

STATE OF NEW YORK

6315--A

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

April 13, 2023

Introduced by Sen. BRISPORT -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Agriculture -- recommitted to the Committee on Agriculture in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the agriculture and markets law, in relation to outdoor restraint of dogs

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The agriculture and markets law is amended by adding a new
2 section 353-g to read as follows:

3 § 353-g. Outdoor restraint of dogs. Definitions. 1. For the purposes
4 of this section:

5 (a) "Tether" shall mean to restrain a dog by attaching the dog to any
6 object or structure, including without limitation a house, tree, fence,
7 post, garage, or shed, by any means, including without limitation a
8 chain, rope, cord, leash, or running line. Tethering does not include
9 the use of a leash to walk a dog or circumstances where a dog is other-
10 wise accompanied by a person who owns or has custody or control of the
11 dog.

12 (b) "Dangerous weather conditions" shall mean inclement weather as
13 defined in section three hundred fifty-three-b of this article, condi-
14 tions described in a weather alert, advisory or other warning issued by
15 a local, state or federal authority, or when outside weather conditions,
16 including but not limited to extreme heat, cold, wind, rain, snow, or
17 hail, pose an adverse risk to the health or safety of a dog based on
18 breed, age, and physical condition, in accordance with the industry
19 standard set forth in the Tufts Animal Care and Condition Weather Safety
20 Scale. Extreme heat and cold limitations shall mean an ambient temper-
21 ature of eighty degrees Fahrenheit and thirty-five degrees Fahrenheit
22 respectively.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 (c) "Shelter" shall mean conditions that allow the dog to remain dry
2 and to be protected from the elements. A shelter shall: (i) comply with
3 the minimum standards for appropriate shelter established pursuant to
4 section three hundred fifty-three-b of this article; (ii) be fully
5 enclosed on all sides except one, which side shall have an opening that
6 allows the dog easy entry to and exit from the shelter; (iii) have a
7 slanted, waterproof roof; (iv) have a solid floor; (v) contain clean
8 bedding or straw/shavings. If straw/shavings are used, they shall be
9 replaced at least once every two weeks so that the dog can burrow into
10 it for warmth; (vi) be small enough to retain the dog's body heat and
11 large enough to allow the dog to stand, lie down with limbs
12 outstretched, and turn around comfortably; and (vii) have a surrounding
13 area that is free of standing water, ice, and waste.

14 (d) "Cruel conditions" or "inhumane tethering" shall include the
15 following:

16 (i) Exposure to animal waste, garbage, noxious odors or objects that
17 could injure or kill a dog, provided that a dog may be exposed to their
18 own waste that was produced while tethered so long as any such waste is
19 cleared prior to the dog being tethered.

20 (ii) Exposure to taunting, prodding, provoking, hitting, harassing,
21 threatening or otherwise harming a tethered or confined dog.

22 (iii) Exposing a dog to dangerous conditions, including potential
23 attacks by other animals.

24 (iv) Exposing a dog to dangerous weather conditions.

25 (v) Allowing a dog to become entangled.

26 (vi) Being tethered to a vacant property.

27 (vii) Any tethering that could reasonably lead to the distress, seri-
28 ous discomfort, injury, or death of the dog.

29 2. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, it shall be unlawful
30 to tether an unaccompanied dog outdoors, except when all of the follow-
31 ing conditions are met:

32 (a) The tether shall: (i) be in compliance with the rules and regu-
33 lations set forth by the department; (ii) not be embedded, partially
34 embedded, or prone to becoming embedded in a dog's skin; (iii) restrain
35 the dog to the owner's property in such a way as to prevent the dog from
36 reaching hazards, including but not limited to pools, fences, porches,
37 or railing that poses a strangulation risk; and (iv) allow the dog
38 sufficient movement to urinate in a separate area from the area where it
39 must eat, drink, or lie down.

40 (b) The tethered dog must:

41 (i) be at least six months old;

42 (ii) not be a nursing female or in the advanced stages of pregnancy;

43 (iii) not be suffering from illness, debilitating disease, injury, or
44 distress; and

45 (iv) be apparently free of any health condition that would be exacer-
46 bated by tethering.

47 (c) If there are multiple dogs, each must be tethered separately.

48 (d) No dog shall be tethered outdoors between the hours of ten p.m.
49 and six a.m.

50 (e) A dog shall not be tethered outside for longer than four consec-
51 utive hours or a total time outside in excess of six hours in a twenty-
52 four hour period.

53 (f) Tethered dogs must have unencumbered access to shade, food, water,
54 shelter, and dry ground without becoming entangled.

55 (g) Tethered dogs must be free of cruel conditions or inhumane tether-
56 ing.

1 3. Tethering a supervised dog for less than fifteen minutes in a
2 public location shall not be a violation of this section so long as the
3 tethered dog is free of cruel conditions or inhumane tethering.

4 4. This section shall be enforced by the attorney general.

5 (a) A violation of any of the provisions of this section shall, for a
6 first offense, be punishable by a civil fine not to exceed fifty dollars
7 total.

8 (b) For a second offense, the fine shall be one thousand dollars per
9 dog plus reimbursement of investigation costs.

10 (c) For a third or subsequent offense, the fine shall be three thou-
11 sand dollars per dog plus reimbursement of investigation costs. Such
12 person shall register with any applicable local animal abuse registry
13 and shall forfeit all animals in such person's possession.

14 5. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or prevent a
15 municipality from enacting or enforcing a local law, rule, regulation or
16 ordinance regarding tethering or chaining of dogs, provided, however,
17 that any such local law, rule, regulation or ordinance shall be no less
18 stringent than the provisions of this section.

19 6. Nothing in this section shall be construed to reduce any
20 protections afforded to dogs under any other provisions of this article
21 or other law or regulation.

22 7. The provisions of this section shall not apply to any federal,
23 state or local law enforcement agency.

24 8. The department shall issue any necessary rules and regulations
25 describing the humane use of a tether and the proper length and weight
26 of such tether to ensure the requirements of this section are met.

27 9. The department shall engage in a public education campaign to
28 ensure that dog owners are aware of the provisions of this section.

29 § 2. This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after it shall
30 have become a law.