

**LAWS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

**DOGS ACT**

**CHAPTER 67:54**

**Act**

**14 of 1918**

Amended by

28 of 1922

22 of 1939

45 of 1951

19 of 1954

3 of 1974

21 of 1990

3 of 1994

\*32 of 2000

\*See Note on page 2

**Current Authorised Pages**

| <i>Pages<br/>(inclusive)</i> | <i>Authorised<br/>by L.R.O.</i> |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1-13                         | .. 1/2006                       |

LAWS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**Index of Subsidiary Legislation**

|  | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------|
| Dogs Regulations (G. 11.12.1930)      ...      ...      ...      ... | 13          |

**Note on Adaptation**

1. Certain fees in this Chapter were increased by the Commission under paragraph 4 of the Second Schedule to the Law Revision Act (Ch. 3:03). Where this occurs, a marginal reference in the form normally indicating an amendment is made to LN 51/1980 (the Legal Notice by which the President's approval was signified).
2. Under paragraph 6 of the Second Schedule to the Law Revision Act (Ch. 3:03) the Commission amended certain references to public officers in this Chapter. The Minister's approval of the amendments was signified by LN 52/1980, but no marginal reference is made to this Notice where any such amendment is made in the text.

**Note on Act No. 32 of 2000**

Section 25 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) repealed sections 15, 16 and 17 of the Act, but Act No. 32 of 2000 had not, up to the date of the revision of this Act (i.e. December 31, 2004), been brought into operation.

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**CHAPTER 67:54**

**DOGS ACT**

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

**SECTION**

1. Short title.
2. Interpretation.
3. )
- to } (*Repealed by Act No. 3 of 1994*).
5. )
6. Power of local authority to seize and control stray dogs.
7. Power of local authority to seize and destroy ownerless dogs.
8. Finder may take dog either to owner or to place of detention.  
Power of local authority to seize and destroy ownerless dogs.
9. Indemnity.
10. (*Repealed by Act No. 3 of 1994*).
11. Order for the muzzling of dogs.
12. Penalty for permitting unmuzzled dog to be at large.
13. Unmuzzled dogs may be destroyed.
14. Where owner claims unmuzzled dog.

**GENERAL**

15. Dangerous dogs.
16. Permitting dangerous or rabid dogs to go at large.
17. Assault or obstruction.
18. Power to make Regulations.
19. Recovery of penalties.

**CHAPTER 67:54**

**DOGS ACT**

**An Act relating to dogs.**

1950 Ed.  
Ch. 25 No. 4.  
14 of 1918.

Commencement.

[13TH JUNE 1918]

Short title.

**1.** This Act may be cited as the Dogs Act.

Interpretation.  
[3 of 1974  
21 of 1990].

**2.** (1) In this Act—

“highway” means the whole or part of any road, thoroughfare, street, trail, trace or way maintainable at the public expense and dedicated to the public use whether by way of express or implied grant or by Notification of the Minister or by a declaration made by a local authority, and includes a bridge, culvert, footway, sidewalk and the adjoining reserves accessory or adjacent to a highway;

Ch. 25:04.

“local authority” means the Council of a Municipal Corporation within the meaning of the Municipal Corporations Act or the Tobago House of Assembly;

“owner” includes the head of a family occupying any house or premises in which a dog is kept or permitted to live or remain; and in case there are more occupiers than one in any house or premises let in separate apartments or lodgings or otherwise, the occupier of that particular part of the premises in which the dog is kept or permitted to live or remain shall be deemed to be the owner of the dog;

“ownerless dog” means a dog found at large in any highway, or public place or premises of a person or authority who is not the owner that, by reason of its condition, appears not to have any owner;

“public place” means any place to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access, whether on payment of a fee or otherwise;

“stray dog” means a dog found at large in any highway or public place (other than a public place where a dog is by virtue of

a licence granted under the Conservation of Wild Life Act Ch. 67:01. permitted to be at large) or premises of a person or authority other than the owner but does not include an ownerless dog.

(2) For the purpose of the definition of “ownerless dog”, the opinion of the local authority shall be conclusive for all purposes.

(3) Where under this Act a local authority is authorised to do any act or thing it may *inter alia* employ another local authority to act on its behalf.

(4) A local authority may authorise any of its officers or any other person to perform any of the functions that may be required or authorised to be performed by the local authority under this Act, and any such function performed by any such officer or other person under the authority of the local authority shall be deemed to have been performed by the local authority.

3. }  
to } *(Repealed by Act No. 3 of 1994).*  
5. }

6. (1) Where a local authority has reason to believe that any dog found in or upon any highway, or public place, within its jurisdiction is a stray dog, the local authority may seize the dog and, subject to subsections (5) and (6), detain it in a place of detention until the owner has claimed it and paid the prescribed fee in respect of all expenses incurred by reason of its detention.

Power of local authority to seize and control stray dogs. [45 of 1951 3 of 1974 51/1980].

(2) Where any stray dog seized in accordance with this section wears a collar having inscribed thereon or attached thereto the name and address of any person, or where the owner of the dog is known, (whether by reason of some identification mark on the dog or otherwise) the local authority shall serve on the person whose name and address are inscribed on or attached to the collar, or on the owner, as the case may be, a notice stating that the dog has been seized and is liable to be sold or destroyed if not claimed within five clear days after the service of the notice.

- (3) A notice under this section may be served—
- (a) by delivering the notice in writing to the person on whom it is to be served;
  - (b) by leaving the notice in writing at that person's usual or last known place of abode, or at the address inscribed on or attached to the collar or ascertainable as a result of some identification mark on the dog;
  - (c) by forwarding the notice in writing by post to that person at his usual or last known place of abode or at the address inscribed on or attached to the collar or ascertainable as a result of some identification mark on the dog; or
  - (d) by conveying the substance thereof by a telephone call to any person at the telephone number, if any, inscribed on the collar or at any telephone number corresponding to the name and address so inscribed or ascertainable as a result of some identification mark on the dog.

(4) A notice sent by post shall be deemed to have been served not later than the seventh day succeeding the day when posted, and in proving the service it shall be sufficient to prove that the letter containing the notice was properly addressed and posted.

(5) Where any stray dog seized in accordance with this section—

- (a) has been detained—
  - (i) for five clear days after the seizure; or
  - (ii) in the case of a notice served in accordance with subsection (2), for five clear days after the service; and
- (b) has not been claimed by the owner and all expenses incurred in respect of its detention have not been paid by the owner,

then the local authority may cause the dog to be sold, destroyed or otherwise disposed of.

(6) A local authority may cause a stray dog to be destroyed immediately it is seized under subsection (1) if in its opinion or in the opinion of a veterinary surgeon the dog is in such condition that it ought to be destroyed forthwith.

(7) Every local authority shall keep a register of all stray dogs seized by it under this section and shall record therein a brief description of the dog, the date of seizure, action, if any, taken to notify the owner, and particulars as to the manner in which the dog was disposed of; and every such register shall be open to inspection by the public at all reasonable times.

(8) The local authority having charge of any stray dog detained under this section shall cause the dog to be properly fed and maintained.

(9) All expenses incurred in respect of the detention of any dog by a local authority in whose municipality or county the place of detention is located under this section shall be defrayed out of the funds of that local authority, and all moneys received under this section shall be paid to the credit of such local authority, except that all expenses incurred and all moneys received in Tobago shall be defrayed from and paid into public funds.

(10) Where the destruction of any dog is to be carried out under this section or under section 7, the local authority shall employ a system that is calculated to cause the dog as little pain as possible.

(11) The Minister shall by Notification designate suitable places of detention for the purposes of this Act, and he may designate one place of detention for one or more local authorities.

(12) Where the owner of any stray dog seized under this section claims the dog he shall—

- (a) ***Repealed by Act No. 3 of 1994***;
- (b) pay all such expenses incurred by a local authority in respect thereof as are prescribed; and
- (c) pay a special charge to the local authority referred to in subsection (9) in the sum of twenty dollars in respect of the seizure of the dog.

Power of local authority to seize and destroy ownerless dogs. [3 of 1974].

**7.** Where a local authority has reason to believe that any dog found in or upon any highway or public place within its jurisdiction is ownerless, the local authority may seize the dog and destroy it forthwith.

Finder may take dog either to owner or to place of detention. [3 of 1974].

**8.** (1) Any person (in this section referred to as “the finder”) who takes possession of any stray dog or ownerless dog shall as soon as may be—

- (a) return the stray dog to its owner; or
- (b) take the stray dog or ownerless dog to the place of detention nearest the place where the dog was found and inform the local authority in whose municipality or county the place of detention is located of the place where the dog was found.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), where a dog has been so taken to a place of detention the local authority shall treat it as if it had been seized by it in pursuance of section 6 or 7.

(3) Where a dog has been so taken to a place of detention, then—

- (a) if the finder desires to keep the dog he shall inform the local authority referred to in subsection (1) of his name and address; and the local authority shall make out in duplicate a certificate in such form stating the description of the dog, the place where it was found, the date on which it was brought to the local authority and the name and address of the finder, and shall give one copy of the certificate to the finder; and
- (b) the local authority shall—
  - (i) in the case of an ownerless dog or a stray dog whose owner is unknown, keep the dog for two weeks; and
  - (ii) in the case of the owner being known, keep the dog for five clear days after service of the notice required by section 6(2) to (4); and the provisions of subsection (2) of that

section shall apply with the necessary modifications including the substitution of the words “is liable to be taken possession of and kept by the finder, if not claimed within two weeks of the service of the notice” for the words “is liable to be sold or destroyed if not claimed within five clear days after the service of the notice”.

(4) Where the dog remains unclaimed by its owner during the period referred to in subsection (3)(b), then upon the expiration thereof, the finder may on payment of the prescribed fee in respect of expenses incurred take possession of the dog and keep it as his own, but if the dog remains unclaimed during the period of three days after the expiration of the period referred to in subsection (3)(b), the local authority shall dispose of the dog in accordance with section 6(2) or 7.

Power of local authority to seize and destroy ownerless dogs.

(5) Where a finder fails to comply with subsection (1), he is liable on summary conviction to a fine of two hundred dollars.

**9.** No person is liable to any action, suit or other cause in respect of any act done under lawful authority pursuant to the provisions of this Act.

Indemnity.  
[3 of 1974].

**10. (Repealed by Act No. 3 of 1994).**

**11.** (1) The Minister may by Order direct that all dogs being in or upon any highway or public place shall be muzzled.

Order for the muzzling of dogs.  
[3 of 1974].

(2) Such Order may relate either to the whole of Trinidad and Tobago or to any part or parts thereof therein named.

**12.** Any person who, in a district in which an Order under section 11 is in operation, permits any dog to go at large, without being muzzled in the prescribed manner, is liable to a fine of one hundred dollars or to imprisonment for one month.

Penalty for permitting unmuzzled dog to be at large.

**13.** Any dog found in or upon any highway or public place without being muzzled in the prescribed manner may be destroyed

Unmuzzled dogs may be destroyed.  
[3 of 1974].

by the local authority in such manner and by such means as may from time to time be prescribed.

Where owner  
claims  
unmuzzled dog.

**14.** (1) Where the owner of any dog found at large without being muzzled as mentioned above claims the dog, the dog shall, unless it has been destroyed as provided above, be restored to the owner upon payment by him of the costs and expenses attendant on the detention and delivery of the dog to its owner, together with the further sum of twenty dollars by way of penalty.

(2) If the owner refuses or neglects to pay such costs, expenses and penalty, the dog may be destroyed forthwith.

#### GENERAL

Dangerous dogs.

**\*15.** (1) Any Magistrate may take cognisance of a complaint that any dog in respect of which a licence is granted is dangerous to person or property and not kept under proper control, and if it appears to the Magistrate that the dog is dangerous, the Magistrate may make order in a summary way directing the dog to be kept by the owner under proper control, or he may order it to be destroyed.

(2) Any person who fails to comply with the order is liable to a fine of forty dollars for every day during which he fails to comply therewith.

Permitting  
dangerous or  
rabid dogs to go  
at large.

**\*16.** Any person who, being the owner thereof, suffers or permits to go at large—

(a) any dangerous or ferocious dog which is not properly muzzled; or

(b) any dog which is in a rabid state,

is liable to a fine of two hundred dollars or to imprisonment for one month.

Assault or  
obstruction.

**\*17.** Any person who assaults or obstructs, or aids or abets any other person in assaulting or obstructing, any constable or other

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\*See Note on Act No. 32 of 2000 at page 2.

person authorised as mentioned above in the execution of his duty is liable to a fine of one thousand dollars.

- 18.** The Minister may make Regulations providing for—
- (a) the placing of restrictions on dogs during such periods as he may think expedient;
  - (b) the muzzling of dogs;
  - (c) the conditions under which dogs may be landed in Trinidad and Tobago;
  - (d) the wearing by every dog, while in or upon a highway or public place, of a collar with the name and address of the owner inscribed on the collar or on a plate or badge attached thereto;
  - (e) the manner of conveying dogs to such places, and the charges to be made for the conveyance;
  - (f) the amount to be paid for the keep of dogs and for any medicines supplied for their use during detention;
  - (g) the manner and conditions of removing dogs from places of detention;
  - (h) the proper supervision of places of detention, and the appointment of persons to see that the provisions of this Act are carried into effect therein;
  - (i) the manner in which dogs are to be kept in places of detention;
  - (j) the conditions under which dogs confined in places of detention may be killed;
  - (k) the form of certificate to be used and stipulating the fee payable pursuant to section 8;
  - (l) as to all other matters and things whatsoever including the payment of the expenses which may be deemed necessary for the better carrying into effect of the provisions of this Act,

Power to make  
Regulations.  
[3 of 1974].

and may attach to the breach of any such Regulation a penalty not exceeding four hundred dollars or imprisonment for one month.

LAWS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

12

Chap. 67:54

*Dogs*

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Recovery of  
penalties.

Ch. 4:20.

**19.** All offences under this Act may be prosecuted, and all penalties incurred may be imposed or recovered, in the manner provided by the Summary Courts Act.

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**SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION**

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**DOGS REGULATIONS**

*made under section 18*

G. 11.12.1930.  
[168/1948  
37/1949  
115/1949  
27/1955].

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Dogs Regulations. Citation.

**RABIES**

2. Every person having in his possession or under his charge any dog affected with or suspected of being infected with rabies shall forthwith give notice of the fact to the member of the Police Service in charge of the nearest Police Station. Such member of the Service shall immediately transmit the information to the Government Veterinary Officer or to such other person appointed as an Inspector of Dogs for the purposes of these Regulations. Rabies.

Every person failing to give such notice and every Officer failing to transmit information in the manner prescribed is liable on summary conviction to a penalty of thirty dollars and in default of payment to imprisonment for fourteen days.

3. The Government Veterinary Officer or any Inspector of Dogs appointed as above on receiving any information of the supposed existence of rabies shall proceed with all practicable speed to the place where the disease exists or is supposed to exist and may there order any dog in his opinion affected with rabies to be destroyed or to be dealt with as he may direct. The Government Veterinary Officer or such Inspector may also direct to be isolated any dogs which in his opinion may have been or may be exposed to infection. Destroying and isolating dogs.