Dog Laws

What are the Pennsylvania Laws?

- All dogs three (3) months or older must be licensed by January 1 of each year.
- All dogs must be UNDER CONTROL. This means that when your dog is not on your property, it must be under the DIRECT control of you or a handler. The best way to control your dog is with a LEASH. Remember, you are responsible for any damage caused by your dog.
- All dogs three months of age and older must be vaccinated against rabies.

What is the Lower Merion Township Code?

Chapter 90: Health and Sanitation
§ 90-53 Control of dogs and cats.

No person owning, harboring, keeping or in charge of any dog or cat shall:

1. Allow such dog or cat to run at large upon the public streets of this municipality or upon the property of others; or

2. Cause or allow a dog or cat to soil, defile or defecate upon any other person's private property without the permission of such other person or upon any public property. Where such person shall immediately remove all feces deposited by the animal and dispose of the same in a sanitary manner, the nuisance created by defecation shall be considered abated, and such person shall not be in violation of this section.


Why Get your Dog Licensed?

- If your dog gets lost, a current license, vaccination tag or a microchip ID is the fastest way to get your dog back home.
- PA Dog wardens randomly conduct compliance checks in neighborhoods to ensure all dogs are licensed. Violators will be fined.
- Summary violations can be cited with a maximum fine of $300 per dog plus court costs.
- Misdemeanor violations of the PA dog law cost up to a maximum of $2,000 plus court costs.

Licenses may be purchased through your county treasurer, Lower Merion Township Police Department or at an issuing agent. For more information, visit www.licenseyourdogPA.com.
About Owning a Dog in Pennsylvania

Owning a dog is one of the great American pastimes and privileges. Dogs fill the role of a companion, guide, hunter, guardian, herdsman and entertainer. But owning a dog is a major responsibility as well. That responsibility extends not only to proper care and training of you dog, but also to your responsibility for the dog’s behavior. A proper understanding of the responsibilities of dog ownership is necessary in today’s complex society.

Allowing your dog to run at large or allowing your dog or cat to defecate without removing same is a nuisance and violation of law.

Controlling your Dog in Public Places

Keeping your dog under control means:

➢ Ensuring your dog is not causing a nuisance or danger.
➢ Being able to get an immediate and desired response from the dog by use of a leash, voice commands, hand signals, whistles or other effective means.

What you may see as playful or boisterous, but harmless behavior, others may see as "out of control" behavior. Dogs can be distracted, threatened or startled and many people are afraid of dogs. These laws are in place for the safety of Humans and Canines alike.

Lower Merion Township Parks
Dogs are Permitted On Leash

Ashbridge Park
1301 Montgomery Ave, Bryn Mawr

Austin Memorial Park
Lancaster & Norwood Aves, Rosemont

Black Rock Road Site
Black Rock & Dove Lake Rds, Gladwyne

Cynwyd Heritage Trail
398 Trevor Lane, Bala Cynwyd

Cynwyd Station Park
321 Conshohocken State Rd, Bala Cynwyd

Eco Valley Park
400 Mary Waters Ford Rd, Bala Cynwyd

Flat Rock Park
122 River Rd, Gladwyne

General Wayne Park
Wooded Area Only
305 Maplewood Ave, Merion Station

Henry Lane Park
Henry Ln & Stony Ln, Gladwyne

Kenealy Nature Park
Youngs Ford Rd & Monticello Dr, Gladwyne

Linwood Park
199 E Athens Ave, Ardmore

Merion Botanical Park
100 Merion Rd, Merion

Merion Square Road Park Site
Old Gulph & Merion Sq Rds, Gladwyne

Mill Creek Valley Park
Mill Creek & Rose Glen Rds, Penn Valley

Pencoyd Park
1300 N Woodbine Avenue, Penn Valley

Penn Wynne Park
Wooded Area Only
214 E Manoa Rd, Wynnewood

Righters Mill Road Site
Manayunk & Conshohocken St Rds, Narberth

Rolling Hill Park
1301 Rose Glen Rd, Gladwyne

Sharpe Bird Sanctuary
405 W Montgomery Avenue, Haverford

Shortridge Memorial Park
Signed Designated Area Only
400 Shortridge Dr, Wynnewood

West Mill Creek Park
Mill Creek & Old Gulph Rds, Gladwyne

Williamson Road Site
Youngs Ford & Williamson Rds, Gladwyne
Lower Merion Township
Off Leash Dog Program

The purpose of this program is to increase recreational opportunities in the Lower Merion Township park system by enabling residents to walk or exercise their dog(s) off-leash. There are currently three (3) Off Leash Dog Areas in Lower Merion Township.

Rolling Hill Park: Unfenced Area 1301 Rose Glen Road, Gladwyne, PA 19035
- The **Unfenced** Off-leash area is restricted to signed, designated trails and is permitted from Sunrise until 9:30am and 3:30 until 6:00pm seven days a week. Dogs must be kept on-leash everywhere else in the park, except the fenced dog area.
- Dogs must be kept on-leash in the parking area and entrance trail until entering the woods and trails identified as the Off-Leash area.
- When walking through fields, dog owners/handlers must remain on the trail and all dogs must be kept leashed to protect the meadow and grassland wildlife.
- **On-Leash Areas:** Dogs are permitted, but must be leashed at all times where these signs are posted.

Rolling Hill Park: Fenced Area 1301 Rose Glen Road, Gladwyne, PA 19035
- The **Fenced** Off-leash dog area is open from Sunrise until Sunset seven days a week.
- No food, drink or rawhide is allowed in the fenced area.
- No children under 6 year of age are permitted and must be under an adult’s supervision at all times.
- Puppies under 6 months are not permitted.
- Dogs in heat are not permitted.
- Pinch and choke chains and spiked collars are not permitted.

West Mill Creek Park Mill Creek & Old Gulph Roads, Gladwyne, PA 19035
- **Off-Leash Areas:** Dogs are permitted from Sunrise until Sunset seven days a week.
- Dogs must be kept on leash in the parking area and entrance trail until inside the park.
- Dogs can access Mill Creek only via identified stream access points.
- Dogs are not permitted in the wetlands meadow or the riparian buffer.
Dog License FAQs

How do I obtain a Pennsylvania Dog License?
Licenses may be purchased through your county treasurer, Lower Merion Township Police Department or at an issuing agent. For more information, visit www.licenseyourdogPA.com.

Am I required to have a Pennsylvania Dog License for my dog?
Yes. All dogs three (3) months or older must be licensed by January 1 of each year.

Is there a fee to purchase a Pennsylvania Dog License?
Yes. Fees vary based upon the duration of the license (annual or lifetime) and if your pet is spayed or neutered. Discounts are also available to older adults and people with disabilities.

Who enforces these Dog License Laws?
The Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement is responsible for ensuring the welfare of all dogs and puppies in kennels, regulating activities pertaining to dogs that are classified as dangerous, and oversees annual licensure and rabies vaccinations for dogs. Violators can be cited with a maximum fine of $300 per violation plus court costs.

What Parks allow dogs?
Dogs on leashes are allowed in some parks provided the owner or person in charge of the dog immediately cleans up and properly disposes of all feces. Please see the list above of parks where dogs are permitted on leash.

What are the park hours?
Sunrise to sunset (except where posted).

Are dogs allowed off-leash in any parks?
Off-leash permits may be purchased to exercise their dogs off-leash in designated areas of Rolling Hill Park in Gladwyne and West Mill Creek Park in Penn Valley. Please visit www.lowermerion.org and go to the Off-Leash Dog Program page for more information or contact the Parks & Recreation Department office at 610-645-6220.

How do I obtain a Lower Merion Township Off Leash Dog Permit?
Permits can be purchased, on-line (fees apply), in person or via mail through Lower Merion Township Parks and Recreation Department. Please visit www.lowermerionrec.com for more information.