



12650 DETROIT AVENUE • 44107 • 216/521-7580 • fax 216/521-1379
Website: www.onelakewood.com

MICHAEL SUMMERS
MAYOR

May 22, 2018

Lakewood Registered Dog Owners,

Thank you for registering your dog with Cuyahoga County! On April 2, 2018, Lakewood City Council approved updates to Lakewood Codified Ordinance Chapter 506 Dangerous and Vicious Animals and Chapter 505 Animals and Fowl. These new animal ordinances became effective on May 13, 2018 except for Section 505.24 Insurance Coverage for Dog Liability which is effective on September 30, 2018.

It should be noted that some of the changes added requirements for ALL dog owners who live in the city of Lakewood. Through the legislative process the city was advised that “all dogs bite, not just some breeds.” As a result, breed specific legislation was repealed.

The biggest changes to these animal ordinances are set forth below. A full copy of the new ordinances may be found on the city’s website at www.onelakewood.com/animals-in-lakewood/.

ORDINANCE HIGHLIGHTS

- Breed specific legislation has been repealed
- New legislation creating a graduated classification of dogs based on their behavior: potential nuisance, nuisance, dangerous and vicious and establishing specific controls for public safety
- Strengthens the dog running-at-large offense by enhancing the penalty provisions.
- Heightened requirements for persons to maintain reasonable control of dogs at all times and that leashes be 6 feet in length and non-retractable.
- Enhances the penalty provisions of the existing section of the code establishing the offense of failing to register a dog with the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer.
- Adds criteria and offenses to and amends the existing section of the code establishing the offense of cruelty to animals.
- Enacts a new section L.C.O. 505.24 Insurance Coverage for Dog Liability. All persons who own, keep or harbor a dog in Lakewood, must maintain at least \$10,000 in liability insurance for damage/injuries caused by their dog. (Effective Date of this section: September 30, 2018)

Many homeowners’ or renters’ policies include this type of liability coverage for dogs. Checking your specific policy and/or contacting your insurance carrier will help you understand your coverage and what is available to you.



According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, owning a pet is a privilege and should result in a mutually beneficial relationship. Lakewood is the 125th most densely populated city when compared with 19,300 other cities across the country. It is estimated that Lakewood is home to over 11,000 dogs residing in approximately 6-7000 households in Lakewood. The animal ordinances are in place to protect residents, dog owners and dogs. Responsible dog owners know what is expected of them. When Lakewood dog owners act responsibly 51,000+ residents and 11,000+ dogs live harmoniously and civilly within the 5.6 square miles we all call home. Thank you for being a responsible pet owner.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to reach out to me (216) 529-6600, city Animal Control Officers (216) 529-5020 or the Law Department (216) 529-6030.

Sincerely,



Michael P. Summers

cc: Kevin Butler, Law Director
Chief Timothy Malley
Captain Gary Stone
Elaine Hearn, ACO Supervisor

Responsible Pet Ownership

- **License your dog**
- **Vaccinate your dog against rabies and keep regular veterinary appointments**
- **Spay or neuter your dog to reduce aggression**
- **Keep your dog controlled and on a leash (best practices indicate a leash of 6 ft. in length that is non-retractable)**
- **Train your dog to learn basic commands and how to be well behaved around others**
- **Understand the costs associated with dog ownership and the personality traits and needs of various breeds before adopting**
- **Provide your dog with exercise, food, water and attention**
- **Prevent your dog from being a nuisance by picking up dog waste on and off your property and controlling excessive dog barking**
- **Maintain liability insurance for unforeseen altercations between your dog and humans or other pets, thereby protecting both yourself and any victims**
- **Be aware of all municipal dog laws set forth in L.C.O Chapters 505 and 506 as well as any applicable state laws.**