

Anti-Tethering/Chaining Resource Sheet

HB 1238 now Act 10 of 2017 Limits the Continuous Tethering of Dogs in Pennsylvania

WHAT DOES “CHAINING” OR “TETHERING” OF DOGS MEAN?

These terms refer to the practice of fastening a dog to a stationary object or stake, usually in the owner's backyard, as a means of keeping the animal under control. These terms do not refer to the periods when an animal is walked on a leash.

WHY IS TETHERING INHUMANE?

Dogs are naturally social animals who thrive on interaction with people and other animals. A dog kept continuously chained suffers immense psychological damage. An otherwise friendly and docile dog, if rarely taken off a chain, becomes neurotic, anxious and often aggressive.

In many cases, the necks of chained dogs become raw and covered with sores, the result of improperly fitted collars and the dogs' constant yanking and straining to escape confinement. Dogs have even been found with collars embedded in their necks, the result of years of neglect at the end of a chain.

WHO SAYS TETHERING IS INHUMANE?

The Humane Society of the United States, the Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association and an increasing number of state and federal agencies have positions against chronic chaining.

THE LEGISLATION PLACES REASONABLE LIMITATIONS ON TETHERING/CHAINING BY:

- Banning tethering a dog outside without providing for its basic needs as defined under Section 5532.
- Creates a rebuttable presumption the dog **has not been neglected** as defined in section 5532 if:
 - The dog is not a victim of cruelty under another section of the animal cruelty code.
 - The dog is tethered for no more than 9 cumulative hours within a 24 hour period.
 - The tether is secured to a well-fitting collar with a swivel and by a tether of no less than 10 feet or three times the length of the dog.
 - The dog has access to water and an area of shade.
 - The dog is not tethered for longer than 30 minutes when the temperature is over 90 degrees or under 32 degrees.

All of the factors above must be met in order for the presumption that a dog has not been neglected to apply. If the dog is not tethered in a manner that satisfies these requirements, a law enforcement officer may file neglect charges.

- The law creates a rebuttable presumption that the dog **has been neglected** if any of the following are present:
 - Excessive waste in the tethered area.
 - Open sores or wounds on the dog's body.
 - The use of a tow or log chain or choke, pinch, prong, or chain collar.

This legislation is a step in the right direction for dogs kept outside. Animals must have access to sanitary shelter which preserves body heat and keeps it dry. Levels of offense are based on the extent of bodily injury to the animal.



Tanner came in to Animal Care Sanctuary in East Smithfield, PA at 10 yrs. old, emaciated, no muscle mass, barely able to walk. After spending ten years on the end of a chain, Tanner was adopted and spent his last few months in the comforts of a loving home.



If you see something, say something!

Report animal cruelty to your local humane officer, who can be found here: bit.ly/ReportCrueltyPA

If you do not have a humane officer covering your area, contact local or state police.

Report animal cruelty to your local humane officer by visiting the link above or by scanning this code with your smart device.



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

Kristen Tullo, Pennsylvania State Director
ktullo@humanesociety.org | 717.440.5527



PENNSYLVANIA VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Jaime Markle, Director of Marketing and Communications
jmarkle@pavma.org | 717.220.1437

**For more information
on this joint effort:**