



FACA Policy Statement

Tethering of Dogs

The Florida Animal Control Association (FACA) recognizes the issue of tethering dogs is a growing concern nationally. The role of animals in society has and continues to evolve. While various opinions exist as to how an animal should be kept and treated, there is an abundance of evidence that tethering as a primary means of confinement or tethering without direct supervision, creates unnecessary risks to pets and people.

FACA does not recommend tethering as a primary means of confinement. There are many risks for the pet and public associated with tethering including heat exhaustion, injuries from becoming entangled to include death from strangulation, inability to escape attacks from other animals, exposure to nocturnal wildlife/rabies carriers, internal and external parasites, unplanned breeding, and more. Additionally, the CDC indicated in a research article that chained dogs are 2.8 times more likely to bite a person. This is likely due to a lack of socialization of the dog. That combined with the inability to get proper exercise may result in hyper-arousal by the dog when approached by a person. Dogs identified as most likely to bite are intact, male, chained dogs.

In making decisions about local laws or policies related to tethering, thoughtful consideration for the animal's well-being and the safety of the community must be given. If circumstances exist that would prohibit or prevent a pet from being kept inside, adequate outdoor provisions must be made. At a minimum, pets kept outside should be housed in a secure enclosure and provided with continuous access to fresh water, adequate shelter that will prevent exposure to harsh weather elements, an adequate quantity and quality of food to ensure health, and adequate space to get exercise unless exercise is otherwise provided the pet when outside the enclosure. Outside enclosures must be properly ventilated and maintained in a sanitary condition. Rabies vaccinations are required by Florida Statute, 828.30, and are even more important for pets that may come in contact with wildlife by being outdoors.

FACA does not support tethering for any period of time unless direct supervision/observation of the animal is maintained by a competent adult. This requires the physical presence of the person, not just visual observation of the pet.

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