

Pet Owner & The Law

Jefferson County Animal Services

360.385.3292



*A department of
Jefferson County
Sheriff*

Tel: 360.385.3831


Animal Services

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Animal Services**

360.385.3292

Physical Address: 112 Critter Lane
Port Townsend, WA 98368
Mailing Address: 79 Elkins Rd
Port Hadlock, WA 98339

Phone: **360.385.3292**
Email: jcas@co.jefferson.wa.us

WASHINGTON'S DANGEROUS DOG LAW

RCW.16.08.070

Washington State has one of the strictest dangerous dog laws in the Nation. It is the owner's responsibility to control his or her animal. Failure to do so may result in criminal prosecution as well as civil suit.

Dangerous Dog

Any dog that, according to the records of the appropriate authority,
*Severely injured a human or public or private property;
*Killed a domestic animal while off the owner's property;
*Has been classified as potentially dangerous under the law and subsequently bites, attacks or endangers the safety of humans or domestic animals.

Potentially Dangerous Dog

Any dog that, when **unprovoked**
*Bites a human or domestic animal;
Chases or approaches a person on the street, sidewalk or other public grounds in a menacing fashion;
*Injures or otherwise threatens the safety of humans or domestic animals

Potential Penalties

Failure to control a potentially dangerous dog:

MISDEMEANOR

*Failure to control a dangerous animal:

GROSS MISDEMEANOR

Possessing a dangerous dog that aggressively attacks, severely injures or kills any human:

CLASS "C" FELONY

Keeping a "Dangerous Dog"
To keep a dog legally classified as dangerous, you must:

- *Obtain a \$50,000 surety bond
- *Permanently kennel the dog
- *Pay an annual registration fee of \$250.00

Registration of a Dangerous Dog

Required to keep a dog legally classified as Dangerous or Potentially Dangerous:

- Obtain a \$50,000 surety Bond
- Permanently kennel the dog
- Register annually with Animal Control.

IMPORTANT:

All dogs exhibiting POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS behavior can be evaluated for designation as a dangerous dog under Washington law. Pet owners whose dogs have been classified as potentially dangerous are liable for criminal prosecution or subsequent violations in addition; a further determination will be made to upgrade the classification to DANGEROUS. This does not preclude the filing of felony or civil charges for the first offence in cases of serious human injury or death.

Questions? Call (360) 385.3292

Jefferson County Animal Services

JCAS as a part of Jefferson County Sheriff, is charged with enforcing the animal statutes of Washington state, Jefferson county, and Port Townsend.

Animal Control Officer

Animal Control Officers, are appointed by the Sheriff for enforcing the State's anti-cruelty laws and other statutes regulating animals.

While the majority of laws about animal control are directed at specific unacceptable behavior, it should be understood that the laws are not for animals— they are for the pet owners or keepers. In a sense, animal control problems are really people problems.

YOU CAN HELP

- Abide by the law. Attach current pet license tags to your pet's collar. Keep your pets off the streets and your neighbor's property. Provide proper food, water, shelter, veterinary care, and most important—your time and companionship!
- Spay or neuter. If your female dog or cat is in heat, don't allow her outside unsupervised. Better yet, spay/neuter your pets.
- Control your pet. Don't let your pet bother the neighbors by barking or being a nuisance. Obedience training can correct many problems.

Pet Licensing

Pet licensing is mandatory in Jefferson County. All dogs must be licensed within 30 days . It must be renewed every two years. The license must be worn at all times, even when the pet is on your property.

Animals at large

It is unlawful for the owner of a pet or livestock to suffer or permit such an animal to leave the premises of the owner, unless the animal is under physical restraint adequate to the size and nature of the animal or is sufficiently near its owner to be under its owners direct control and is obedient to its owner commands.

Animals in Heat

It is unlawful to keep an animal in heat where it is accessible to male animals unless such accessibility is for the purpose of planned breeding.

Disturbing Pedestrians

It is unlawful to keep an animal that disturbs people lawfully using public ways by snarling, growling, or jumping at or toward such people. Such an animal may be deemed Potentially Dangerous

Animal Bites

It is unlawful to maintain an animal that bites a person while such person is on public property or lawfully on private property. Such an animal may be deemed Potentially Dangerous.

Quarantine

Any domestic animal that bites or otherwise breaks the skin of any persons will be quarantined for ten (10) day at the owner's expense.

Cruelty

It is unlawful to deliberately abuse or neglect any animal. Cruelty includes failure to furnish adequate care, shelter and medical attention, or allowing an animal to go 24 hours without food or water.

Penalties

Owners of animal impounded are subject to payment of impound and boarding fees, and transportation fees for livestock. In addition, you may be cited for violations of the Civil Code (infractions) or the Criminal Code (misdemeanors) subject to fines and/or mandatory appearances in District or Municipal court. A minimum fine for the first infraction. Conviction of a misdemeanor can result in up to \$1,000.00 fine and imprisonment for up to 90 days. Fines and penalties vary with each jurisdiction.

Other Violations

- Abandoning an animal
- Releasing someone else's animal
- Possessing a dangerous, venomous or poisonous, wild animal
- Confinement of an animal in a motor vehicle
- Transporting an animal in the open bed of a truck without restraint or containment
- Failing to remove feces from public property ("scooper" Law)
- Refusal to quarantine
- Interfering with impoundment
- Owning an excessive number of animals

- Obstruction of an Officer

- Filing false reports

Services Provided by JCAS

- Rescuing sick, & injured domesticated animals
- Investigating animal bite complaints
- Removing dead domesticated animals from roads
- Investigating cruelty complaints
- Impounding stray animals
- Rounding up stray livestock
- Investigating animal noise complaints
- Acting as expert witnesses in court cases
- Assisting other Law Enforcement agencies with animal problems
- You can purchase a new pet license or renew your pet license for Jefferson County during normal business hours of **11:00 AM—5:00 PM**

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