



LEARN MORE
ABOUT THE
LAWS THAT
PROTECT
ANIMALS AND
HELP INFORM
OTHERS



FRIDAY FACTS FROM BARRIO DOGS

▶ ANIMAL WELFARE LAWS

Both Houston and the state of Texas have laws protecting animals. Here are some that we should all know about:

- **Pets must be licensed and vaccinated.** Anyone who owns, keeps, possesses, or has control of a dog or cat four months of age or older must have the animal licensed and vaccinated against rabies every year. (1)
- **Running at large is prohibited.** Pets cannot run loose on the streets. All pets must be leashed or kept inside a secure enclosure, for example, behind a fence in your yard or inside your home. (1)
- **Breeders permit required.** Anyone who breeds dogs or cats to sell must have a commercial breeder's permit. (1)
- **Roadside sales of pets are prohibited.** It's illegal to sell, trade, give away or display live animals on a roadside, public right-of-way, commercial parking lot, or at an outdoor special sale, swap meet, flea market or parking lot sale. (1)
- **Chaining your dog.** Texas law governs how and when you may chain your dog. In any event, it's never a good idea to chain your dog, especially for long periods of time. It is unpleasant for the dog and may cause it to become more aggressive and unsociable. (2)
- **Animal cruelty.** It is illegal to torture, kill or cause serious bodily injury to an animal; to fail to unreasonably to provide necessary food, water, care, or shelter for an animal in your custody; to abandon an animal in your custody; and to transport or confine an animal in a cruel manner. (3)
- **Animal abandonment.** Dumping a pet you no longer want is considered animal cruelty and is prohibited by law. (3)
- **Dog fighting.** Participating in or watching dog fighting, allowing dog fighting on your property and owning dog fighting dogs or equipment are all prohibited by law. (3)
- **Spay and neuter.** Some cities have laws requiring pet owners to fix their dogs but Houston does not. However, we strongly encourage everyone to be responsible owners and fix their pets. There are low cost vet clinics where you can get it done and BARC's Healthy Pets Healthy Streets offers free spay neuter; check Barrio Dogs' and BARC's website for more info.

(1) HOUSTON CODE OF ORDINANCES, Ch. 6 - ANIMALS AND FOWL
(2) TEXAS HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §821.077
(3) TEXAS PENAL CODE §42