



Pennsylvania
Department of Agriculture

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**The Department of Agriculture Announces that Dog
License Purchases for 2026 Will Be Available in December and Urges
All Pet Owners to License Their Dogs**

Beginning December 1, dog owners can buy an annual license for 2026 online by clicking on your county at licenseyourdogpa.pa.gov. The deadline to purchase a 2026 license renewal for your pets is January 1, 2026.

Pet safety is a team sport — and dog licenses help keeps your dog out of a shelter if they get lost and funds the important work that dog wardens do to protect all Pennsylvania dogs and the communities they live in.

*Since taking office, **Governor Josh Shapiro** has strengthened Pennsylvania's Dog Law, making Pennsylvania a safer, healthier place for dogs in kennels and shelters, and protecting communities from stray and dangerous dogs.*

Barto, PA – Today, **Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding** announced that annual dog license purchases for 2026 will be available for purchase beginning December 1st. Licensing is a legal obligation of every dog owner in Pennsylvania, and license sales fund the work of dog wardens who protect dogs and communities statewide. Montgomery County Treasury officials and canine athletes and their owners from Montgomery County 4-H Speedy Paws Dog Agility Club joined the Secretary to help remind Pennsylvanians how licensing your dog helps make Pennsylvania a safer, healthier place for dogs in kennels and shelters, and ramps up the work to protect communities from stray and dangerous dogs.

"Pennsylvanians have made it clear that they expect dog owners, kennels, breeders, and shelters to be held to high standards," said **Secretary Russell Redding**. "They want their communities to be safe from stray and dangerous dogs. They want owners to be held responsible when their dog attacks, and they want unscrupulous breeders to be shut down. **Shapiro Administration** updates to state law have put more dog wardens in our communities, made it easier for people buying a dog to know where it came from, streamlined licensing for dog owners and for kennel businesses, and clarified requirements for boarding kennel owners. **Governor Josh Shapiro**, along with our

General Assembly, our hardworking **Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement** staff, and **Pennsylvania County Treasurers** are working together to make Pennsylvania a safer, healthier place for dogs and for our communities. We hope every dog owner will do their part in this to help protect Pennsylvania dogs.”

Dogs must be licensed at the point of adoption or purchase, or at three months if no transfer of ownership has taken place. The youngest age at which a dog can be purchased or adopted in Pennsylvania is eight weeks.

Beginning December 1, annual licenses can be purchased online from your county treasurer in one location at licenseyourdogpa.pa.gov. Not every county offers lifetime licenses online — but Pennsylvanians can click on the map to find details of how to buy a lifetime license in your county, along with dog warden and county treasurer contacts.

An annual license costs \$10.80. Lifetime licenses are available for \$52.80 for dogs with permanent identification like a microchip or tattoo. Senior adults and people with disabilities may be eligible for discounted fees of \$8.80 for an annual license or \$36.80 for a lifetime license.

The cost of a license is far less than the penalty for being caught without one. Owners who fail to license their dogs can face fines of up to \$500, plus court costs for each unlicensed dog.

“One of the most important things it does is it allows us as a local government and an agent for the state, to have a very positive reaction with our constituents “, said Montgomery County Treasurer Jason Salus.” We have found in Montgomery County, that people really don’t mind licensing their dogs. They understand the protection that dogs get.”

Pet owners and their dogs [from Montgomery County 4-H Speedy Paws Dog Agility Club](#) put today’s featured canine athletes — all sporting their PA Dog Licenses and athletic gear from their favorite Pennsylvania teams — through a course to show off their skills and agility at [Orchard Hills Training Center](#) in Barto. Orchard Hills’ 15,000 square foot training facilities are one of the home bases for the club’s activities.

“Athletes protect themselves and their teams by wearing helmets and pads,” continued **Secretary Redding**. “The best protective gear for your dog is a license. A license keeps your dog out of a shelter if they get lost. It also protects all Pennsylvania dogs, whether they are in a breeding kennel waiting to be sold, a shelter waiting to be adopted, or in a boarding kennel or doggy day care while you’re away.”

Unlike a chip, which is invisible without an electronic reader, a license on a dog’s collar is clearly visible and increases their chance of being returned home, rather than ending

up in a shelter. In 2024, only 3% of stray dogs across Pennsylvania could immediately be returned to their owners, and 23% were taken to shelters in other counties, due to lack of shelter space in the county where they were found.

Learn more about how Pennsylvania is working to make communities and dogs safer, as well as the responsibilities of dog ownership and more here and license your dog online at licenseyourdogpa.pa.gov.

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