



TO: Members of City Council

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Cc: Raymond J. Mularski, Esq., *City Attorney*
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SUBJECT: Legislative Research on Central Ohio Community Codes on Animal Control & "Leash Laws"

The current City of Gahanna Code governing animal control is Chapter 505 – Animals and Fowl. As it pertains to [Section 505.01 ANIMALS AND FOWL RUNNING AT LARGE](#):

(a) No person shall be the owner, keeper of, harborer or person in charge of any dog over three months of age after January 31 of any year, or brought from outside the State at any time during the year without first registering such dog as required by Ohio R.C. Chapter 955.

(b) No person who is the owner or keeper of any domestic animal shall permit that animal to be out of control at any time or place, even running in its own yard.

(c) A reasonable effort to confine the animal or fowl to the premises of the owner or harborer may be considered in mitigation but not as an excuse for the offense.

(d) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor for the first offense. All subsequent offenses shall be a misdemeanor of the second degree.

(Ord. 0105-2002. Passed 6-17-02; Ord. No. 0002-2022 , § 1(Exh. A), 2-22-22)

While there is no reference to "leash" within this section of Code, other sections do contain the word "leash." They include as follows:

- [Section 505.03](#) - REGISTRATION OF DOGS; TAGS TO BE WORN.
- [Section 505.04](#) - RABIES IMMUNIZATION.
- [Section 505.14](#) - DANGEROUS AND VICIOUS ANIMALS.
- [Section 563.19](#) - PETS. (*from Chapter 563 – Park Conduct*)

The following is a compilation of 9 Central Ohio communities with code that specifically references "leash".

CITY OF DUBLIN

91.01 ANIMALS OR FOWL RUNNING AT LARGE.

(A) No person, being the owner or having charge of any animal or fowl, except homing pigeons bearing official bands, shall fail to prevent such animal or fowl from running at large on any property not his own.

(B) No person, being the owner, keeper, harbinger or having charge of any dog shall permit such dog to enter upon any public or private property other than that of such person unless such dog is securely leashed by a leash not to exceed six feet in length, with the following exceptions:

(1) On private property other than that of the owner, harbinger or keeper or person having charge of the dog, with permission of the property owner.

(2) On public property.

In the case of both of the exceptions, the owner, keeper, harbinger or person having charge of such dog shall have such dog under direct control. When any dog is found on property not that of its owner, keeper, harbinger or person having charge, or securely leashed, or under "direct control", such dog shall be subject to impoundment.

(C) **DIRECT CONTROL** means that the dog is within sight and hearing and will respond instantly to the minimum obedience commands of "come" and "sit" or "stay". It shall be prima-facie evidence that a dog is not under the required control if such dog chases, injures or kills any person or domestic animal or damages or commits any nuisance upon property other than that of its owner, keeper or harbinger. "Come", the command, means that the dog shall leave the position at which he is located and return to the handler when such command is given by the handler. "Sit", the command, means that the dog shall cease movement in any forward, backward or sideways direction and shall assume a sitting position when such command is given by the handler. "Stay", the command, means that the dog shall cease movement in any forward, backward or sideways direction and shall remain in the spot in which such command was heeded until he is released by the handler.

(’80 Code, § 505.01) (Ord. 39-73, passed 7-2-73) Penalty, see § 91.99

CITY OF WHITEHALL

505.01 ANIMALS OR FOWL RUNNING AT LARGE PROHIBITED.

(a) No person, being the owner, keeper, harbinger or having charge of any animal or fowl excepting homing pigeons bearing official bands, shall fail to prevent such animal or fowl from running at large on any property not his own.

(b) No person, being the owner, keeper, harbinger or having charge of any dog shall permit such dog to enter upon any public or private property, except as allowed in Section 931.05 (a), other than that of such person unless such dog is securely controlled by a leash not to exceed six feet in length.

When any dog is found on property not that of its owner, keeper, harbinger or person having charge, or securely leashed, or under direct control, such dog shall be subject to impoundment.

(c) "Direct control" means that the dog shall be securely attached to a leash, is within sight and hearing, and regardless of the demonstrative fact that the animal will respond instantly to the minimum obedience commands of "come" and "sit" or "stay". It shall be prima-facie evidence that a dog is not under the required control if such dog chases, injures or kills any person or domestic animal or damages or commits any nuisance upon property other than its owner, keeper or harbinger.

(Ord. 49-08. Passed 7-1-08; Ord. 050-2014. Passed 9-2-14; Ord. 055-2021. Passed 7-20-21; Ord. 104-2021. Passed 10-19-21.)

CITY OF REYNOLDSBURG

505.03 ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE.

(a) No person being the owner, as defined in Section 501.01(g), of an animal or animals shall permit them to run or traverse at large upon any public place, upon any unenclosed lands, or upon the premises of another without the consent of the owner of such property within the Municipality.

(b) A dog shall not be considered to be running at large if under the reasonable control of some person.

(c) The running at large of any such animal in or upon any of the places mentioned in this section is prima-facie evidence that it is running or traversing at large in violation of this section.

(d) No owner of any dog shall permit the animal to enter upon any property that is not of his owner, when it is not securely leashed. The leash securing the animal shall not be longer than six (6) feet in length. The leash shall be controlled by a person that is physically capable of preventing the animal from entering private property and/or making physical contact with another animal or person, so long as such contact is not initiated by another animal or person.

(f) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor. If, within one (1) year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of violating this section, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor in the fourth degree, and if the offender has two (2) or more violations of this section within one (1) year, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor in the third degree.

(Ord. 76-96. Passed 6-10-96; Ord. 72-03. Passed 9-8-03; Ord. 48-13. Passed 7-1-13; Ord. 107-19. Passed 9-23-19.)

CITY OF BEXLEY

618.01 DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE.

(a) No person who is the owner or keeper of any animal shall permit it to run at large upon any public property, including, without limitation, sidewalks and streets, or upon the premises of another.

(b) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any dog shall permit it to go beyond the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger unless the dog is on a leash, cord or tether of not more than six feet in length, which is controlled by a person of such age, size and discretion that he is capable of preventing the dog from approaching any person or other animal in a menacing fashion.

(c) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any dog shall fail at any time to keep it either physically confined or restrained upon the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger by a leash, tether, adequate fence, or secure enclosure to prevent escape, or under reasonable control of a person of such age, size and discretion that he is capable of preventing the dog from approaching any person or other animal in a menacing fashion.

(Ord. 60-91. Passed 11-26-91.)

(d) Strict liability is intended to be imposed for a violation of this section.

(Ord. 69-98. Passed 7-28-98.)

(e) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree.

(Ord. 70-08. Passed 9-9-08.)

CITY OF WESTERVILLE

531.01 DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE.

(b) No person, being the owner, keeper, harbinger or having charge of any dog, shall permit such dog to enter upon any property other than that of such person unless such dog is securely leashed by a leash not to exceed six feet in length, with the following exceptions.

(1) In an off-leash area in a City dog park;

(2) On private property other than that of the owner, harbinger or keeper or person having charge of such dog, with permission of the property owner;

(3) On public property.

In the case of the aforementioned exceptions, the owner, keeper, harbinger or person having charge of such dog shall have such dog under "direct control". When any dog is found on property not that of its owner, keeper, harbinger or person having charge, and is not securely leashed or under "direct control", such dog shall be subject to impoundment.

(c) "Direct Control" means that the dog is within sight and hearing and will respond instantly to the minimum obedience commands of "come" and "sit" or "stay". It shall be prima-facie evidence that a dog is not under the required control if such dog chases, injures or kills any person or domestic animal or damages or commits any nuisance upon property other than its owner, keeper or harbinger. "Come", the command, shall mean that the dog shall leave position at which he is located and return to the handler when such command is given by the handler. "Sit", the command, shall mean that the dog shall cease movement in any forward, backward or sideways direction and shall assume a sitting position when such command is given by the handler. "Stay", the command, shall mean that the dog shall cease movement in any forward, backward or sideways direction and shall remain in the spot in which such command was heeded until he is released by the handler.

(d) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor. If the animal causes physical harm to any person or property, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. If the offender previously has been convicted of a fourth degree misdemeanor violation of this section, then the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.
(Ord. 05-13. Passed 4-19-05.)

NEW ALBANY

505.01 - DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE; NUISANCE, DANGEROUS AND VICIOUS DOGS; HEARINGS.

(c) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any female dog shall permit it to go beyond the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger at any time the dog is in heat unless the dog is properly in leash.

(d) Except when a dog is lawfully engaged in hunting and accompanied by the owner, keeper, harbinger, or handler of the dog, no owner, keeper or harbinger of any dog shall fail at any time to do either of the following:

(1) Keep the dog physically confined or restrained upon the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger by a leash, tether, adequate fence, supervision or secure enclosure to prevent escape;

(2) Keep the dog under the reasonable control of some person.

(e) Except when a dangerous dog is lawfully engaged in hunting or training for the purpose of hunting and is accompanied by the owner, keeper, harbinger, or handler of the dog, no owner, keeper or harbinger of a dangerous dog shall fail to do either of the following:

(1) While the dog is on the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger, securely confine it at all times in a locked pen that has a top.

(2) While the dog is off the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger, keep that dog on a chain-link leash or tether that is not more than six (6) feet in length and additionally do at least one of the following: keep the dog in a locked pen that has a top, locked fenced yard or other locked enclosure that has a top; have the leash or tether controlled by a person who is of suitable age and discretion or securely attach, tie or affix the leash or tether to the ground or a stationary object or fixture so that the dog is adequately restrained and station a person in close enough proximity to that dog so as to prevent it from causing injury to any person; or muzzle that dog.

State Law reference— ORC 951.02; ORC 951.99; ORC 955.11(A); ORC 955.22; ORC 955.99(E)—(H), (J), (L)—(N), (P), (Q); ORC 955.222

CITY OF PICKERINGTON

618.01 DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE; NUISANCE, DANGEROUS AND VICIOUS DOGS; HEARINGS.

... (c) No owner, keeper, or harbinger of any female dog shall permit it to go beyond the premises of the owner, keeper, or harbinger at any time the dog is in heat unless the dog is properly in **leash**.

(d) Except when a dog is lawfully engaged in hunting and accompanied by the owner, keeper, harbinger, or handler of the dog, no owner, keeper, or harbinger of any dog shall fail at any time to do either of the following:

(1) Keep the dog physically confined or restrained upon the premises of the owner, keeper, or harbinger by a **leash**, tether, adequate fence, supervision, or secure enclosure to prevent escape;

(2) Keep the dog under the reasonable control of some person.

(e) Except when a dangerous dog is lawfully engaged in hunting or training for the purpose of hunting and is accompanied by the owner, keeper, harbinger, or handler of the dog, no owner, keeper, or harbinger of a dangerous dog shall fail to do either of the following:

(1) While the dog is on the premises of the owner, keeper, or harbinger, securely confine it at all times in a locked pen that has a top.

(2) While the dog is off the premises of the owner, keeper, or harbinger, keep that dog on a chain-link **leash** or tether that is not more than six feet in length and additionally do at least one of the following: keep the dog in a locked pen that has a top, locked fenced yard, or other locked enclosure that has a top; have the **leash** or tether controlled by a person who is of suitable age and discretion or securely attach, tie, or affix the **leash** or tether to the ground or a stationary object or fixture so that the dog is adequately restrained and station a person in close enough proximity to that dog so as to prevent it from causing injury to any person; or muzzle that dog.

(ORC 955.222)

HILLIARD

505.02 - DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE.

(b) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any female dog shall permit it to go beyond the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger at any time the dog is in heat, unless the dog is properly in **leash**.

(c) Except when a dog is lawfully engaged in hunting and accompanied by the owner, keeper, harbinger, or handler of the dog, no owner, keeper, or harbinger of any dog shall fail at any time to do either of the following:

(1) Keep the dog physically confined or restrained upon the premises of the owner, keeper, or harbinger by a **leash**, tether, adequate fence, supervision, or secure enclosure to prevent escape.

(2) Keep the dog under the reasonable control of some person.

(ORC 955.22)

GROVE CITY

505.01 DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE; NUISANCE, DANGEROUS AND VICIOUS DOGS; HEARINGS.

... (c) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any female dog shall permit it to go beyond the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger at any time the dog is in heat unless the dog is properly in **leash**.

(d) Except when a dog is lawfully engaged in hunting and accompanied by the owner, keeper, harbinger, or handler of the dog, no owner, keeper or harbinger of any dog shall fail at any time to do either of the following:

(1) Keep the dog physically confined or restrained upon the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger by a leash, tether, adequate fence, supervision or secure enclosure to prevent escape;

(2) Keep the dog under the reasonable control of some person.

(e) Except when a dangerous dog is lawfully engaged in hunting or training for the purpose of hunting and is accompanied by the owner, keeper, harbinger, or handler of the dog, no owner, keeper or harbinger of a dangerous dog shall fail to do either of the following:

(1) While the dog is on the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger, securely confine it at all times in a locked pen that has a top.

(2) While the dog is off the premises of the owner, keeper or harbinger, keep that dog on a chain-link leash or tether that is not more than six feet in length and additionally do at least one of the following: keep the dog in a locked pen that has a top, locked fenced yard or other locked enclosure that has a top; have the leash or tether controlled by a person who is of suitable age and discretion or securely attach, tie or affix the leash or tether to the ground or a stationary object or fixture so that the dog is adequately restrained and station a person in close enough proximity to that dog so as to prevent it from causing injury to any person; or muzzle that dog.

(ORC 955.22)