



# Taking Command

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



## What's New from AKC Government Relations

The dog days of summer have been busier than ever for the American Kennel Club Government Relations (AKC GR) team and advocates. This August marks the launch of several new initiatives and resources to better serve dogs, dog owners, and the community at large.

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## AKC Announces Launch Of Resources And Task Force On Anti-Breeder Harassment And Retaliation

The American Kennel Club (AKC) has become increasingly aware of anecdotes where radical animal rights activists have targeted individual dog breeders or enthusiasts with harassment, slander or retaliation. In some cases, these incidents appear to relate an individual's participation in the political process, such as testifying at legislative hearings or working on legislation to protect their rights as dog owners, enthusiasts or breeders.

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## Why Legal Compliance Matters

If you're like most dog enthusiasts, you started out with one or two dogs. Not long after joining competitive events and beginning your breeding program, you find yourself with multiple dogs. Knowing, understanding and obeying dog laws that apply to you is part of being a responsible dog owner. The importance of staying in compliance cannot be overstated.

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## Avoid Nuisance Complaints: Barking Dogs Are Easy Targets

Barking is the most common complaint about dogs. The quiet enjoyment of one's home is typically protected by nuisance laws. Although barking is not illegal and not all barking dogs are a nuisance, barking dogs can be a problem that quickly leads to more problems. Preventing any call to report a nuisance is an easy first step to avoiding further issues. When law enforcement or animal control visit, it's natural they may look for other items of concern, leading to potentially more serious issues.

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## K-9 Units Are A Public Safety Tool That Must Be Preserved

As cities debate police funding in the wake of coast-to-coast protests, municipalities should take great care to protect the one public safety tool that no community can do without — highly trained police K-9 units.



Put aside the myths and inaccuracies — there is little doubt highly trained police dogs are keeping American communities safe from terrorism, crime and are doing their part to protect precious freedoms. End or underfund the K-9 police units, and every community will be less safe and less secure.

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**IN SESSION**  
The American Kennel Club's Newsletter  
for Members of Congress and their Staff

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[Read now!](#)

## New *In Session* Newsletter

The American Kennel Club is pleased to share with you the latest issue of the AKC's [In Session newsletter](#). Did you know that nearly 1 million dogs are imported into the U.S. each year, and the vast majority never receive more than a quick visual check before distribution? Find out how the bipartisan Healthy Dog Importation Act (HR 6921) can help protect pets and public health.

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## The AKC Animal Law Writing Contest

The American Kennel Club® (AKC), the world's largest purebred dog registry and leading advocate for dogs, is pleased to announce the fourth annual Companion Animal Law Writing Contest.



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## Protecting You & Your Dog: AKC PAC Launches Mask Fundraiser

In today's world, face masks have become the newest accessory! The AKC PAC is excited to provide you with the opportunity to ***show you care*** about the future of our breeds, protecting the health and wellbeing of our dogs, and all those you encounter at shows and in your daily activities.

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## Case Study: How Arbitrary Cruelty Bills Could Enrich NGOs At the Cost of The Wrongly Accused

A 2019-2020 Tennessee bill provides an interesting study on how the continuing expansion of arbitrary animal cruelty legislation and penalties could enrich—with insufficient governmental oversight—any society “incorporated for the prevention of cruelty to animals” at a terrible cost to wrongly accused pet owners or owners who innocently entrusted the care of a pet to a negligent caregiver.

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## Legislative Information and Updates

The U.S. Congress is currently on August recess. The House of Representatives will return on September 14; the Senate will return on September 8.

As of publication, 10 states are currently in session. A number of others will be returning in September. To date this year, AKC Government Relations has been tracking more than 2,400 bills impacting dog ownership at the federal, state, and local levels. The COVID-19 outbreak and response has had a dramatic impact on legislatures and policymaking at all levels of government. Below are some highlights of pending legislation impacting dog ownership and dog owners' rights across the country. For more information on these bills, and information on how you can get involved, visit the AKC GR Legislative Action Center at [www.akcgr.org](http://www.akcgr.org).

In addition to tracking and responding to legislative proposals, AKC Government Relations addresses dog-related regulatory proposals from the U.S. federal government, all 50 states, and the District of Columbia. AKC Government Relations (AKC GR) is currently tracking approximately 750 regulatory proposals, the majority of which concern land use/hunting regulations and those governing the practice of veterinary medicine. Click the link below to read highlights from this past month.

AKC GR's Regulatory Resource Center provides updates on our federal and state regulatory work that may impact dog owners. Check it out at [www.crcengage.com/akc.org/regcenter](http://www.crcengage.com/akc.org/regcenter).

Visit the [2020 Legislation Tracking page](#) for the most up-to-date information on state and federal legislation. This site, updated each weekday, provides the latest bill text, status, and links to legislative alerts posted by the AKC. Click on the links below to view highlights of issues that are being tracked by AKC Government Relations:

### Federal

Issues that may affect **all** dog owners in the U.S.

### State

Issues specific to your state

### Local

Issues at the city, county, and metropolitan levels, and in U.S. territories

### Regulatory

Regulatory issues at the federal, state, and local levels

Please contact AKC GR at (919) 816-3720 or [doglaw@akc.org](mailto:doglaw@akc.org) for more information or

to let us know what's happening in your local community.



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