



TOWN OF WELLESLEY

WELLESLEY, MA 02482
Telephone 781-235-1212

POLICE DEPARTMENT

SCOTT WHITTEMORE
Chief of Police

Wellesley Animal Control Regulations & Leash Law

Wellesley is experiencing a recent uptick in concerns about off-leash and aggressive dogs causing issues with the public. The Wellesley Police Department and Animal Control Officer Jenny Smith are reminding residents, and especially dog owners and dog walkers, that [Town bylaws](#) require that dogs **MUST BE LEASHED** when off the property of its owner or keeper, including on all public streets and sidewalks. Leashes may not exceed seven (7) feet.

There are some exceptions to this bylaw, which apply to specifically School property and Natural Resources Commission (NRC) property.

- **School Property** - As adopted by the Wellesley School Committee (April 4, 2018), to ensure the safety of students and staff, dogs are **NOT** allowed on school grounds during school hours, including arrival and dismissal times, as well as at school-approved events and facility rentals. Service animals are allowed under the provisions of the Animals in the Classroom policy. Dogs are allowed on school property outside of these times according to Wellesley's Animal Control Regulations ([Town Bylaw Article 47.](#))
- **Town Park and Conservation Land** - As adopted by the [Natural Resources Commission](#) (NRC), unless otherwise noted, pets must be at all times **under the immediate control** of the owner or on a leash in order to protect plants, wildlife and the enjoyment of other visitors.

PLEASE NOTE: Under immediate voice control means that the dog responds to one command of COME and remains sitting beside the owner or keeper. Dogs may not run up to, jump on or assault other individuals and their pets who are using the area.

Recommendations for Handling Unwanted Interactions with Dogs

For individuals who may encounter unruly or aggressive dogs, Officer Jenny Smith suggests the following:

- Try to calmly communicate with the dog's owner that you do not wish to be approached by the dog.
- Carry an item capable of making a loud noise such as a whistle or small air horn to help redirect the dog.
- Utilize a walking stick to push a dog away that gets too close (do not strike or hit the dog)
- Use citronella spray. This can naturally repel dogs without causing physical harm unlike pepper spray.

- If time allows, verbally warn the dog's owner that you will be using one of these options if they do not recall their dog.

Helpful information for Animal Control to Identify Aggressive Dogs

- Obtain the name of the dog or the dog's owner, if possible.
- Give a detailed description of the dog (breed, coloring, type of collar or harness, etc).
- If unable to get the dog's name, take a photo of the dog.
- If the owner is uncooperative, call the Wellesley Police Department non-emergency line at 781-235-1212 in the moment so the ACO or an officer can be sent to assist.
- Note the dog owner/walker vehicle license plate number and make, model and color of the vehicle.

The Animal Control Officer conducts routine checks of popular areas for dog walkers to ensure compliance with the Town's leash laws and NRC policies for dogs on Town property. If you frequently encounter dogs on Town property that are unleashed and not under voice control, please notify Animal Control of the timeframe of these encounters so patrols can be increased during these times.

Contact Wellesley's Animal Control Officer. To reach Animal Control Officer Jenny Smith, call 781-235-8460 or email jsmith@wellesleyma.gov

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