

Connecticut Pet Shop Laws

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Issue

This report briefly summarizes Connecticut's pet shop laws.

Summary

Connecticut law authorizes pet shops to sell dogs and cats, subject to certain requirements, such as licensure, abiding by veterinary and health and safety requirements, and inspection by the Department of Agriculture (DoAg). These requirements are summarized below.

Pet Shop Laws

License Required

State law defines a “pet shop” as a place at which animals not born and raised on the premises are kept to be sold to the public ([CGS § 22-327\(9\)](#)). No one may operate a pet shop without a license from DoAg ([CGS § 22-344\(b\)](#)). DoAg will issue a license to an applicant upon written application and payment of a \$400 fee if the applicant complies with (1) municipal zoning regulations and (2) DoAg regulations concerning sanitation, disease, humane treatment, and public safety. Licenses are renewable biennially.

Other Requirements

State law also places certain other requirements on pet shops. Table 1 summarizes these requirements.

Table 1: Pet Shop Requirements

| Citation CGS § | Summary | Penalty |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| 22-344e | No one may procure a dog or cat for resale unless the person (1) holds a pet shop license or (2) resells the dog to a law enforcement agency or military branch of the government | Class B misdemeanor |
| 22-344b | Before offering a dog or cat for sale, and then every 15 days until the animal is sold, a pet shop licensee must have it examined by a Connecticut-licensed veterinarian and pet shops must maintain records of the veterinary services for each dog or cat offered for sale | Up to a \$500 fine |
| 22-344d(a) | Pet shops must post a sign on the cage of each dog offered for sale with the dog's breed, where the dog was born, and any identification number on the official veterinary inspection certificate from the state of origin | Up to a \$250 fine |
| 22-354 | For each dog sold or offered for sale, a pet shop licensee must have a certificate of origin identifying the name and address of the breeder and the person or entity that sold the dog to the pet shop | Up to a \$1,000 fine per day of violation |
| 22-354 | A pet shop licensee cannot purchase a dog or cat for resale from a breeder or other person or entity located outside of this state (1) that does not possess a current license from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and any applicable state agency or (2) who committed certain violations of USDA pet dealer regulations | Up to a \$1,000 fine per day of violation |
| 22-344d(c) | Each pet shop must post the USDA inspection report from the prior two-year period for the breeder of any dog offered for sale | Up to a \$250 fine |
| 22-344d(b) | Pet shops must post a sign that (a) includes DoAg's telephone number for filing complaints about diseased or disabled animals offered for sale and (b) contains specific language about the type of information available on all puppies for sale (e.g., date and state of birth, breed, sex, the date the pet shop received the puppy, veterinary treatment received) | Up to a \$250 fine |
| 22-344a | Euthanasia by a pet shop of a warm-blooded animal offered for sale but not sold or transferred to another owner must be by lethal injection of sodium pentobarbital administered by a Connecticut-licensed veterinarian or someone he or she supervises | License revocation |

Pet Lemon Law

Under Connecticut's "pet lemon law," pet shop licensees must reimburse a customer for veterinarian expenses incurred for a dog or cat that within (1) 20 days after sale, becomes ill or dies of an illness that existed at the time of sale or (2) six months after sale, is diagnosed with a congenital defect adversely affecting the animal's health. The law limits reimbursement to (1) the animal's purchase price if it was bought for \$500 or more or (2) \$500 if it was bought for less than \$500.

Alternatively, the pet shop licensee must replace the animal or refund the purchase price when (1) in the case of illness or congenital defect, the owner returns the cat or dog with a certificate from a veterinarian stating that the condition or defect existed at the time of sale or (2) in the case of death, the owner provides a certificate from a veterinarian stating that the dog or cat died from such a condition or defect that existed at the time of sale ([CGS § 22-344b\(b\)](#)).

The law allows customers to seek help from DoAg if a licensee fails to follow the law ([CGS § 22-344b\(b\)\(1\)](#)). Licensees who violate the pet lemon law are subject to a fine of up to \$500 ([CGS § 22-344b\(c\)](#)).

The law also requires pet shop licensees who sell dogs and cats to post a statement of these rights in a readily visible location at the shop and provide a copy to the purchaser at the time of sale. Licensees who violate this requirement are subject to a fine of up to \$250 ([CGS § 22-344b\(b\)\(2\)](#)).

DoAg Inspection

By law, the DoAg commissioner may inspect a pet shop at any time. If, in his judgment, it 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, he may (1) fine the pet shop up to \$500 for each affected animal, (2) issue orders to correct the conditions, and (3) quarantine the premises and animals. If the pet shop owner fails to comply with the commissioner's orders or the applicable state laws or regulations, the commissioner may revoke or suspend the pet shop's license ([CGS § 22-344\(g\)](#)).

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