



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 133

S.P. 69

In Senate, January 8, 2025

An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Nuisance Dogs

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D M Grant", is positioned above the printed name of the Secretary of the Senate.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator BENNETT of Oxford.

Cosponsored by Representative WADSWORTH of Hiram and

Senator: BALDACCI of Penobscot, Representative: WOODSOME of Waterboro.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §3907, sub-§20-A**, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 404, §3, is amended
3 to read:

4 **20-A. Nuisance dog.** "Nuisance dog" means a dog or wolf hybrid that causes bodily
5 injury, other than serious bodily injury, to an individual or a domesticated animal who is
6 not trespassing on the dog or wolf hybrid owner's or keeper's premises at the time of the
7 injury; a dog or wolf hybrid that causes a reasonable and prudent person who is not on the
8 dog or wolf hybrid owner's or keeper's premises and is acting in a reasonable and
9 nonaggressive manner to fear bodily injury, other than serious bodily injury, by assaulting
10 or threatening to assault that individual or individual's domesticated animal; ~~or a dog or~~
11 ~~wolf hybrid that causes damage to property or crops not owned by the dog or wolf hybrid~~
12 ~~owner or keeper while the dog or wolf hybrid is not on the owner's or keeper's premises; or~~
13 a dog or wolf hybrid that disturbs the peace of an individual by excessive barking, howling
14 or yelping, and the individual is not trespassing on the dog or wolf hybrid owner's or
15 keeper's premises at the time of the excessive barking, howling or yelping.

16 "Nuisance dog" does not include:

17 A. A dog certified by the State and used for law enforcement use;

18 B. A dog or wolf hybrid that injures or threatens to assault an individual who is on the
19 dog or wolf hybrid owner's or keeper's premises if the dog or wolf hybrid has no prior
20 history of assault and was provoked by the individual immediately prior to the injury
21 or threatened assault; or

22 C. A dog or wolf hybrid that inflicts bodily injury on an individual who is committing
23 a crime against an individual or property owned by the dog or wolf hybrid owner or
24 keeper.

25 For the purposes of this definition, "dog or wolf hybrid owner's or keeper's premises" means
26 the residence or residences, including buildings and land and motor vehicles, belonging to
27 the owner or keeper of the dog or wolf hybrid.

28 **Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §3952-A, sub-§1**, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 404, §12, is amended
29 to read:

30 **1. Procedure.** ~~A person who is assaulted or threatened with bodily injury by a dog or~~
31 ~~a person witnessing such an assault or threatened assault against a person or domesticated~~
32 ~~animal or a person with knowledge of such an assault or threatened assault against a minor,~~
33 ~~or a person whose property or crops have been damaged by a dog, within 30 days of the~~
34 ~~incident, may make written complaint to the a sheriff, local law enforcement officer or~~
35 ~~animal control officer that the a dog is a dangerous dog or a nuisance dog within 30 days~~
36 of an incident for any of the following. For the purposes of this chapter, "domesticated
37 animal" includes, but is not limited to, livestock as defined in section 3907, subsection
38 18-A.

39 A. The person is assaulted or threatened with bodily injury by a dog.

40 B. The person witnesses an assault or threatened assault against another person or
41 domesticated animal by a dog.

C. The person has knowledge of an assault or threatened assault against a minor by a dog.

D. The person's property or crops have been damaged by a dog.

E. The person's peace has been disrupted by a dog that barks, howls or yelps excessively.

A representative of the sheriff's department, a local law enforcement officer or an animal control officer appointed by the municipality shall investigate and document the complaint. Upon completion of the investigation of the complaint, the investigator may issue a civil violation summons for keeping a dangerous dog or a nuisance dog.

All records of the outcome of the investigation must be kept by the municipality for the life of the dog, plus 2 years.

For the purposes of this chapter, "domesticated animal" includes, but is not limited to, livestock as defined in section 3907, subsection 18-A.

SUMMARY

This bill amends the definition of "nuisance dog" to include a dog or wolf hybrid that disturbs the peace of an individual by excessive barking, howling or yelping, and the individual is not trespassing on the dog or wolf hybrid owner's or keeper's premises at the time of the excessive barking, howling or yelping. The bill also explicitly authorizes a person to file a written complaint to a sheriff, local law enforcement officer or animal control officer if the person's peace has been disrupted by a dog that barks, howls or yelps excessively.