

Anne Arundel County changes Animal Control code

Posted by [TBNDavid](#) On 09/08/2017

Beginning September 7, 2017, numerous changes relating to animals that pose a public safety risk are effective. On May 15, 2017, Bill number 59-17 an ordinance concerning **Public Safety – Animal Control – Dangerous and Vicious Animals (Lilo's Law)** was introduced by County Council members Mr. Fink, Mr. Walker, Mr. Trumbauer, Mr. Grasso and Mr. Smith.

The County Council voted on the bill on July 17, 2017, and unanimously supported the code changes. On July 24, 2017, the County Executive signed the bill making it effective September 7, 2017.

To view [full details of the bill](#) please visit the County website.

A few of the key components of this bill are:

- A Dangerous Animal Registry has been created. To [view a listing](#) of animals designated Potentially Dangerous (for Public Safety Incidences that occurred prior to September 7, 2017) and Dangerous animals before and subsequent to September 7, 2017, visit the Anne Arundel County Animal Control website.
- Animals that have committed violations of the Public Safety section can no longer be declared "Potentially Dangerous" this does not impact the label of animals prior to September 7, 2017.
- A definition of "Vicious Animal" has been added to the County Code and the Agency shall order the destruction of an animal determined to be "Vicious".
- The Agency may now impound animals involved in an incident that constitutes a public safety threat or an animal whose owner violates any condition of an administrative order (Potentially Dangerous or Dangerous Order) pertaining to that animal.
- Animal Control may not place for adoption, send to rescue or transfer to rescue an animal deemed Dangerous or Vicious.
- If an animal has been deemed Dangerous or Vicious by another jurisdiction Animal Control may designate the animal as Dangerous or Vicious if the animal now resides in Anne Arundel County.
- It is now considered a public safety threat if an animal kills or inflicts injury to a domesticated animal and if an animal, while at large, and without provocation, chases or approaches a lawfully restrained domesticated animal in an attitude of attack.

These changes were initiated by citizens of Anne Arundel County after "Lilo" a French Bulldog/Boston Terrier mix was fatally attacked by an at large dog. The attacking dog was deemed Potentially Dangerous in accordance with the existing laws at that time of the incident and returned to its owner. "Lilo's" owner and the community in which the attacking dog resides were outraged that the dog that took the life of "Lilo" was allowed to return to the community.

It is our hope that the changes to the County code will encourage pet owners to be more responsible, particularly if they own an animal with history of aggression, that knowing where animals with a history of public safety violations live will help the citizens of our County be informed and therefore safer and that fewer animals with a history of violating public safety laws will reside in Anne Arundel County over time.

In effort to help animal owners be responsible we want to remind the public that the most frequent violation of existing County laws that leads to an animal being involved in a public safety incident is when an animal is not leashed and not under control when off its owner's property either due to an open gate, open entry/exit door to the home or failure of the owner to properly secure the animal on leash. A few extra tips to help prevent animals from violating County laws and being involved in public safety incidences that may lead to the impoundment and possible destruction of the animal include:

- Ensure any/all gates to fenced yards are secured prior to letting an animal in the yard.
- Install locks on any/all gates to fenced yards to prevent the gates from being opened by someone other than a resident of the home.
- Install automatic door closures on any/all fence gates.
- Install safety mechanisms to prevent young children from being able to open entry/exit doors to the home.
- Install secondary barriers at entry/exit doors to the home to prevent animals from having unintentional access to the public.

- Secure animals away from entry/exit doors when they will be opened to prevent animals from accidentally slipping past (for example: when delivered or trick-or-treaters come to the door).
- Crate your animal in your vehicle or use other means to prevent your animal from escaping from your vehicle when windows/doors are opened.
- Spay/Neuter your pets.

Additionally, we would like to remind citizens of the County that Anne Arundel County Law requires ALL CATS AND DOGS over 6 months of age be licensed with the County.

This can be done in person at Anne Arundel County Animal Control or via mail. Proof of current rabies vaccination, which is required by Maryland Law (§18-318 of the Annotated Code of Maryland), for all pets over 4 months of age must be provided at the time of licensing.

For information on licensing, including license applications, please visit our [website](#).

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