

**ORDINANCE NO. 1 of 2024**

**CANTON TOWNSHIP  
WASHINGTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

**AN ORDINANCE OF CANTON TOWNSHIP, WASHINGTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2 OF 2022 IMPOSING RESTRICTIONS AS TO DOGS RUNNING AT LARGE AND PRESCRIBING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF.**

**WHEREAS**, Canton Township has received notice that the enforcement of the Ordinance known as the Canton Township Dogs Running At Large Ordinance of 2024, should be limited to the Township Designee and/or the Washington County Humane Society.

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Supervisors have determined that the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Canton Township (hereby referred to as "Township").

**NOW THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority conferred upon it by the Second-Class Township Code, the Supervisors of Canton Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania, does hereby **ENACT** and **ORDAIN** the following:

**SECTION. 1. TITLE.**

This Ordinance shall be known as the "Canton Township Dogs Running At Large Ordinance of 2024."

**SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS.**

The following words, terms and phrases, used herein, shall have the following meaning:

**LEASH:** A line, collar, chain or other device of sufficient strength for leading or restraining an animal, not exceeding 10 feet in length.

**OWNER:** The word "owner" when applied to the proprietorship of a dog, shall include every person having a right of property in such dog, or has it in his/her care, and every person who permits such dog to remain on or about any premises occupied by him.

**PERSON:** Any natural person, firm, association, company, partnership, or corporation.

**RESPONSIBLE PARTY:** Any owner, person, persons, keeper, handler, custodian, farmer, corporation, partnership or other entity responsible for the care and confinement of any domestic animal (i.e., dog, cat, horse, cow, bird, etc.).

**RUNNING AT LARGE:** Being upon any public highway, street, alley, park or any other public land, or upon property of another person, other than the owner, and not being accompanied by and under the restraint or control of the owner, or any other person having custody of said dog.

**TO PERMIT:** As used in Section 3 shall include failure to restrain from the prohibited activity.

### **SECTION 3. DOGS RUNNING AT LARGE VIOLATION.**

Singular words shall include the plural, and masculine words shall include the feminine and neutral.

- A. It shall be unlawful for the owner/custodian of any dog to permit such dog, whether licensed or not, to run at large in the Township.
- B. It shall be unlawful for the owner of any dog or other domestic animal to permit said dog or other domestic animal to molest or injure any human being by biting, jumping on, knocking down or attacking said human being.

- C. It shall be unlawful for the owner of any dog to permit such dog to damage or injure personal property, real estate, shrubs, hedges, flowers or any growing thing, or to permit such dog to repeatedly deposit excrement on property other than his own.
- D. All dogs are required to be on a leash when not on the owner's property.

**SECTION 4. ENFORCEMENT.**

- A. The Township Designee shall be charged with the responsibility of enforcing the provisions of this Ordinance and shall perform all other duties, which may be prescribed, by the Board of Supervisors.
- B. Upon receiving a complaint or information that a dog is doing any of the acts prohibited by this Ordinance, the Township Designee shall conduct an investigation. If the complaint or information is found to be true, for a first offense, a written warning shall be issued to the owner and a copy of this Ordinance shall accompany the warning. Upon a second or subsequent offense a summary citation prepared in accordance with the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure and Canton Township shall be issued against the owner of the dog.
- C. In conjunction with any proceeding under this Ordinance, or upon complaint or information otherwise received, the Township Designee shall investigate and take appropriate action to enforce all provisions of the Pennsylvania Dog Law, Act of December 7, 1982, P.L. 784, 3 P.S. § 459-101 et seq., and amendments thereto in accordance with the provisions of said law.

## **SECTION 5. SEIZING OF DOGS.**

The Township Designee or dog warden may seize any dog found at large in the Township. Such dogs are to be impounded and/or can be picked up by either the Washington County Humane Society or the Organization for Responsible Care of Animals (ORCA).

- A. **Seizing of Licensed Dogs.** Owners of licensed dogs are to be notified by registered or certified mail, with return receipt, that the dog is impounded and will be disposed of in five (5) days if not claimed. Five (5) days after the return receipt has been received, and the dog has not been claimed, the dog may be sold or destroyed in accordance with the 1982 Dog Law. The owner shall pay the Township a penalty of Fifty (\$50.00) Dollars and all expenses (which includes a Ten (\$10.00) Dollar pickup charge and a charge for daily board) of seizing and detaining the dog. If the Township has forwarded the dog to the Washington County Humane Society, the owner shall pay the Township its costs to the date of forwarding the dog and any charges by the Humane Society to take the dog.
- B. **Seizing of Unlicensed Dogs.** Any dog seized by the Township shall be properly fed and kept by the Township or the Washington County Humane Society or other such society for a period of Forty-Eight (48) hours. Such dogs may be viewed by persons during business hours. Any dog which does not bear a legible tattoo, or any unlicensed dog claimed by its owner shall pay the Township a penalty of Fifty (\$50.00) Dollars and all expenses (which includes a Ten (\$10.00) Dollar pickup charge and a charge for daily board) of seizing and detaining the dog. If the Township has forwarded the dog to the Washington County Humane Society, the owner shall

pay the Township its costs to the date of forwarding the dog and any charges by the Humane Society to take the dog.

#### **SECTION 6. VIOLATIONS PENALTIES.**

First offense violators shall receive a written warning which shall consist of either personal delivery and/or mailing of a copy of this Ordinance to such owner, keeper or custodian, or to someone in their household, or by mailing a copy of this Ordinance if the violator resides outside of Canton Township, together with a written notice that no further warning shall be given and that any future complaints shall be prosecuted according to law for second or subsequent offenses. Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this Ordinance shall, upon conviction thereof in an action brought before a Magisterial District Judge in the manner provided for the enforcement of summary offenses under the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure, shall be sentenced to pay a fine of not less than One Hundred (\$100.00) Dollars nor more than One Thousand (\$1,000.00) Dollars plus costs and, in default of payment of said fine and costs, to a term of imprisonment not to exceed ninety (90) days. Each day that a violation of this Ordinance continues or each section of this Ordinance which shall be found to have been violated shall constitute a separate offense.

#### **SECTION 7. SEVERABILITY.**

The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared severable, and if any of its provisions shall be held to be invalid or unconstitutional, or otherwise void for any reason, such decision shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions hereof; it is hereby declared to be the intent of the Township that this Ordinance would have been adopted if such invalid, unconstitutional, or otherwise void provision had not been included herein.

**SECTION 8: REPEALER.**

All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed insofar as they be inconsistent herewith.

**SECTION 9: EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This Ordinance shall become effective 5 days after enactment.

**ENACTED AND ORDAINED** by the Board of Supervisors of the Canton Township,  
Washington County, Pennsylvania this 8<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2024.

**ATTEST:**

**CANTON TOWNSHIP**


  
Stephanie Pettit, Township Manager

By:   
Howard E. Main, Chairman

(SEAL)



By:   
Thomas A. Bodnovich, Vice Chairman

By:   
Richard Horner, Supervisor