

East Quabbin Land Trust Dog Policy

Adopted by the Board of Directors on March 9, 2015, and revised on February 10, 2026

East Quabbin Land Trust (EQLT) properties are open to the public from dawn to dusk and visitors are welcome. In order to protect these special places and provide a pleasant experience for all, we have developed the following policy for dog walkers.

An owner or keeper of a dog must either 1) accompany and restrain the dog on a leash or 2) if others are not present, accompany with leash in hand and maintain effective voice control of the dog, or in certain situations, in a manner directed by a law enforcement officer or EQLT personnel. **All dogs must be leashed on a short tether and under the keeper's control when others are present or as directed by a leash law within that town's bylaws***.

EQLT may post rules requiring that dogs be excluded or on leash in designated areas and/or at certain times of year when sensitive wildlife are breeding or livestock are kept within an area.

When your dog is off your property, it must be under your control at all times. The purposes of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 131 Section 82 and Chapter 140, Section 173 are intended to protect people and wildlife from free-roaming dogs. No person may leave a dog unattended. No person may cause or permit any dog owned by him/her or in his or her custody or under his or her control, to roam or be at large in, on, or through EQLT property.

EQLT may direct a dog's owner or keeper to remove a dog from its property. Failure to abide by such direction may subject the owner/keeper or dog to eviction or banning from the EQLT property and may subject the owner or keeper to a fine and determination that the animal is a "nuisance" or "dangerous" animal by a local animal control officer or police officer authorized to enforce provisions of local by-laws.

No person may have in his or her possession, care or custody more than three dogs on any EQLT property at any one time without a special use permit from the Executive Director of the East Quabbin Land Trust.

No person or organization may use any EQLT property for organized animal shows, events, or field trials without obtaining a special use permit from the Executive Director of the East Quabbin Land Trust.

The training of hunting dogs may be restricted during nesting season to protect sensitive species. The training of sled dogs is not allowed on EQLT properties.

We must respect the rights of those with whom we share these special properties to ensure a clean and safe environment. All persons who bring dogs onto EQLT property shall properly remove and dispose of their pet's feces.

In Summary:

- Dogs may be off-leash only when others are not present. If off-leash, dogs must be under the owner's/keeper's control. "Control" is defined as the dog being within the owner's/keeper's sight and hearing at all times and being trained to come immediately when called.
- Dogs must be restrained by a leash immediately when encountering others.
- Dogs are not allowed to harass people, wildlife, or livestock of any kind.
- An individual dog walker can bring a maximum of three dogs.
- Training of sled dogs is not allowed on EQLT properties.
- Dogs may be restricted from certain properties or under leash requirements in sensitive wildlife areas or farmlands during certain times of year. Watch for signs at preserves.
- Dog owners/keepers must clean up after their dogs.

* Links to local town bylaws, where available, may be found on the next page.

Links to Town Bylaws

(as of January 14, 2026)

Please note: It is the responsibility of the dog owner/keeper to stay current on state and local dog and leash laws.

Barre: <https://ecode360.com/9218724#9218724>

Hardwick: <https://www.hardwick-ma.gov/media/4546>.

Hubbardston: <https://www.hubbardstonma.gov/221/Animal-Control-Officer>

New Braintree: https://www.newbraintreema.us/vertical/sites/%7BDB28C06A-9981-4746-94BD-D376054BB741%7D/uploads/Chapter_11_Animal_Control.pdf

North Brookfield: https://www.northbrookfield.net/sites/g/files/vyhliif3576/f/uploads/by-laws_rev_06-2017.pdf

Oakham: <https://www.oakham-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/355/Bylaws-PDF?bidId=>

Petersham: https://townofpetersham.weebly.com/uploads/2/7/5/3/27531945/by-laws_2017.pdf

Ware: no bylaw found

West Brookfield: https://storage.googleapis.com/juniper-media-library/43/2024/07/Town_gen_bylaws_842016%20-%202016.pdf