



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **State, County Officials Kick-Off Statewide Dog Licensing Awareness Campaign; Announce Poster Contest During Visit to Dauphin County Shelter**

**Harrisburg, PA** – While visiting the Humane Society of Harrisburg today, Acting Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding urged Pennsylvanians to license their dogs, emphasizing that a current dog license is the best way to ensure lost dogs are reunited with their families.

“Our 12-year-old golden retriever, Lucky, has a current license,” Redding said. “Not only is licensing the right thing to do because you love your pet, but it’s also the law. Lucky is very much a part of our family, and if he somehow got away from home, his license increases the likelihood of him being returned to us more quickly.”

Governor Tom Wolf proclaimed March as “Dog License Awareness Month,” reminding Pennsylvanians to purchase licenses before dog wardens begin compliance checks at homes to check for current license and rabies vaccinations.

State law requires all dogs, three months and older, to be licensed by January 1 of each year. Owners who fail to license their dogs could face a fine of up to \$300 for each unlicensed dog.

The fee for an annual dog license is \$6.50, or \$8.50 if the animal is not spayed or neutered. Lifetime licenses are available for dogs that have permanent identification like a microchip or tattoo. Older adults and persons with disabilities may be eligible for discounts.

The dog license application is simple and only requests owner contact information and details about the dog being licensed, like name, age, breed and color. The information is used by animal control and shelters to identify lost dogs and get them home safely.

In celebration of Dog License Awareness Month, Redding invited Pennsylvania students, in first through sixth grades, to enter a poster contest to help raise awareness about the importance of dog licensing. The poster must reflect the theme “Love your dog. License your dog.” The entries must also include the [www.licenseyourdogPA.com](http://www.licenseyourdogPA.com) website address. The deadline to enter the statewide contest is May 1.

“This annual contest gets all ages of the family involved in creating awareness about the importance of licensing your dogs,” Redding added. “I encourage all eligible students to participate, be imaginative, and learn more about keeping their ‘best friend’ safe.”

Licensing fees support animal control through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement, which is responsible for ensuring the welfare of dogs, regulating dangerous dogs and overseeing annual licensing and rabies vaccinations.

For more information, visit [www.licenseyourdogPA.com](http://www.licenseyourdogPA.com) or call the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement at 717-787-3062.

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**EDITOR’S NOTE:** The text of Governor Wolf’s proclamation declaring March as Dog License Awareness Month in Pennsylvania follows.

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania’s 12.8 million citizens enjoy the state as a great place to live, work and play, especially those who enrich their lives by owning dogs; and

WHEREAS, care of a dog is an important responsibility, with dogs dependent on their owners for guardianship and safety; and

WHEREAS, purchasing a dog license is one of the best ways owners can safeguard man’s best friend; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has recognized through statutes the importance of licensing all dogs aged three months and older by Jan. 1, with penalties for non-compliance; and

WHEREAS, a dog license is an inexpensive way to keep peace of mind if a dog is lost. It is a dog’s ticket home, as a tag can readily identify a dog; and

WHEREAS, when dog owners purchase a dog license, not only are they protecting their dog, they are also helping dogs across the state by supporting the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement helps ensure the welfare of breeding dogs and puppies in commercial and breeding kennels, regulates dangerous dogs, oversees annual licensure and rabies vaccination of dogs, and supports animal shelters that accept stray dogs; and

WHEREAS, dog licenses are available from local county treasurers, many of whom offer online licensing and register other licensing agents at stores and veterinary offices; and

WHEREAS, licenses are affordable, and discounts are offered to owners of spayed or neutered dogs, older Pennsylvanians and dog owners with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being licensed, all dogs three months or older must be vaccinated against rabies, a fatal viral infection of the central nervous system that is spread by infected animals.

THEREFORE, to increase public understanding about the laws regarding dog licensing, I, Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim March 2015, DOG LICENSE AWARENESS MONTH in Pennsylvania. I urge all citizens to protect their pet by purchasing a dog license.

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