



Hill & Associates, P.C. | 123 S. Broad Street, Suite 1100 | Philadelphia, PA 19109
Phone: 215-989-4253
Toll Free: 866-720-4699

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Pennsylvania Dangerous Dogs: Dog Bite / Dog Attack Statutes

§ 459-502. Dog bites; detention and isolation of dogs

(a) Confinement. Any dog which bites or attacks a human being shall be confined in quarters approved by a designated employee of the Department of Health, a State dog warden or employee of the Department of Agriculture, an animal control officer or a police officer. The dog may be detained and isolated in an approved kennel or at the dog owner's property or at another [FN1] location approved by the investigating officer. Where the dog is detained is at the discretion of the investigating officer. All dogs so detained must be isolated for a minimum of ten days. Any costs incurred in the detaining and isolation of the dog shall be paid by the offending dog's owner or keeper or both. If the dog's owner or keeper is not known, the Commonwealth is responsible for all reasonable costs for holding and detaining the dog.

(b) Bite victims. The following shall apply:

(1) The investigating officer shall be responsible for notifying the bite victim of the medical results of the offending dog's confinement. Any cost to the victim for medical treatment resulting from an attacking or biting dog must be paid fully by the owner or keeper of the dog. The Commonwealth shall not be liable for medical treatment costs to the victim.

(2)(i) For the purpose of this subsection, the term "medical results of the offending dog's confinement" shall mean, except as provided in subparagraph (ii), information as to whether the quarantined dog is still alive and whether it is exhibiting any signs of being infected with the rabies virus.

(ii) If a nonlethal test for rabies is developed, the term shall mean the results of the test and not the meaning given in subparagraph (i).

(c) Exception. When a dog that bites or attacks a human being is a service dog or a police work dog in the performance of duties, the dog need not be confined if it is under the active supervision of a licensed doctor of veterinary medicine.

CREDIT(S)

1982, Dec. 7, P.L. 784, No. 225, art. V, § 502, effective Jan. 1, 1983. Amended 1996, Dec. 11, P.L. 943, No. 151, § 12, effective in 60 days; 2008, Oct. 9, P.L. 1450, No. 119, § 14, effective in 60 days [Dec. 8, 2008].

[FN1] "or to another" in enrolled bill.

3 P.S. § 459-502, PA ST 3 P.S. § 459-502

Current through Act 2009-52

Source: [Westlaw](#) /Thomson Reuters. PURDON'S PENNSYLVANIA STATUTES AND CONSOLIDATED STATUTES TITLE 3 P.S. AGRICULTURE CHAPTER 8. DOGS AND CATS DOG LAW ARTICLE V. OFFENSES OF DOGS § 459-502. Dog bites; detention and isolation of dogs.