

**House File 2190 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 2190  
BY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 2016)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to requirements for proof of ownership of dogs  
2 and providing penalties.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. Section 351.25, Code 2026, is amended by striking  
2 the section and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

3 **351.25 Dog as property — proof of ownership — penalties.**

4 1. Any dog six months or less of age shall be deemed  
5 property, and proof of ownership may be established by any method  
6 listed in subsection 2, paragraph "b", "c", "d", "e", or "f".

7 2. Any dog over six months of age shall be deemed property  
8 only if proof of ownership exists, which may be established by  
9 any of the following:

10 a. A valid rabies vaccination tag attached to the dog's  
11 collar.

12 b. A tattoo imprinted on the dog's skin that may be visually  
13 observed.

14 c. A device implanted under the dog's skin that stores  
15 information in an electronic format, such as a microchip. Upon  
16 apprehension, impoundment, or admission to a shelter, the shelter  
17 shall scan across the entire body of the dog to determine if  
18 such a device is present to locate the owner of the dog. Prior  
19 to adoption, euthanasia, or transfer of ownership or possession  
20 of the dog by a shelter, the shelter shall again scan across  
21 the entire body of the dog to determine whether the device is  
22 present. The shelter shall record and maintain the results of  
23 the scan in a written transfer, adoption, or other disposition  
24 record.

25 d. A receipt or contract indicating ownership.

26 e. A record of an ongoing patient-client relationship with a  
27 veterinarian.

28 f. An otherwise documented history of ownership.

29 3. This section shall not be construed to affect a dog  
30 owner's duty to comply with the vaccination requirements  
31 established in sections 351.33 and 351.35.

32 4. In a legal dispute regarding ownership, a party that  
33 provides proof of ownership pursuant to this section is presumed  
34 to own the dog. To overcome this presumption, a lack of  
35 ownership must be shown by a preponderance of evidence by the

1 party challenging such ownership.

2 5. Any person who knowingly misrepresents the ownership of  
3 a dog to a law enforcement officer or in a legal proceeding is  
4 guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

5 EXPLANATION

6 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with  
7 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

8 This bill relates to the verification of ownership of dogs.

9 Under current law, a dog is deemed property if the dog is  
10 under six months of age or if the dog is at least six months  
11 of age and wearing a collar with a valid rabies vaccination tag  
12 attached to the collar. A person is prohibited from owning or  
13 having in possession a dog that is at least six months of age if  
14 the dog has not been vaccinated against rabies.

15 The bill provides that a dog under six months of age is  
16 deemed property and that ownership of the dog can be shown  
17 by tattoo, microchip, receipt, contract, medical records, or  
18 other documented history of ownership. The bill provides that  
19 a dog over six months of age is deemed property only if proof  
20 of ownership exists, which can be shown by a valid rabies  
21 vaccination tag, tattoo, microchip, receipt, contract, medical  
22 records, or other documented history of ownership.

23 The bill provides that the amended Code section shall not be  
24 construed to affect a dog owner's obligation to vaccinate their  
25 dog under Code sections 351.33 (rabies vaccination) and 351.35  
26 (how and when).

27 The bill provides that in a legal dispute over ownership, the  
28 owner of the dog is presumed to be the person with proof of  
29 ownership as shown in one of the ways listed in the bill, and  
30 that this presumption can only be overcome by a preponderance  
31 of evidence to the contrary. The bill provides that any  
32 person who knowingly misrepresents the ownership of a dog to  
33 a law enforcement officer or in a legal proceeding is guilty  
34 of a simple misdemeanor; a simple misdemeanor is punishable by  
35 confinement for not more than 30 days and a fine of at least \$105

1 but not more than \$855.

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