



**House Agriculture and Forestry Reported Substitute
for SB361**

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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 authorize agents of political subdivisions to inspect violations.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. For purposes of this act, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) ADEQUATE FOOD. Food that is offered in suitable intervals and in sufficient amounts to prevent starvation or significant risk to a dog's health from lack of food.

(2) ADEQUATE WATER. Potable water that is offered in suitable intervals and in sufficient amounts to prevent dehydration or significant risk to a dog's health from lack of water.

(3) PROPERLY FITTED. When naturally worn by a dog, a collar or harness that:

a. Is appropriately sized for the dog based on the dog's measurements and body weight; and

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



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29 (4) TETHER. A chain, leash, cable, rope, trolley
30 system, or other similar device used to tie or otherwise
31 connect a dog to a stationary object, including a structure,
32 doghouse, pole, or tree.

33 Section 2. (a) (1) A person may not tether a dog to a
34 stationary object, including a tree, pole, stake, or
35 structure, unless the dog is tethered via a trolley system in
36 accordance with all of the following:

37 a. The tether is not unreasonably heavy in relation to
38 the weight of the dog.

39 b. The tether does not allow the dog to leave the
40 property of the owner or person responsible for the dog.

41 c. The tether is connected to only one dog.

42 d. The tether is attached to a properly fitted collar
43 or harness worn by the dog.

44 e. The tether has a swivel on both ends to minimize
45 tangling.

46 f. The tether allows the dog continuous access at all
47 times to adequate food, adequate water, and shelter as
48 described in Section 3.

49 g. The tether does not extend over an object or edge
50 that could result in injury or strangulation of the dog.

51 h. The tether is situated in a manner to prevent
52 entanglement with other objects or animals.

53 (2) A logging chain, choke collar, or pinch collar may
54 not be used to tether a dog.

55 (b) A person may not restrain or restrict a dog's
56 movement by confining the dog within an enclosure unless in



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57 accordance with all of the following:

58 (1) The enclosure is secure, fully fenced, and has
59 adequate space for the dog to run.

60 (2) The enclosure is constructed with a sturdy
61 material, including chain link and electronic fencing, with
62 all four sides enclosed, and with a minimum height sufficient
63 to confine the dog if not an electronic fence.

64 (3) The dog has continuous access at all times to
65 adequate food, adequate water, and shelter as described in
66 Section 3.

67 (4) The enclosure does not allow the dog to leave the
68 property of the owner or person responsible for the dog.

69 (c) Subsections (a) and (b) do not apply to any of the
70 following:

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

73 (2) A boarding kennel or public or private animal
74 shelter with secure enclosures for the temporary boarding or
75 housing of dogs.

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

79 (4) A dog that is used for obedience purposes or
80 receives training in a lawful manner to hunt or retrieve
81 wildlife.

82 (5) A service or assistance dog.

83 (6) A licensed grooming shop or facility during the
84 grooming of a dog.



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

88 (8) An individual walking a dog on a leash.

89 (9) A commercial dog breeder.

90 Section 3. In addition to any other requirement by law,
91 a person leaving or keeping a dog tethered or confined outside
92 shall provide the dog with access to shelter that complies
93 with all of the following:

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

98 (2) Has a roof, walls, and a solid floor.

99 (3) Has space for the dog to stand up, turn around, lie
100 down in a normal position, and extend its limbs.

101 (4) Is constructed or manufactured of durable materials
102 and provides adequate ventilation.

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

105 (6) Allows the dog unlimited access to the shelter.

106 Section 4. This act does not apply to any of the
107 following:

108 (1) A dog whose purpose is or that is receiving
109 training in conduct that is directly related to the business
110 of shepherding or herding livestock, cultivating agricultural
111 products, hunting, or retrieving.

112 (2) An individual tethering or confining a dog near a



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113 place of business while the individual is inside or otherwise
114 interacting with the business, so long as:

115 a. The dog is tethered or confined for a reasonable
116 amount of time with respect to the weather; and

117 b. The dog is tethered or confined in a reasonable
118 location near the place of business.

119 (3) The temporary tethering or confining of a dog at
120 any campsite, recreation area, or home so long as the dog is
121 tethered or confined for a reasonable amount of time with
122 respect to the weather.

123 Section 5. (a) The governing body of a county or
124 municipality may appoint one or more animal control officers
125 to investigate alleged violations of this act. An
126 investigating officer shall not be required to be a certified
127 law enforcement officer.

128 (b) Upon having probable cause that a violation of this
129 act has occurred, a certified law enforcement officer **or**
130 **animal control officer** may do either of the following:

131 (1) Remove a dog from its present location if he or she
132 believes the animal's life is in danger.

133 (2) Order the owner to provide care to the dog at the
134 owner's expense to comply with this act.

135 (c) The removal of a dog or the issuance of an order to
136 provide care to a dog shall be subject to the hearing and
137 disposition requirements and procedures provided in Sections
138 13A-11-244 and 13A-11-245, Code of Alabama 1975.

139 (d) A county, municipality, animal control officer, or
140 certified law enforcement officer, acting in good faith, may



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141 not be liable for any actions taken pursuant to this act,
142 regardless of whether a dog that is removed is returned to its
143 owner.

144 Section 6. A person who violates this act shall pay the
145 full costs of boarding and providing veterinarian care to the
146 dog and be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

147 Section 7. This act shall become effective on October
148 1, 2026.