



John W. Mays, Executive Director  
National Animal Control Association  
P.O. Box 480851  
Kansas City, MO 64148  
Phone: 913-768-1319  
Fax: 913-768-1378  
[naca@nacanet.org](mailto:naca@nacanet.org)

## **Pet Licenses - Dogs**

### **Guideline Statement**

State and or local statutes should require all dogs to be licensed, and require licenses to be worn at all times. Licenses should be considered as permits which shall mandate specified responsibility and privileges of ownership. Licenses should be issued only upon proof of necessary immunizations.

### **Basis for Guideline**

Licenses provide for the proper identification of dogs and their owners. It has been proven that licensing programs, adequately enforced, greatly reduce the numbers of surplus animals impounded unnecessarily, and encourage owner responsibility. Licenses provide owners with proof of legal ownership. Licensing fees can provide a necessary revenue base for animal control services. Fines for licensing violations also help offset the tax burden to the general public for such services.

### **Guideline Recommendation**

Licensing laws should be fully enforceable by animal control officers and police officers, and should prescribe progressive penalties for repeat violations. Licenses considered as permits may be revoked for specific violations. NACA recommends that licensing programs be designed to provide a fast, efficient means of identifying dogs and their owners. Licensing records can be easily maintained via a central, local registry. Annual registration may help keep licensing records current and accurate, as circumstances frequently change in the lives of people and their pets. At the minimum, NACA recommends that licenses include complete owner contact information, and a complete description of the licensed dog. It is also helpful to include whether the dog has been spayed/neutered.

Licensing should be required as a condition for owning, harboring, or keeping a dog, and not combined with restraint laws.

Reviewed/Revised by the NACA Corporate Office - 09/17/02

The foregoing Guideline has been affirmed as duly adopted by the NACA Board of Directors.

***John W. Mays***

John W. Mays  
Executive Director  
National Animal Control Association