

Dog Leash Laws (extracts from City of Norfolk Code of Ordinances)

Chap. 6.1, Art IV, Sec. 6.1-72. Allowing animals to defecate on public property or on private property of other persons

It shall be unlawful for any owner or person in control of any animal to allow any animal to defecate on the property of other persons without their consent or that of the authorized agent or persons having control of the premises or on public property. Immediate removal and sanitary disposal of the defecated matter shall not constitute a violation of this section. The defecated matter shall be placed in a container and disposed of in a proper waste receptacle. A violation of this section shall constitute a class 3 misdemeanor.

Chap. 6.1, Art IV, Sec. 6.1-79. Animals at Large

(a) It shall be unlawful for the owner, custodian or other person in charge or control of any animal to permit or allow such animal to be at large within the city limits or to negligently fail to prevent such animal from being at large within the city limits. Animals are prohibited from being at large in trailer coach parks, mobile home parks, and apartment complexes and must be maintained in accordance with lease provisions. This section does not apply to law-enforcement animals.

(b) For the purpose of this section, an animal is deemed to be at large while roaming, running, flying or self-hunting off the property of its owner or custodian and not under the owner's or custodian's immediate leashed or lead control or secured in an appropriate animal carrier. An owner or custodian of an animal which has completed a certified off-leash obedience class may acquire an animal off-leash permit from the animal control officer. The animal control officer shall require proof of such class. Said permit shall be carried by the owner or custodian when the animal is off the owner's or custodian's premises. Said permit shall not apply to those public parks surrounding or adjacent to schools during days and hours that on-leash animals are prohibited pursuant to chapter 25.2 of this Code, 1979, as amended. Said permit shall not be needed when the animal is confined within an area designated by the city manager for having animals off leash. The requirements of this subsection relating to leash control shall not apply to cats.

(c) Animals are prohibited at public swimming pools.

(d) Any animal picked up or detained by any city employee or on city property at any time shall become the custodial property of the city. If, after a five-day period commencing the day after it is impounded, an animal is not redeemed by the owner, the animal shall become the property of the city for disposition, except that certain wildlife or non-native species may be delivered to the zoological park for proper care and disposition. Such animals may be retained by the zoological park for display, exchange or may be reintroduced to the wild if such action is appropriate.

(e) The first violation of this section shall constitute a class 4 misdemeanor. The second violation on the same animal shall constitute a class 3 misdemeanor and subsequent violations on the same animal shall

constitute a class 2 misdemeanor. Any owner cited for three (3) violations of this section may have his animals impounded or spayed and neutered at the owner's or custodian's expense. Costs for spaying or neutering shall be borne by the owner or custodian.

Chap. 25.2, Art. III, Sec. 25.2-32. Dogs and domestic animals generally

(a) Dogs and domestic animals shall be restrained on a leash at all times when on a public sand beach or in a public park, which term for purposes of this section includes those fields owned by the city surrounding or adjacent to a school building. In the case of a dog, the dog's owner or his custodian must secure the animal by a collar with a chain, cord or leash not exceeding eight (8) feet in length, and have the animal under complete and immediate control while in beach and park areas within the city.

(b) The Director of Recreation, Parks and Open Space (RPOS) may restrict the public's access with leashed dogs and domestic animals to public parks, so long as the prohibited days and hours are clearly indicated by signs established by the director of recreation, parks and open space. In establishing restrictions for those parks that are fields surrounding or adjacent to school buildings, the director shall consider the reasonable use of each field by both the school and the public generally, including the regular days and hours of attendance for the specific school involved and the geographic characteristics of the individual field, including whether the field is shared by the school with a city recreation or resource center.

(c) It shall be unlawful for any owner or custodian of a dog or domestic animal to permit such animal on public sand beaches during the time period from the Saturday before Memorial Day through Labor Day each year, such period hereinafter referred to as the "season"; provided, however, that dogs or domestic animals may be permitted on said beaches during the season before 10:00 a.m. and after 6:00 p.m. daily. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to a guide dog, hearing dog or service dog trained to accompany a person with a disability while being accompanied by such person, or to any dog in the custody or control of a law enforcement officer while such officer is in the performance of his duties.

(d) The owners or custodians of such leashed dogs and domestic animals when lawfully present in public parks or on public sand beaches pursuant to this section shall obey the city's provisions concerning animal feces contained in chapter 6.1, as amended.

(e) The off-leash permit provisions of chapter 6.1, as amended, represent a general exception to the leash requirements of this section. However, the owner or custodian of any dog or domestic animal shall not have it off leash even with an off-leash permit in those public parks that are surrounding or adjacent to school buildings during the days and hours that on-leash animals are restricted.