

# SENATE BILL 703

L2

6lr2745  
CF HB 1038

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By: **Caroline County Senators**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

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Committee Report: Favorable

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 1, 2026

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Caroline County – Regulation of Animals – Dogs**

3 FOR the purpose of repealing certain requirements for the issuance of dog licenses in  
4 Caroline County; and generally relating to the regulation of dogs in Caroline County.

5 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

6 Article – Local Government

7 Section 13–116

8 Annotated Code of Maryland

9 (2013 Volume and 2025 Supplement)

10 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
11 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

12 **Article – Local Government**

13 13–116.

14 (a) [(1) In Caroline County, on or before July 1 of each year, a person owning  
15 or keeping a dog shall apply to the county tax collector for a license for the dog if the dog is  
16 at least 6 months old.

17 (2) At the time of application, the applicant shall pay the fee for a dog or  
18 kennel license set by the county commissioners.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (3) Except as provided in § 13–108 of this subtitle, the licenses and fees  
2 required under this section are the only licenses and fees required for owning or keeping a  
3 dog.

4 (4) The County Commissioners of Caroline County shall prepare and  
5 supply the form for a license issued under this subsection.

6 (5) A dog license shall contain the date of issuance, a serial number, and a  
7 description of the dog licensed.

8 (6) A license expires on July 1 of the year after issuance.

9 (b) (1) In Caroline County, the county tax collector shall issue a tag with each  
10 dog license to a person owning or keeping a dog when the person pays the license fee for  
11 the dog.

12 (2) The County Commissioners of Caroline County shall prepare and  
13 supply tags to the county tax collector each year.

14 (3) The tags shall be:

15 (i) composed of metal;

16 (ii) imprinted with a serial number corresponding to the number on  
17 the license issued to the owner under subsection (a) of this section;

18 (iii) imprinted with the calendar year for which the tag is issued;

19 (iv) 1 inch or less in length; and

20 (v) equipped with a substantial metal fastener.

21 (4) The county commissioners shall change the general shape of the tags  
22 each year.

23 (5) Tags supplied to owners of kennels shall contain the word “kennel”.

24 (6) The person owning or keeping a dog shall attach the tag to a substantial  
25 collar and keep the collar and tag on the dog for which the license was issued at all times,  
26 except when the dog is:

27 (i) confined in a kennel; or

28 (ii) hunting under the charge of an attendant.

29 (7) The county tax collector shall replace a lost tag on:

1 (i) application by the person to whom the original license was  
2 issued;

3 (ii) the production of the license; and

4 (iii) payment of a fee of 25 cents.

5 (c)] (1) The County Commissioners of Caroline County may adopt rules and  
6 regulations by resolution or ordinance to provide for:

7 (i) issuing dog licenses;

8 (ii) keeping records of all sales of licenses;

9 (iii) designating persons authorized to sell licenses; and

10 (iv) seizing and disposing of dogs found running at large in the  
11 county.

12 (2) Before the county commissioners adopt a rule or regulation in  
13 accordance with this subsection, a summary of the proposed rule or regulation shall be  
14 advertised in a newspaper of general circulation in the county once each week for 2  
15 successive weeks, to provide any person an opportunity to be heard.

16 (3) The rules and regulations shall include standards and operate  
17 uniformly.

18 (4) Subject to paragraph (5) of this subsection, the county commissioners  
19 may delegate, by written contract, the enforcement of the rules and regulations.

20 (5) (i) The county commissioners shall reserve the right to cancel a  
21 written contract executed in accordance with paragraph (4) of this subsection.

22 (ii) A cancellation under this paragraph:

23 1. may be without notice or recourse, if the cancellation is for  
24 cause; or

25 2. requires notice at least 30 days before cancellation, if the  
26 cancellation is without cause.

27 [(d)] (B) (1) The County Commissioners of Caroline County may appoint  
28 animal control officers.

29 (2) An animal control officer appointed under this subsection:

30 (i) has all the powers of a peace officer;

1 (ii) may sell and issue dog licenses; and

2 (iii) may seize and dispose of stray, injured, unlicensed, diseased, or  
3 vicious dogs in accordance with rules and regulations of the county commissioners.

4 (3) The county commissioners may provide for the compensation of an  
5 animal control officer appointed under this subsection.

6 ~~[(e)]~~ (C) (1) The County Commissioners of Caroline County may provide  
7 animal shelters where dogs seized by an animal control officer may be placed.

8 (2) The county commissioners may enter into agreements with adjacent  
9 counties to establish an animal shelter to serve the counties.

10 (3) Notwithstanding § 13–105(d) of this subtitle, the county commissioners  
11 may use the proceeds from dog license fees to:

12 (i) establish and maintain an animal shelter; and

13 (ii) collect, care for, or euthanize dogs.

14 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
15 October 1, 2026.

Approved:

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Governor.

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President of the Senate.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.