

Dog Licenses

- Most locations throughout the United States have state or local laws that require dog owners to license their dogs.
- Licensing your dog is usually as simple as filling out a form and paying a small fee.
- **For specific information about dog laws, licensing and renewal requirements, and licensing options for where you live, visit your local government Web site.**

What Is a Dog License?

A dog license is proof that you have registered your dog with your local (often a state, county, or city) government authority. Most locations throughout the United States have state or local laws that require dog owners to license their dogs.

In most cases, you will receive a metal license tag that must be placed on your dog's collar.

How Do I Get a License for My Dog?

The licensing process is usually as simple as filling out a form and paying a small fee. However, the form is different from state to state and, sometimes, from town to town. For this reason, if you move, you will probably need to get a new license for your dog.

Proof of your dog's vaccination status may also be required to get a dog license.

Some locations, like New York City, offer a discount on the license fee if the dog is spayed or neutered.

Do I Need a Dog License for My New Puppy?

The age at which your dog must be licensed depends on where you live. Some places require a license for puppies as young as 3 months.

Where Do I Get a Dog License?

Dog licenses are usually available at local government offices. In some areas, licenses may also be obtained at specific veterinarian's offices or animal shelters. Some locations offer online services or allow you to complete the licensing process by mail.

License application forms are often available online.

Do I Have to Renew My Dog's License?

Many places require dog owners to renew their dog's license every year. A small fee is usually charged for renewal. Some areas offer a "lifetime" license if the dog carries a form of permanent identification (e.g., microchip, tattoo).

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Why Do I Need a License for My Dog?

The most important reason to get a license for your dog is to comply with the laws where you live. The second most important reason is to help your dog come home to you if he or she gets lost. Animal shelters and services can use the information you supply in your license application to contact you if your dog is brought to them. For the same reason, it is important that you keep your dog's license tag on your dog's collar at all times.