

## Proposed Revisions to Dog Laws Revealed

### **Preliminary changes to Pennsylvania's dog laws target large, commercial breeding operations.**

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Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell's proposed changes to the state's dog laws were reworked and presented this week, after collecting input and thousands of comments from the public, the Dog Law Advisory Board, interest groups, and legislators.

The preliminary changes mainly target large, commercial dog breeding operations and are aimed to create better standards of care for dogs housed in these facilities through stricter regulations. Commercial breeding kennels are defined as those that maintain dogs for breeding and sell directly to a store or broker, have five or more litters per year, or keep or transfer 60 or more dogs in a year.

The proposed legislation would require commercial dog breeders to double the current floor-space requirements of dogs' enclosures and require the dogs have access to an exercise area twice as big as primary enclosure. In addition, all dogs would be required to have a veterinary exam annually or for each pregnancy and only veterinarians would be allowed to give rabies vaccinations and conduct tail docking and euthanasia procedures.

The legislation also establishes some requirements for all kennel types that would include an exercise plan for dogs, prohibit tethering, require the installation of smoke alarms and fire extinguishers, and increase the availability of water.

The state's special deputy secretary for dog law enforcement, Jessie Smith, presented the proposal. Comments were accepted from the Dog Law Advisory Board in order to fine tune the proposal before a final draft is presented, which could be ready by the end of February. Public comment will be accepted on the proposal at that time.