



SYNOPSIS:

Under existing law, animals are afforded protections regarding their care in this state.

This bill would require certain methods be used to tether or confine a dog.

This bill would require certain care be provided to dogs kept outside using one of these methods.

This bill would exempt certain persons and activities from these requirements.

This bill would provide a criminal penalty for tethering or confining a dog in violation of this act.

This bill would also provide for a political subdivision of this state to appoint an agent to inspect violations.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Relating to dogs; to provide methods for tethering and confining dogs; to provide certain standards of care for dogs kept outside; to exempt certain persons and activities; to provide criminal penalties for violations; and to provide for political subdivisions' agent to inspect violations.



BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. (a) This act shall be known and may be cited as the Alabama Dog Tethering and Outdoor Shelter Act.

(b) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) ADEQUATE FOOD. Food that is sufficient in amount and is appropriate for the particular type of dog to prevent starvation or a significant risk to the dog's health from lack of food. the term includes palatable, uncontaminated, and nutritionally appropriate food that is fed according to species requirements or is fed as directed by a veterinarian.

(2) ADEQUATE WATER. Water that is sufficient in amount and is appropriate for the particular type of dog to prevent dehydration or a significant risk to the dog's health from lack of water. The term includes potable water offered to dogs at suitable intervals according to the species requirements, or as directed by a veterinarian.

(3) ADEQUATE SHELTER. A structure that provides a dog with protections from inclement weather and is of a dimension that allows the dog to stand erect, sit, turn around, and lie down in a normal position while in the structure.

(4) PROPERLY FITTED. When worn by a dog, all of the following apply:

a. Appropriately sized for a dog based on the dog's measurement and body weight.

b. Does not choke a dog or impede the dog's normal breathing or swallowing.

c. Does not cause pain or injury to a dog.



57 (c) A person may not leave or keep a dog chained or
58 tethered to a stationary object, including a structure,
59 doghouse, pole, or tree, or otherwise confined unless in
60 accordance with one of the following:

61 (1)a. Confined in a secure enclosure that has adequate
62 space for exercise depending upon the age, size, breed, and
63 weight of the dog.

64 b. The secure enclosure shall be constructed with chain
65 link or other sturdy material, with all four sides enclosed
66 and with a minimum height sufficient to confine the dog.

67 (2) Confined in a fully fenced, including
68 electronically fenced, or otherwise securely enclosed yard
69 where the dog has the ability to run but is unable to leave
70 the yard.

71 (3) Tethered to a trolley system that satisfies all of
72 the following:

73 a. The tether is designed for dogs.

74 b. The tether does not weigh more than one-eighth of
75 the dog's body weight.

76 c. The trolley system does not allow the dog to leave
77 the property of the owner or keeper.

78 d. Only one dog is tethered to each cable attached to
79 the trolley system.

80 e. The tether is attached to a properly fitted collar
81 or harness worn by the dog.

82 f. The tether has a swivel on both ends to minimize
83 tangling of the collar.

84 g. The tether and cable run are both at least 10 feet



85 in length and the cable run is secured at least four feet, but
86 not more than seven feet, above ground level.

87 h. The length of the tether from the cable run to the
88 dog's collar or harness allows continuous access at all times
89 to adequate food and adequate water, and shelter as described
90 in subsection (d).

91 i. The trolley system is of an appropriate
92 configuration to confine the dog to the property of the owner
93 or keeper, prevent the cable run and tether from extending
94 over an object or edge that could result in injury or
95 strangulation of the dog, and prevent the cable run and tether
96 from becoming tangled with other objects or animals.

97 (d) Subsection (c) does not apply to any of the
98 following:

99 (1) A licensed veterinary practice that tethers or
100 confines a dog in the course of its practice.

101 (2) A boarding kennel or public or private animal
102 shelter with secure enclosures for the temporary boarding or
103 housing of dogs.

104 (3) An exhibition, trial, show, contest, or other
105 temporary event in which skill, breeding, or stamina of a dog
106 is judged or examined.

107 (4) A dog that is used for obedience purposes or
108 receives training in a lawful manner to hunt or retrieve
109 wildlife.

110 (5) The temporary tethering of a dog at any campsite or
111 recreation area or home.

112 (6) A licensed grooming shop or facility during the



grooming of a dog.

(7) Any emergency circumstance during which tethering a dog is necessary, but not exceeding a reasonable amount of time with respect to the weather.

(e) A logging chain or other line or device not designed or intended for tethering a dog, or a choke collar or pinch collar, may not be used to indefinitely tether a dog.

(f) In addition to any other requirement, a person leaving or keeping a dog confined outside shall provide the dog with access to shelter that complies with all of the following:

(1) Allows the dog to remain dry and protected from the elements, including providing shade for the dog and containing adequate bedding for cold weather when necessary.

(2) Has a roof, walls, and a solid floor to provide adequate shelter.

(3) Is constructed or manufactured of durable materials and provides adequate ventilation.

(4) Has adequate space for the dog to stand up, turn around, and extend its limbs.

(5) Is free from accumulated waste, standing water, and debris.

(6) Allows the dog unlimited access.

(g) Nothing in this section shall apply to any of the following:

(1) A dog whose purpose is or that is receiving training in conduct that is directly related to the business of shepherding or herding livestock, cultivating agricultural



products, hunting, or retrieving.

(2) A person walking a dog on a leash.

(3) A person tethering a dog near a place of business while the person is inside or otherwise interacting with the business, subject to the following conditions:

a. The dog is tethered for a reasonable amount of time with respect to the weather.

b. The dog is tethered in a reasonable location near the place of business.

(h) A person who violates this section shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(i) The governing body of a county or municipality may appoint one or more animal control officers to investigate alleged violations of this section. An officer shall not be required to be a certified law enforcement officer. Upon having probable cause that a violation of this section has occurred, an officer may do either of the following:

(1) Remove a dog or cat from its present location.

(2) Order the owner of a dog or cat to provide certain care to the dog or cat at the owner's expense without the removal of the dog or cat from its present location.

(j) Neither a county or municipality, nor an animal control officer, acting in good faith, may be liable for any actions taken under this section, regardless of whether a dog or cat that is removed is returned to its owner.

Section 2. This act shall become effective on October 1, 2025.