dog shall forthwith secure a
138 substitute tag or plate from the town clerk or Department of
139 Agriculture, as applicable, at a cost of [fifty cents] one dollar.

140 Sec. 7. Section 22-345 of the general statutes is repealed and the
141 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

142 Any person with a disability who is the owner or keeper of a dog that
143 has been trained as a service animal, is in training to become a service
144 animal for such person, is in training to become a service animal or is
145 enrolled in a program described in section 17a-22ee shall receive a
146 license and tag for such dog from the town clerk of the town where such
147 dog is owned or kept or from the Department of Agriculture. Such
148 license and tag shall be issued in accordance with the provisions of
149 section 22-340, as amended by this act, and no fee shall be required of
150 the owner or keeper of any such dog. [When any such dog has not been
151 previously licensed by the town clerk to whom application is being
152 made, and it is not obvious that the dog is a service animal, such town
153 clerk may inquire of such owner or keeper whether the dog is a service
154 animal required because of a disability and what work or task the dog
155 has been trained to perform.] Any person who has a dog placed with
156 such person temporarily, including for breeding purposes, by a
157 nonprofit organization established for the purpose of training or
158 educating the dog as a service animal shall receive a license and tag for
159 such dog from the town clerk of the town where such dog is kept or
160 from the Department of Agriculture. Such license and tag shall be issued
161 in accordance with the provisions of section 22-340, as amended by this
162 act, and no fee shall be required for such license and tag, provided such
163 person [presents confirmation] confirms that such dog was placed with
164 such person by such organization. As used in this section, (1) "disability"
165 means any one or more of the following, as defined in section 46a-51:
166 (A) An intellectual disability, (B) physically disabled, (C) a mental
167 disability, or (D) a learning disability; and (2) "service animal" has the
168 same meaning as provided in 28 CFR 35.104, as amended from time to
169 time, and includes a service animal in training.

170 Sec. 8. Section 22-347 of the general statutes is repealed and the
171 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

172 (a) Within thirty days after receipt of the fees for dog licenses and
173 tags, each town clerk shall deduct one dollar for each dog licensed, two
174 dollars for each kennel license issued and fifty cents for each

175 replacement tag issued and pay the balance to the town treasurer or
176 other proper fiscal officer. Each town treasurer or fiscal officer, as the
177 case may be, shall keep a separate dog fund account of all fees received
178 from the town clerk, and all receipts from the municipal animal control
179 officer and expended by said officer under the provisions of this chapter,
180 and shall pay to the Commissioner of Agriculture, on September first of
181 each year, fifty per cent of all moneys received from the sale of licenses
182 prior to July first, or forty per cent of all such moneys if the town has
183 made a survey of unlicensed dogs in accordance with the provisions of
184 section 22-349, as amended by this act, and include with such payment
185 a statement of the number of licenses issued during such year. All
186 moneys received from licenses sold after June thirtieth and all moneys
187 received from the municipal animal control officer [and all license fees
188 returned to the town by the State Treasurer, at the request of the
189 commissioner,] shall be kept by the town treasurer or other fiscal officer
190 in the separate dog fund account. The town treasurer or other fiscal
191 officer shall, on the ensuing September first, send fifty per cent, or forty
192 per cent as the case may be, of all license fees in such account to the
193 commissioner, including any penalty fees collected pursuant to section
194 22-338, as amended by this act. All payments to the commissioner shall
195 be accompanied by an account thereof in a form prescribed by the
196 commissioner and a copy of such account shall be sent to the
197 commissioner. Upon the failure of any town treasurer or other fiscal
198 officer to pay any amount due pursuant to this section, or any portion
199 thereof, within forty-five days from its due date, the commissioner shall
200 add interest of one and one-fourth per cent per month or fraction thereof
201 on the amount unpaid per month or fraction thereof from the due date
202 of such payment to the date of payment and a penalty in the amount of
203 ten per cent of the amount unpaid or fifty dollars, whichever is greater.
204 All funds in the dog fund account, except such funds as are to be sent to
205 the commissioner, shall be used only for the compensation of municipal
206 animal control officers, license certificates, tags, the construction and
207 maintenance of dog pounds, the detention and care of impounded dogs
208 in accordance with section 22-336, municipal animal control officer's

209 equipment, dog supplies and such veterinary fees as are provided for
210 by law or regulations and shall not be used for any other purpose except
211 upon written approval of the commissioner. No fees paid into the
212 treasury of the town for tags or licenses for dogs shall be paid back to
213 the persons from whom they were collected.

214 (b) The Commissioner of Agriculture shall, not later than thirty days
215 after the Department of Agriculture's electronic receipt of fees for dog
216 licenses and tags, remit to each town clerk twenty-five per cent of each
217 license fee paid electronically to the department for each dog licensed
218 within such town. The Commissioner of Agriculture shall keep a
219 separate dog licensing fee account consisting of all fees received and
220 expended by the commissioner in accordance with the provisions of this
221 chapter.

222 Sec. 9. Section 22-349 of the general statutes is repealed and the
223 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

224 The town clerk of each town and the Department of Agriculture shall,
225 annually, on or before July first, provide the municipal animal control
226 officer or regional animal control officer of each town with a copy of
227 each dog license issued in such town by such clerk or department. Such
228 municipal animal control officer or regional animal control officer shall
229 thereupon make diligent search for any unlicensed dog required to be
230 licensed by section 22-338, as amended by this act. The commissioner
231 [shall] may adopt regulations in accordance with the provisions of
232 chapter 54 establishing procedures for such search. If the owner of any
233 such unlicensed dog is not known, the municipal animal control officer
234 or regional animal control officer shall impound such dog. The owning
235 or keeping of an unlicensed or impounded dog and the failure to
236 purchase a license and pay the advertising and redemption fee within
237 one hundred and twenty hours from the time the dog was impounded
238 shall be an infraction.

239 Sec. 10. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) The Commissioner of

240 Agriculture shall create an electronic dog licensing form to be used by
 241 the Department of Agriculture to electronically process dog licenses
 242 pursuant to chapter 435 of the general statutes. Such form shall be in
 243 addition to the standard form created by the commissioner pursuant to
 244 section 22-380g of the general statutes. The commissioner shall
 245 distribute information about such electronic form to veterinarians and
 246 the operators of pet shops, pet grooming facilities, municipal pounds
 247 and dog training facilities who voluntarily agree to make such
 248 information available for the convenience of dog owners.

249 Sec. 11. Sections 22-348, 22-352 and 22-380l of the general statutes are
 250 repealed. (*Effective October 1, 2026*)

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-338
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-339
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-339a
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-339c(a)
Sec. 5	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-340
Sec. 6	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-341(a)
Sec. 7	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-345
Sec. 8	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-347
Sec. 9	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-349
Sec. 10	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	New section
Sec. 11	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	Repealer section

Statement of Purpose:

To authorize the issuance of online dog licenses from the Department of Agriculture in addition to the existing town clerk process for issuing such licenses, and to require dog owners to obtain licenses every three years rather than annually.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]