

INTRODUCTION

The leash law is one of the fundamental animal control laws and at the same time, one that is continuously challenged by some pet owners. Loose dogs present a threat to public health and safety, obstructing or jumping into traffic, spreading diseases, causing injuries and accidents, and creating a nuisance. A dog that runs loose frequently, may expand its territory beyond the legal boundaries of its owner's property, triggering territorial aggression. Dogs at large may bite people or other animals, or may be bitten by other animals, with the resulting exposure to diseases, including rabies. In addition, loose dogs may cause property damage and become a nuisance by relieving themselves in public and private areas.

Although most people understand that a loose dog presents a threat to the public and to itself, some pet owners continue to challenge the leash law when it affects their perceived right to allow their dogs to run loose. It is not uncommon for an Animal Control Field Officer to encounter a pet owner who believes that his pet has the right to run loose in the park, or in an unfenced area of the pet owner's property, such as the front yard.

OBJECTIVE

To provide the officer with basic knowledge regarding the leash law, its enforcement and the issues surrounding it.

APPLICABLE LAWS

In Arizona, loose-dog regulations arise from A.R.S. Article 6, § 11-1012 (formerly 24-370), which regulates the running at large of dogs. It is important to note that A.R.S. § 11-1012 does not completely prohibit dogs from running at large, it simply regulates them. However, jurisdictions that regulate animals, under certain circumstances, are exempt from the provisions of A.R.S. Article 6. The following are the applicable laws enforced by the Pima Animal Care Center:

Jurisdiction	Code	Comments
Pima County	6.04.030	Dogs participating in events approved by PACC Dogs being used or trained for hunting Dogs being used or trained for the control of livestock Dogs assisting a peace officer engaged in enforcement duties Service dogs on voice command
Tucson	4-97	Dogs participating in dog training classes or events Dogs engaged in races approved by the Arizona Racing Commission Dogs in City approved areas
Marana	6-3-3	Service dogs Dogs assisting a peace officer engaged in enforcement duties
Oro Valley	89-13 II A	Dogs participating in dog training classes or events Dogs engaged in races approved by the Arizona Racing Commission A police dog at any time Service dogs at any time

Jurisdiction	Code	Comments
Sahuarita	6-3	Dogs participating in events approved by PACC Dogs being used or trained for hunting Dogs being used or trained for the control of livestock Dogs assisting a peace officer engaged in enforcement duties Service dogs on voice command
South Tucson	3-97	Dogs participating in dog training classes or events Dogs engaged in races approved by the Arizona Racing Commission Dogs in City approved areas

IMPOUNDMENT

All dogs found at large shall be impounded, with the exception of those cases in which the owner is present. In cases in which the owner is present, the owner must be cited for the violation. In some instances, such as dogs with id tags or license, the officer may be able to find the dog owner or the address where the dog is maintained. In those cases, the officer may return the dog to the owner or put the dog back in its yard if it is safe to do so. The officer must always ask dispatch to check for previous violations. If the dog is a repeat offender, it may be necessary to impound the dog and maintain at the shelter until the confinement is fixed.

THIRD PARTY CITATIONS

Animal Control Field Officers will issue citations for violation of the leash law, when requested by a third party, when:

- There are pictures that clearly show the dog at large. The animal must be identifiable from the picture.
- There are at least two unrelated witnesses willing to testify in court. The witnesses must be able to describe the dog.

Tell the third party complainant that his/her name and address will appear on all copies of the citations as the complainant, and that they must appear in court to testify. The third-party-complaint part of the investigation report must be properly completed with all the appropriate information.

DOG PARKS

There are certain park areas that have been designated by the City or County as dog areas. Dogs are allowed to run off leash in these fenced in areas. These areas are regulated by the department in charge of the park. The regulations of these areas are not enforced by the Pima Animal Care Center. Enforcement staff will only intervene in bite cases, abandonment and other violations to the Animal Control Code of the jurisdiction in which the park is located. The Pima Animal Care Center encourages owners to use these areas to allow their pets to run off leash legally.

ELECTRONIC FENCING

Pima Animal Care Center will consider electronic fencing as adequate confinement for dogs as long as the fencing is effective and used properly as determined by a field officer. Electronic fencing will not be considered adequate confinement for dangerous or vicious animals. The Pima Animal Care Center does not endorse or make any distinctions regarding any specific product or manufacturer of electronic fence technology.

TRAPS

Traps are an effective method for capturing stray dogs. The Pima Animal Care Center uses traps for the capture of stray biters, vicious or dangerous animals or packs of dogs threatening public health and safety, when other conventional methods have failed. Field enforcement personnel must monitor all traps at least once a day. Traps for stray biters will be considered the first priority. Traps for stray animals will only be set if there are sufficient resources to ensure the traps will be checked as stated above. Residents will not be allowed to monitor traps that are property of the Pima Animal Care Center. Traps must be set in areas where shade will be available at all times. Traps must be secured with a chain and padlock to a tree or structure.

- If an animal is picked up in an owner TRAP or CARRIER, the owner **MUST** be advised to pick up the trap or carrier within 24-hours.
- The trap or carrier must be tagged with an animal ID collar located in the kennel area. The collar must have the date the trap or carrier was picked up. The name of the owner, phone number and complaint number **MUST** be listed on the ID collar.
- The trap or carrier must then be placed in the northeast corner of the Euthanasia Room by the evaporative cooler.