



Update of Standard of Care for Dogs Kept Outdoors

1-833-9-ANIMAL

Fact Sheet: Standards of Care for Dogs Kept Outdoors under the PAWS Act – Summary of Requirements (As of July 1, 2022)

Tethers:



Tethers must:

- Permit 3 metres of horizontal movement
- Allow the dog to move about safely
- Be a size, type and weight that won't cause discomfort or injury
- Have a swivel at both ends
- Be in good condition and well-attached to prevent escape



Collars and harnesses used with a tether must be of a size, type, design and fit that won't cause discomfort or injury

When tethering a dog kept outdoors, an owner/custodian must not:

- ⊗ Use a **choke, pinch, prong, slip, head halter or martingale collar**
- ⊗ Tether **dogs under 6 months or that are in heat, whelping or nursing**
- ⊗ **Cause undue distress**, including because of the age, health or reproductive status of the dog or objects or hazards they can reach

Housing Pens:



Use of housing pens must not **cause undue distress** and housing pens must be constructed to prevent escape and provide protection from predators.

Housing pen minimum size must be scaled to the height of the dog (measured at shoulder):

- **1.5m²** for each additional dog housed in the same pen (with exceptions)

Height (cm)	Area (m ²)
70 or greater	15
>= 40 and < 70	10
>= 20 and < 40	6
less than 20	4

Aggressive dogs must not be housed together, and **dogs in heat or coming into heat** must not be housed with male dogs (with exceptions)

Housing Pen and Tether Area:



Must provide enough space for **natural behaviours** and **distinct areas** for feeding and drinking and defecating and urinating



Dog must not be forced to stand, sit or lie in feces, urine, mud or water; area must be cleaned as needed to prevent the accumulation of waste; **keep sanitary and minimize parasites**

Additional Standards for Dogs Tethered Outdoors:



Dogs tethered outdoors for 23 hours in a 24-hour period, whether the 23 hours are consecutive or not, must be taken off the tether for at least 60 continuous minutes to allow for exercise and enrichment (with exceptions)

Note: the definition of "kept outdoors" does not apply to this requirement

The full text of the regulation is available at the [Ontario e-Laws website](https://www.ontario.ca/laws). This document is intended to provide a summary only and is not legal advice. If there is any conflict between this document and the regulation, the regulation is the final authority. Produced April 2022.



Fact Sheet: Standards of Care for Dogs Kept Outdoors under the PAWS Act – Summary of Requirements (As of July 1, 2022)

Shade, Shelter and Protection from the Elements:



Sufficient protection from the elements to prevent heat or cold-related distress, and **shade** as required by the weather, including to protect from direct sunlight



A dog shelter, available at all times, that:

- Is waterproof and provides protection from the elements
- Is structurally sound and does not cause injury
- Has an insulated roof, a level, elevated and dry floor, and is ventilated
- Has a doorway free from obstructions
- Has bedding at least 3 inches thick, changed as needed to stay clean, dry, comfortable and unsoiled

Size of the shelter must allow all dogs using it to turn around, lie down with their legs extended and stand with their heads held at normal height



Livestock guardian dogs and dogs with access to a structurally sound building used to house livestock do not require a dog shelter

A dog "kept outdoors" is a dog that is outdoors for more than 60 minutes without its owner or custodian present



Food and Water:



Food that meets daily caloric requirements, is fit for consumption, not spoiled and does not contain dirt, feces, urine or toxic substances



Water at all times that is not frozen, does not contain dirt, feces, urine or toxic substances, and is replaced at least once every 24 hours

Food and water containers must be constructed to avoid injury and difficulty accessing food and water

Health and Grooming:



Daily health and welfare checks

Isolation from other healthy dogs if the dog is at high risk of or suffering from a contagious disease (with exceptions)

Dogs must not be kept outdoors if they have an injury or illness that affects their ability to regulate temperature or restricts mobility (with exceptions)



Grooming, as needed, of nails and to avoid matting of the dog's coat or accumulation of ice or mud on its coat or under its paws

The full text of the regulation is available at the [Ontario e-Laws website](https://www.ontario.ca/laws). This document is intended to provide a summary only and is not legal advice. If there is any conflict between this document and the regulation, the regulation is the final authority. Produced April 2022.

