



**RHODE ISLAND**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**  
**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY**  
235 Promenade Street, Room 370  
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

## **BOARDING KENNEL and DOG TRAINER FACT SHEET**

RI General Law does not delineate between daycare and boarding kennels; the definition of boarding kennel includes daycare, therefore they are covered by the same regulations. Boarding Kennel/Daycare activity is required to be licensed unless you care for 4 or fewer animals (not owned by proprietor) in your own home. Municipalities may have greater restrictions (prohibit or allow fewer animals). The care of any number of animals in a setting other than a residential setting requires a license. Per RI GL 4-19-5.2, Dog Training may also require a Boarding Kennel License.

Here is the link to the current Application: [Application for Boarding Kennel](#)  
URL: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/agriculture/documents/kennelapp.pdf>

The URL should take you to a document with the heading below. If it takes you to a document with a different heading try refreshing your browser.

REGISTRATION APPLICATION FOR A BOARDING KENNEL (April 2018)  
(Required for BOTH Overnight and Social Boarding ie “Doggie Daycare”)

Information regarding the license period, annual fee and submission can be found on Page Four (4) of the application.

**New Applicants:** Along with completed application and Fifty-dollar (\$50.00) annual fee, submit written proof from local municipal zoning office confirming local ordinance permits BOARDING KENNEL at intended location.

“**Municipal approvals**” in Part 4.9 (G) of **Rules and Regulations Governing Animal Care Facilities (250-RICR-40-05-4)** means that you must confirm whether or not your Municipality requires you to meet a Zoning requirement in order to be licensed, and you must provide Written proof from the appropriate Municipal official indicating that you have met the requirement, OR that there is NO zoning requirement. Typically, this would come from the Zoning or Building Official. This should be submitted along with application and must be provided prior to inspection and approval.

### **Rules and Regulations Governing Animal Care Facilities (250-RICR-40-05-4)**

URL: <https://rules.sos.ri.gov/regulations/part/250-40-05-4> These regulations are the basis for any inspections. We will conduct a scheduled inspection upon receipt of a completed application and may conduct unannounced inspections at any reasonable time thereafter. Pay particular attention to the “Minimum Space Requirements for Primary Enclosures” requiring primary enclosure/crate availability and the formula for minimum size requirements.

Note that there is a lot of information in the links within the application and your signature on the application is an attestation that you have read and understand the information provided.

Here are the referenced regulations, as well as the recently promulgated Reportable Animal Disease Regulations:

- [Rules and Regulations Governing Animal Care Facilities \(250-RICR-40-05-4\)](#)
- [Rules and Regulations Governing the Prevention, Control, and Suppression of Rabies Within the State of Rhode Island \(250-RICR-40-05-2\)](#)

- [Rules and Regulations Governing Reportable Animal Diseases and Conditions in the State of Rhode Island \(250-RICR-40-05-11\)](#)

Here are pertinent definitions from RI General Law 4-19

(URL: <http://webserver.rilegislature.gov//Statutes/TITLE4/4-19/4-19-2.HTM>):

**(7) "Animal"** means any dog or cat, rabbit, rodent, nonhuman primate, bird or other warm-blooded vertebrate, amphibian, fish, or reptile but shall not include horses, cattle, sheep, goats, swine, and domestic fowl.

**(19) "Kennel"** means a place or establishment, other than a pound or animal shelter, or veterinary hospital that is housing animals during their treatment, where animals not owned by the proprietor are sheltered, fed, and watered in return for a fee. This definition shall not apply to the following:

(i) Sheltering, feeding, and watering in return for a fee in a residential setting, of no more than four (4) animals not owned by the proprietor, subject to any applicable municipal ordinance that may be more restrictive;

(ii) Any entity that sells a dog or cat.

**(32) "Trainer"** means those persons who actively engage in the application of behavior analysis using the environmental events of antecedents and consequences to modify the behavior of an animal, either for the animal to assist in specific activities or undertake particular tasks, or for the animal to participate effectively in contemporary domestic life, and who keep, board, or retain possession of the animal for at least one overnight period, with the exception of those persons engaged in these activities for dog training programs operated by government agencies and for dog training programs operated by a not-for-profit or exempt nonprofit organization pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**Licensing requirement per [CHAPTER 4-19 Animal Care](#)**

**URL: <http://webserver.rilegislature.gov//Statutes/TITLE4/4-19/INDEX.htm>**

#### **§ 4-19-5.2. Trainers required to obtain kennel license – Exceptions.**

No person shall act as a trainer, as defined in § 4-19-2, unless in possession of a valid kennel license as set forth in § 4-19-6. Provided, however, persons engaged in dog training activities for dog training programs operated by government agencies, or operated by a not-for-profit or exempt nonprofit organization pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, shall not be required by this section to obtain a kennel license.

#### **§ 4-19-6. Public auction and kennel licenses.**

(a) No person shall operate a public auction or a kennel, as defined in this chapter, unless a license to operate that establishment has been granted by the director. Application for the license shall be made in the manner provided by the director. The license period is the fiscal year and the license fee shall be fifty dollars (\$50.00) for each license period or part thereof beginning with the first day of the fiscal year.

(b) This section shall not be interpreted to interfere in any manner with the issuing of a public auction or kennel license by any city or town, nor any fee charged by any city or town. No license shall be issued by the director except for those premises as shall be designated for the licensure by the respective city or town council.

(c) Pursuant to § 4-19-2(19), any person who provides the sheltering, feeding, and watering in return for a fee in a residential setting of no more than four (4) animals not owned by the proprietor is:

(1) Exempt from licensure as a kennel under this chapter; and

(2) Subject to inspection by an authorized agent of the department of environmental management (hereinafter "the

department") upon the department receiving a written complaint against the person. Only complaints related to animal care, animal health, and animal welfare may initiate an inspection. Any inspection that is conducted by the department shall be conducted during the hours of eight o'clock a.m. (8:00 a.m.) through five o'clock p.m. (5:00 p.m.), unless the person who is the subject of the complaint agrees to an inspection at another time; and

(3) Required to be compliant with the department's rules and regulations governing animal care facilities, RICR 250-RICR-40-05-4, §§ 4.7 and 4.8.A.1 through 8 (excluding the sanitation log requirements of § 4.8.A.3). Any inspection conducted by an authorized agent of the department shall be limited to the aforementioned sections and shall be limited to areas to which the animals being cared for have access. Any violations of these sections are punishable in accordance with § 4.12 of the rules and regulations governing animal care facilities and any appeal for any enforcement action shall be made in accordance with § 4.11.B of those rules and regulations; and

(4) Any person who is subject to inspection pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection (c)(2), but who denies access to authorized inspectors from the department, is subject to a civil fine of three hundred fifty dollars (\$350). Each day that access is denied shall constitute a separate punishable offense.

**§ 4-19-9. Operation as a pet shop, kennel, breeder or public auction without a license.**

Any person who operates as a pet shop, kennel, breeder, or public auction without a currently valid license shall, upon conviction, plea of guilty, or plea of nolo contendere, be punished pursuant to § 4-19-11.3. Each day of operation shall constitute a separate offense. Advertisement of services consistent with the operation of a pet shop, kennel, breeder, or public auction shall be sufficient evidence of operation of a pet shop, kennel, breeder, or public auction as applicable.

Specific question should be submitted via email to [Marisa.Coates@dem.RI.Gov](mailto:Marisa.Coates@dem.RI.Gov)

*(B/T FS September 2022)*