



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

November 5, 2013

2013-R-0429

CONNECTICUT LAWS ON DOG BREEDERS AND COMMERCIAL KENNELS

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You asked for a summary of state laws on dog breeders and commercial kennels. We present the information in a question and answer format.

What requirements does state law place on dog breeders?

State law does not define “breeder.” However, it defines a “kennel” as one pack or collection of dogs kept under one ownership at a single location bred for show, sport, or sale ([CGS § 22-327\(7\)](#)). Thus, most people who breed dogs are considered kennel owners or keepers.

Any kennel owner or keeper who breeds more than two litters of dogs annually must apply to the town clerk in the town in which the kennel is located for a town kennel license ([CGS § 22-342](#)). The town clerk may renew each license annually upon application of the kennel owner or keeper. State law also permits a town to require a person who keeps 10 or more unneutered or unsprayed dogs capable of breeding to apply to the town clerk for a license ([CGS § 22-344c](#)). However, in practice, towns currently issue licenses only under [CGS § 22-342](#), according to the Department of Agriculture (DoAg).

The law requires a kennel owner or keeper to keep on each dog a collar or harness that has attached to it a tag with the kennel license number, the name of the town issuing the license, and the license year ([CGS § 22-342\(a\)](#)).

Are kennels that dog breeders own or keep subject to inspection by DoAg?

The DoAg commissioner, the chief animal control officer, or any state animal control officer may inspect any kennel, including one a dog breeder owns or keeps, at any time or have it inspected by a Connecticut-licensed veterinarian the commissioner appoints ([CGS § 22-342\(b\)](#)).

If, in the commissioner's judgment, a kennel is not being maintained in good repair and in a sanitary and humane manner, or if the commissioner finds that communicable or infectious disease or other unsatisfactory conditions exist at the kennel, he may (1) issue orders requiring the correction of such conditions and (2) quarantine the premises and animals. If the kennel owner or keeper fails to comply with the orders, the commissioner must revoke or suspend the owner's or keeper's kennel license.

What is a commercial kennel and do they breed dogs?

The law defines a "commercial kennel" as a kennel maintained for boarding or grooming dogs or cats, including any veterinarian hospital that boards or grooms dogs or cats for nonmedical purposes ([CGS § 22-327\(3\)](#)). According to the DoAg, commercial kennels do not breed animals.

Do commercial kennels need to be licensed?

No one may maintain a commercial kennel until he or she has obtained a license from the DoAg commissioner ([CGS § 22-344\(a\)](#)). DoAg will issue a license to an applicant upon written application and payment of a \$200 fee if the applicant complies with applicable state regulations (see below) and municipal zoning regulations. Licenses are renewable annually.

What standards of care do state regulations require of commercial kennels?

DoAg has promulgated regulations detailing further commercial kennel requirements (Conn. Agencies Regs. §§ 22-344-1 to 15). These regulations specify that commercial kennels must comply with the below listed standards of care.

1. Facilities for housing dogs must be structurally sound and maintained in good repair.
2. Kennel floors and removable rest boards, if provided, must be constructed of non-toxic, easily cleaned, water impervious materials, and walls and ceilings must be painted and kept clean.
3. Inside and outside runs must be constructed to meet listed weight requirements for dogs.
4. Lighting by either natural or artificial means must provide a minimum of 30 candle power for at least eight hours per day, except where otherwise indicated for health reasons.
5. Hot and cold water must be provided.
6. Kennel space must be ventilated to provide fresh air at all times.
7. Kennel temperature must be maintained at a reasonable and suitable level to promote the health and comfort of the type of dogs housed.
8. Sanitation must keep vermin at a minimum.
9. There must be isolation facilities for dogs under quarantine or treatment for communicable diseases.
10. Puppy litters must be segregated.
11. Dogs confined in cages must be caged individually, except where otherwise indicated for health or welfare reasons.
12. Cages must be large enough for the dog to turn about freely, stand erect, and lie down in a natural position
13. Facilities must provide shelter from inclement weather that keeps dogs clean, warm, and dry.
14. There must be clean and fresh water and sufficient and wholesome food, and food and water containers must be kept clean and sanitized.

Are commercial kennels subject to inspection by DoAg?

By law, the DoAg commissioner may inspect a commercial kennel at any time ([CGS S 22-344\(f\)](#)). If in his judgment, the commercial kennel is not being maintained in a sanitary and humane manner or in a manner that protects public safety, or if he finds that contagious, infectious, or communicable disease or other unsatisfactory conditions exist, the commissioner may (1) fine the commercial kennel up to \$500 for each affected animal, (2) issue orders as necessary to correct the conditions, and (3) quarantine the premises and animals.

Additionally, if the commercial kennel owner fails to comply with the commissioner's orders or applicable state laws or regulations, the commissioner may revoke the commercial kennel's license.

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