



Town of Weston
Massachusetts

COMMERCIAL DOG WALKER
PERMIT REGULATIONS

2021.001: Commercial Dog Walker Permit Regulations

Adopted: February 9, 2021; revised March 2, 2021

Select Board Chair: Laurie A. Bent

The Select Board, acting under the authority of Article XX of the By-laws of the Town of Weston hereby adopts the following rules and regulations to govern permits issued to Commercial Dog Walkers:

SECTION 1. Duty to Observe Rules; Town's Right to Modify

1.1 Commercial dog walking businesses and their employees must obey the Town of Weston Article XX Dog By-law and all regulations, policies, and conditions. The Select Board or its designee may, immediately and without notice, modify permit conditions, including leashing requirements or access to municipal property, for matters of human or animal safety or critical resource protection, on any or all municipal land. Permit holders will be notified at least 30 days in advance of the effective date of non-emergency modifications.

1.2 Dog walkers are under a duty to stay informed about any leashing or other modifications or restrictions applicable to municipal or public land that are published on the Town Website or posted in kiosks, at trailheads or on municipal land.

SECTION 2. Rules and Conduct

2.1 All dogs six months of age or more brought onto the municipal lands are required to have current licenses and must have a license tag affixed to their collar or harness. Commercial dog walkers must carry proof of a rabies vaccination for every animal.

2.2 Commercial dog walkers must wear an official Weston identification badge showing their photograph and the number of dogs they are licensed to walk. The identification badge must be worn in a Town-approved badge holder while walking dogs on municipal lands. Badges must be

visible from the front and made available for inspection to Town of Weston staff or any law enforcement agent when requested.

2.3 Commercial dog walkers must display their vehicle window placard in their vehicle when walking dogs in Weston.

2.4 The previous year's ID badge and vehicle window placard must be returned or a fee will be applied.

2.5 Commercial dog walkers are limited to a maximum of five dogs per person, including emotional support service animals.

2.6 Commercial dog walkers must carry one leash per dog while on municipal land. A coupler leash shall count as multiple leashes based on the number of clips attached to the dog collars.

2.7 Unless specifically allowed under Article XX of the Town By-laws, a dog shall be on a leash or under effective voice control of the walker while on municipal land. An electric dog collar is not a substitute for a leash. Walkers must keep dogs under their immediate supervision and shall not let their dogs out of their control or sight. When approaching persons, dogs, or horses, those walking dogs shall call their dogs to their side and keep them under control until the persons, dogs, or horses pass. Dogs shall be immediately leashed at the first sign of aggression or unruliness.

2.8 Dogs must not disturb visitors to municipal lands and must be under physical control when in the presence of visitors. Disturbance is defined as unwelcome approaching, touching, jumping on, displaying threatening behavior, or physically harming persons, animals, or wildlife.

2.9 Aggressive or dangerous dogs are not allowed on municipal lands. Dogs displaying aggressive and/or dangerous behavior must be removed from the municipal lands immediately. Any dog that has been cited as aggressive or dangerous by the Animal Control Officer or any enforcing person may not return to municipal land. Bringing a dog that has previously been so cited to municipal property may be cause for revocation of a dog walker's permit and denial of future dog walker permits to the business or dog walker or both.

2.10 Commercial dog walkers will pick up their dogs' waste and remove it from municipal land or place it in a trash receptacle.

2.11 Except in case of emergency, dogs may not be left unattended in the dog walker's vehicle.

SECTION 3. Application Process

3.1 Anyone wishing to obtain a commercial dog walking permit shall submit the following to the Department of Animal Control:

- a. Proof of current commercial general liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 (\$2,000,000 aggregate). Commercial dog walker agrees that he/she shall (1) indemnify and hold harmless the Town of Weston from any and all loss, liability, damage or cost incurred related to the permit holder's activities or the activities of dogs under his/her care; and (2) provide evidence of commercial general liability insurance coverage in limits established by the Town, naming the Town as an additional insured. Insurance shall be maintained for the life of the permit.
- b. A copy of the business owner's contact information and address and each walker's driver's license.
- c. A signed and dated copy of these regulations signifying understanding and acceptance.
- d. Appropriate permit fees as described in Section 4.

SECTION 4. Enforcement

4.1 Credible or verified complaints about a commercial dog walker's use of municipal lands, or noncompliance with permit conditions, may result in citations to the business and walker as provided in Article V of the Town By-laws, Sections 1 and 2.

4.2 The Select Board, or its designee, may for cause suspend for a period of time, revoke or deny a permit issued under this section. Decisions may be appealed by requesting a hearing.

4.3 A person with outstanding citations may not be considered for a commercial dog walking permit until all citations have been paid.

4.4 A permit may be denied for previous failure to comply with the Dog By-law or these regulations.

4.5 A dog walking business or dog walker may not circumvent these regulations by loaning, swapping, or giving their permit to a dog walker not registered with the Town.

4.6. Dog walkers who are aware of violations of these regulations have an obligation to report those violations to the Town.

SECTION 5. Permit Fees

5.1 Commercial dog walker permits are valid for one year from February 28th. No more than three permits may be issued to one business.

5.2 Permit fees may be pro-rated during the permit year according to the following guidelines:

February 28-August 31: no discount.

September 1-February 27: 50 percent discount on business fee, commercial dog walker fee, and per-dog fee. Fees for permit transfer, badge replacement, and badge deposit are not discounted.

5.3 A permitted business may transfer an employee's permit to another of its employees by paying a transfer fee and turning in the previously issued vehicle placard and I.D. badge.

5.4 No more than 50 commercial dog walkers and 30 businesses may be licensed in Town.

5.5 Fees paid are non-refundable.

Commercial dog walking permit fees are as follows:

Business fee: \$50.00

Commercial dog walker permit: \$50.00 per walker (maximum of 3 walkers per business)

Dogs: \$150 each (maximum of 5 dogs per walker)

Replacement fee for ID badge and vehicle placard: \$10.00 each

Permit transfer: \$50.00

Badge holder deposit: the lesser of \$25.00 or the cost of the badge holder, which shall be returned upon the return of the badge holder.

Fee for failure to return previous year's ID badge or vehicle placard: \$10.00 each.

Permit holder has read, acknowledged, understands, and agrees to these conditions and rules.

Adopted: February 9, 2021

Laurie A. Bent, Chair

Harvey R. Boshart

Christopher E. Houston

Select Board of the Town of Weston

Filed with the Office of the Town Clerk on the ____ day of _____, 2021.

March 2, 2021 revision: strike "service" from "emotional support service animal" term in section 2.5