

As Introduced

136th General Assembly

Regular Session

2025-2026

H. B. No. 241

Representatives Thomas, C., Lawson-Rowe

To amend section 955.222 and to enact section
955.13 of the Revised Code to require a 10-day
quarantine period for a dog following an attack
and to require a court, under certain
circumstances, to hold a hearing to determine
the dog's disposition.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 955.222 be amended and section
955.13 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows:

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Sec. 955.13. (A) If a dog injures, seriously injures, or
kills a person, in addition to any applicable penalties in
section 955.99 of the Revised Code, the dog shall be quarantined
for a ten-day period at a suitable place for impounding dogs
provided by the board of county commissioners in accordance with
section 955.15 of the Revised Code. During the ten-day
quarantine, the dog warden or applicable law enforcement agency
shall conduct an investigation into the incident that resulted
in the injury, serious injury, or death of a person. At the
conclusion of the investigation, the warden or the law
enforcement agency shall determine one of the following:

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(1) That it is safe to have the dog remain in the

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community without training and rehabilitation; 21

(2) That there is probable cause that the dog injured, 22
seriously injured, or killed a person without provocation as 23
defined in section 955.11 of the Revised Code and the 24
seriousness of the attack warrants that the dog be released, but 25
only on the condition that the dog be trained and rehabilitated; 26

(3) That there is probable cause that the dog injured, 27
seriously injured, or killed a person without provocation as 28
defined in section 955.11 of the Revised Code and the 29
seriousness of the attack warrants that the dog be humanely 30
destroyed. 31

(B) (1) If the warden or the law enforcement agency 32
determines that it is safe to have the dog remain in the 33
community without training or rehabilitation under division (A) 34
(1) of this section, the warden or agency shall release the dog 35
to the dog's owner, keeper, or harborer. 36

(2) If the dog warden or the law enforcement agency makes 37
a determination as specified in division (A) (2) or (3) of this 38
section, the warden or agency shall petition the municipal court 39
or county court that has territorial jurisdiction over the 40
residence of the dog's owner, keeper, or harborer to order the 41
dog to either be humanely destroyed or be released on the 42
condition that the dog be trained and rehabilitated, as 43
applicable. 44

(C) The court, within ten days after receiving such a 45
petition, shall hold the hearing and issue one of the following: 46

(1) An order that the dog be humanely destroyed, at the 47
expense of the dog's owner, keeper, or harborer, by a licensed 48
veterinarian, the county dog warden, or the county humane 49

society; 50

(2) An order that the dog be released to the dog's owner, 51
keeper, or harborer; 52

(3) An order that the dog be released to the dog's owner, 53
keeper, or harborer on the condition that the dog be trained and 54
rehabilitated. If the court orders the dog to be trained and 55
rehabilitated, the expense of such training and rehabilitation 56
shall be the responsibility of the dog's owner, keeper, or 57
harborer. 58

(D) The dog's owner may appeal the court's final 59
determination as in any other case filed in that court. 60

(E) During the pendency of a court's determination under 61
division (C) of this section or an appeal under division (D) of 62
this section, the dog that is the subject of the determination 63
or appeal shall remain in quarantine. While the dog is being 64
held in quarantine, the cost of the quarantine shall be the 65
responsibility of the dog's owner, keeper, or harborer. 66

Sec. 955.222. (A) The municipal court or county court that 67
has territorial jurisdiction over the residence of the owner, 68
keeper, or harborer of a dog shall conduct any hearing 69
concerning the designation of the dog that is not humanely 70
destroyed under section 955.13 of the Revised Code as a nuisance 71
dog, dangerous dog, or vicious dog. 72

(B) If a person who is authorized to enforce this chapter 73
has reasonable cause to believe that a dog in the person's 74
jurisdiction is a nuisance dog, dangerous dog, or vicious dog, 75
the person shall notify the owner, keeper, or harborer of that 76
dog, by certified mail or in person, of both of the following: 77

(1) That the person has designated the dog a nuisance dog, 78

dangerous dog, or vicious dog, as applicable; 79

(2) That the owner, keeper, or harborer of the dog may 80
request a hearing regarding the designation in accordance with 81
this section. The notice shall include instructions for filing a 82
request for a hearing in the county in which the dog's owner, 83
keeper, or harborer resides. 84

(C) If the owner, keeper, or harborer of the dog disagrees 85
with the designation of the dog as a nuisance dog, dangerous 86
dog, or vicious dog, as applicable, the owner, keeper, or 87
harborer, not later than ten days after receiving notification 88
of the designation, may request a hearing regarding the 89
determination. The request for a hearing shall be in writing and 90
shall be filed with the municipal court or county court that has 91
territorial jurisdiction over the residence of the dog's owner, 92
keeper, or harborer. At the hearing, the person who designated 93
the dog as a nuisance dog, dangerous dog, or vicious dog has the 94
burden of proving, by clear and convincing evidence, that the 95
dog is a nuisance dog, dangerous dog, or vicious dog. 96

The owner, keeper, or harborer of the dog or the person 97
who designated the dog as a nuisance dog, dangerous dog, or 98
vicious dog may appeal the court's final determination as in any 99
other case filed in that court. 100

(D) A-Subject to a quarantine period required under 101
section 955.13 of the Revised Code, a court, upon motion of an 102
owner, keeper, or harborer or an attorney representing the 103
owner, keeper, or harborer, may order that the dog designated as 104
a nuisance dog, dangerous dog, or vicious dog be held in the 105
possession of the owner, keeper, or harborer from the time the 106
quarantine expires, if applicable, until the court makes a final 107
determination under this section or during the pendency of an 108

appeal, as applicable. Until the court makes a final 109
determination and during the pendency of any appeal, the dog 110
shall be confined or restrained in accordance with the 111
provisions of division (D) of section 955.22 of the Revised Code 112
that apply to dangerous dogs regardless of whether the dog has 113
been designated as a vicious dog or a nuisance dog rather than a 114
dangerous dog. The owner, keeper, or harborer of the dog shall 115
not be required to comply with any other requirements 116
established in the Revised Code that concern a nuisance dog, 117
dangerous dog, or vicious dog, as applicable, until the court 118
makes a final determination and during the pendency of any 119
appeal. 120

(E) If a dog is finally determined under this section, or 121
on appeal as described in this section, to be a vicious dog, 122
division (D) of section 955.11 and divisions (D) to (I) of 123
section 955.22 of the Revised Code apply with respect to the dog 124
and the owner, keeper, or harborer of the dog as if the dog were 125
a dangerous dog, and section 955.54 of the Revised Code applies 126
with respect to the dog as if it were a dangerous dog, and the 127
court shall issue an order that specifies that those provisions 128
apply with respect to the dog and the owner, keeper, or harborer 129
in that manner. As part of the order, the court shall require 130
the owner, keeper, or harborer to obtain the liability insurance 131
required under division (E) (1) of section 955.22 of the Revised 132
Code in an amount described in division (H) (2) of section 955.99 133
of the Revised Code. 134

(F) As used in this section, "nuisance dog," "dangerous 135
dog," and "vicious dog" have the same meanings as in section 136
955.11 of the Revised Code. 137

Section 2. That existing section 955.222 of the Revised 138

Code is hereby repealed.

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