

**TOWN OF THORNTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DOG ORDINANCE**

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**Section 1:** The following Ordinance is enacted pursuant to the enabling provisions of RSA 466 for the purpose of regulating the licensing and restraining of dogs owned or kept within the Town of Thornton, New Hampshire.

**Section 2: Purpose:** This Ordinance shall be captioned "Town of Thornton Dog Ordinance" and shall take effect on its adoption by the Town. With discretion of authority, this ordinance regarding dogs will be enforced to protect the general health, safety and welfare for the residents of the Town of Thornton and the general public.

**Section 3: Registration and Licensing:** No dog four (4) months old or older shall be allowed to be or remain within the Town unless registered and licensed as follows:

- a. All dogs owned or kept in the Town shall be registered as to sex, breed, name and address of owner, and name of dog.
- b. Before a license is issued, the owner or keeper of a dog shall furnish to Town Clerk verification for a licensed veterinarian that the dog has been vaccinated against rabies in accordance with the provisions of RSA 436.
- c. At the time of registration the owner shall obtain a license and tag for each dog and pay the statutory fee therefor.
- d. It shall be the duty of the owner to cause the license tag to be securely attached around the dog's neck and kept there at all times during the licensing period.
- e. Registration and licensing of a dog previously registered and licensed shall be completed annually on or before the 30th of April. The license period shall run from one year from the first day of the ensuing May.
- f. Any person becoming the owner or keeper of a dog after May 1, shall, if the dog is not duly licensed, cause it to be licensed until the first day of the ensuing May.
- g. A license duly recorded may be transferred to the Town of Thornton with the dog licensed.
- h. The owner or keeper of 5 or more dogs or breeder of dogs shall obtain a special license pursuant to RSA 466:6.

**Section 4: Dogs running at large:** In accordance with RSA 466:30-a, It shall be unlawful for an owner of any dog licensed or unlicensed to permit said dog to run at large except when used for hunting, herding, supervised competition and exhibition or training for such.

- a. Running "at large" means off the premises of the owner or keeper and not under the control of any person by means of personal presence and attention as will reasonably control the conduct of such dog.
- b. Any authorized person may seize, impound or restrain any dog in violation of this section and deliver said dog to a shelter authorized to board dogs at the owner's expense.

- c. The owner or keeper of any dogs impounded hereunder may redeem the same by paying all costs, charges, and penalties assessed, if any, that have accrued up to the time of making the redemption, and when the same are paid the dog shall be released to the owner thereof.
- d. In addition to impounding the dog found at large or in violation of this section, any local law enforcement officer may issue, in the name of the owner or keeper of such dog, a notice of violation for a nuisance dog pursuant to RSA 466:31, II(a).

**Section 5: Dog a Menace, a Nuisance or Violation:** Under this section a dog is considered to be a nuisance, a menace or vicious to person or to property under any or all, but not limited to the following conditions.

- a. No person owning or keeping any dog within the Town of Thornton shall suffer or permit such dog to disturb the peace and quiet of the neighborhood by continuous barking, making other loud or unusual noises, running through or across cultivated gardens, lawns, or fields, or acting in any other manner which would disturb the peace and solitude of the neighborhood.
- b. If a dog barks for sustained periods of more than ½ hour, or during the night hours so as to disturb the peace and quiet of a neighborhood or area, not including a dog which is guarding, working, or herding livestock;
- c. If it digs, scratches, or excretes, or causes waste or garbage to be scattered on property other than it's owner's;
- d. If a female dog in season (heat) is permitted to run at large or be off the premises of the owner or keeper during this period except when being exercised on a leash by a responsible adult. At all other times such dog shall be confined within a building or enclosure in such manner that she will not come in contact (except for intentional breeding purposes) with a male dog. A female dog in heat shall not be used for hunting;
- e. If it growls, snaps at, runs after, or chases any person or persons not on the premises of the owner or keeper;
- f. If it runs after, or chases bicycles, motor vehicles, motorcycles, or other vehicles being driven, pulled or pushed on the streets, highways or public ways;
- g. If whether alone or in a pack with other dogs, it bites, attacks, or preys on game animals, domestic animals, fowl or human beings.

**Section 6: PENALTIES:**

I. Any person who violates any provision of RSA 466:31 shall be guilty of a violation; provided that if such person chooses to pay the civil forfeiture specified in paragraph II, the person shall be deemed to have waived the right to have the case heard in district or municipal court and shall not be prosecuted or found guilty of a violation of RSA 466:31. Any person who does not pay the civil forfeiture specified in paragraph II shall have the case disposed of in district or municipal court.

II. Any person who violates any of the provisions of RSA 466:31 shall be liable for a civil forfeiture, which shall be paid to the clerk of the town or city wherein such dog is owned or kept within 96 hours of the date and time notice is given by any law enforcement officer or other person authorized by the town to the owner or keeper of a dog in violation of RSA 466:31. If the forfeiture is paid, said payment shall be in full satisfaction of the assessed penalty. The forfeiture shall be in the amount as specified for the following violations:

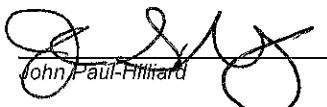

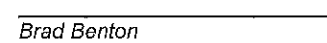

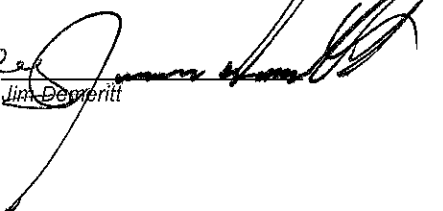
- a. \$25 for the first nuisance offense under RSA 466:31, II(a), (b), (c) or (d); \$100 for the second or subsequent nuisance offense committed within 12 months of the first nuisance offense under RSA 466:31, II(a), (b), (c) or (d).
- b. \$50 for the first menace offense under RSA 466:31, II(e) or (f); \$200 for the second or subsequent menace offense committed within 12 months of the first menace offense under RSA 466:31, II(e) or (f).
- c. \$100 for the first vicious offense under RSA 466:31, II(g).
- d. \$400 for the second or subsequent vicious offense committed within 12 months of the first vicious offense under RSA 466:31, II(g)

III. Any person who pays a civil forfeiture specified in paragraph II 2 times in any 12-month period according to the records of the town or city clerk, may not pay a civil forfeiture for subsequent violations of RSA 466:31 in that 12-month period, but shall have those cases disposed of in district or municipal court. In the case of a vicious dog, as described by RSA 466:31, II(g), where its behavior presents a threat to public safety, immediate district court or municipal court proceedings may be initiated in lieu of the civil forfeiture.

**Automatic Amendment:** Sections 3, 5, and 6 of this ordinance shall be automatically amended by any correlating amendments to RSA 466:1, :1-a, :2, :3, :6, :31 or :31-a.

**Effective Date:** This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or repealed by appropriate authority. This Ordinance supersedes all prior ordinances on similar subject matter.

Passed and approved by the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Thornton, New Hampshire, this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 2015.

  
John Paul-Filliard  
  
Roy Sabourin  
  
Brad Benton  
  
Marianne Peabody  
  
Jim Demeritt  
Board of Selectmen  
Thornton, New Hampshire

Received and Recorded March 19, 2015 at 7:45 o'clock am/pm.

  
Town Clerk, J. Tyler