

**RCW 16.52.310 Dog breeding—Limit on the number of dogs—Required conditions—Penalty—Definitions.** (1) A person may not own, possess, control, or otherwise have charge or custody of more than 50 dogs with intact sexual organs over the age of six months at any time.

(2) Any person who owns, possesses, controls, or otherwise has charge or custody of more than 10 dogs with intact sexual organs over the age of six months and keeps the dogs in an enclosure for the majority of the day must at a minimum:

(a) Provide space to allow each dog to turn about freely, to stand, sit, and lie down. The dog must be able to lie down while fully extended without the dog's head, tail, legs, face, or feet touching any side of an enclosure and without touching any other dog in the enclosure when all dogs are lying down simultaneously. The interior height of the enclosure must be at least six inches higher than the head of the tallest dog in the enclosure when it is in a normal standing position. Each enclosure must be at least three times the length and width of the longest dog in the enclosure, from tip of nose to base of tail and shoulder blade to shoulder blade.

(b) Provide each dog that is over the age of four months with a minimum of one exercise period during each day for a total of not less than one hour of exercise during such day. Such exercise must include either leash walking or giving the dog access to an enclosure at least four times the size of the minimum allowable enclosure specified in (a) of this subsection allowing the dog free mobility for the entire exercise period, but may not include use of a cat mill, jenny mill, slat mill, or similar device, unless prescribed by a doctor of veterinary medicine. The exercise requirements in this subsection do not apply to a dog certified by a doctor of veterinary medicine as being medically precluded from exercise.

(c) Maintain adequate housing facilities and primary enclosures that meet the following requirements at a minimum:

(i) Housing facilities and primary enclosures must be kept in a sanitary condition. Housing facilities where dogs are kept must be sufficiently ventilated at all times to minimize odors, drafts, ammonia levels, and to prevent moisture condensation. Housing facilities must have a means of fire suppression, such as functioning fire extinguishers, on the premises and must have sufficient lighting to allow for observation of the dogs at any time of day or night;

(ii) Housing facilities must enable all dogs to remain dry and clean;

(iii) Housing facilities must provide shelter and protection from extreme temperatures and weather conditions that may be uncomfortable or hazardous to the dogs;

(iv) Housing facilities must provide sufficient shade to shelter all the dogs housed in the primary enclosure at one time;

(v) A primary enclosure must have floors that are constructed in a manner that protects the dogs' feet and legs from injury;

(vi) Primary enclosures must be placed no higher than forty-two inches above the floor and may not be placed over or stacked on top of another cage or primary enclosure;

(vii) Feces, hair, dirt, debris, and food waste must be removed from primary enclosures at least daily or more often if necessary to prevent accumulation and to reduce disease hazards, insects, pests, and odors; and

(viii) All dogs in the same enclosure at the same time must be compatible, as determined by observation. Animals with a vicious or

aggressive disposition must never be placed in an enclosure with another animal, except for breeding purposes. Breeding females in heat may not be in the same enclosure at the same time with sexually mature males, except for breeding purposes. Breeding females and their litters may not be in the same enclosure at the same time with other adult dogs. Puppies under twelve weeks may not be in the same enclosure at the same time with other adult dogs, other than the dam or foster dam unless under immediate supervision.

(d) Provide dogs with easy and convenient access to adequate amounts of clean food and water. Food and water receptacles must be regularly cleaned and sanitized. All enclosures must contain potable water that is not frozen, is substantially free from debris, and is readily accessible to all dogs in the enclosure at all times.

(e) Provide veterinary care without delay when necessary. A dog may not be bred if a veterinarian determines that the animal is unfit for breeding purposes. Only dogs between the ages of twelve months and eight years of age may be used for breeding. Animals requiring euthanasia must be euthanized only by a licensed veterinarian.

(3) A person who violates subsection (1) or (2) of this section is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

(4) This section does not apply to the following:

(a) A publicly operated animal control facility or animal shelter;

(b) A private, charitable not-for-profit humane society or animal adoption organization;

(c) A veterinary facility;

(d) A retail pet store;

(e) A research institution;

(f) A boarding facility; or

(g) A grooming facility.

(5) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

(a) "Dog" means any member of *Canis lupus familiaris*; and

(b) "Retail pet store" means a commercial establishment that engages in a for-profit business of selling at retail cats, dogs, or other animals to be kept as household pets and is regulated by the United States department of agriculture. [2023 c 208 § 3; 2009 c 286 § 2.]

**Findings—2009 c 286:** "The legislature finds that:

(1) Dogs are neither a commercial crop nor commodity and should not be indiscriminately or irresponsibly mass produced;

(2) Large-scale dog breeding increases the likelihood that the dogs will be denied their most basic needs including but not limited to: Sanitary living conditions, proper and timely medical care, the ability to move freely at least once per day, and adequate shelter from the elements;

(3) Without proper oversight, large-scale breeding facilities can easily fall below even the most basic standards of humane housing and husbandry;

(4) Current Washington state laws are inadequate regarding the care and husbandry of dogs in large-scale breeding facilities;

(5) No Washington state agency currently regulates large-scale breeding facilities;

(6) The United States department of agriculture does not regulate large-scale breeding facilities that sell dogs directly to the public

and thus, such direct-sales breeders are currently exempt from even the minimum care and housing standards outlined in the federal animal welfare act;

(7) Documented conditions at large-scale breeding facilities include unsanitary conditions, potential for soil and groundwater contamination, the spread of zoonotic parasites and infectious diseases, and the sale of sick and dying animals to the public; and

(8) An unfair fiscal burden is placed on city, county, and state taxpayers as well as government agencies and nongovernmental organizations, which are required to care for discarded or abused and neglected dogs from large-scale breeding facilities." [2009 c 286 § 1.]

**Effective date—2009 c 286:** "This act takes effect January 1, 2010." [2009 c 286 § 3.]