

# BREED-DISCRIMINATORY BYLAWS IN MASSACHUSETTS

## With Restrictions:

**Amesbury:** Definition of "vicious dog" includes the breed of dog known as the American Staffordshire Pit Bull, Pit Bull Terrier, Bull Terrier or the American Pit Bull and therefore subject to muzzling, sign requirement, liability insurance and other provisions. See <http://www.ecode360.com/AM2893> (search pit bull)

**Boston:** Requires special license, limits to 2 pit bulls\* per household, must be muzzled when off owner's property, spayed/neutered, and "beware of dog" sign posted, among other provisions. See <http://www.cityofboston.gov/animalcontrol/regulations/pitbull.asp>

**Canton:** Requires special license, limits to 1 pit bull, must be muzzled when off owner's property, spayed/neutered and sign posted, \$200,000 liability insurance, sign must specifically say "WARNING-PIT BULL DOG," and other provisions. See [http://www.town.canton.ma.us/PDF\\_files/2010/General-bylaws.pdf](http://www.town.canton.ma.us/PDF_files/2010/General-bylaws.pdf)

**Everett:** Sale of pit bulls or facilitation of sale within the City is prohibited. Pit bulls must be on the owner's property or must be muzzled. Must also be "chained at all times so as to prevent it from gaining access beyond the premises." See [http://www.ci.everett.ma.us/Everett\\_files/cityclerk/ordinances/Chapter%203%20%20ANIMALS.pdf](http://www.ci.everett.ma.us/Everett_files/cityclerk/ordinances/Chapter%203%20%20ANIMALS.pdf)

**Haverhill:** No owner, keeper or other person having the care, possession or custody of any American Staffordshire terrier, also known as "American pit bull terrier," also known as "bull terrier," dog shall permit or allow such dog to be off such person's own premises unless such dog is securely muzzled and leashed. See ARTICLE V, § 137-21, Adopted 7-23-1991 as Doc.110 at [http://www.ci.haverhill.ma.us/departments/police/animal\\_control/ordinances/pitbull.html](http://www.ci.haverhill.ma.us/departments/police/animal_control/ordinances/pitbull.html)

**Lowell:** Requires special license, limits to 2 pit bulls, must be muzzled when off owner's property, spayed/neutered and sign posted, among other provisions. Exempts dogs trained and relied upon as a service dog or assistance dog by a person with a disability; dogs who have successfully completed a dog or canine training program from a facility or instructor possessing a nationally accredited certification in dog training unless otherwise deemed a dangerous dog; a dog which is placed with a person by the Lowell Humane Society and which has successfully passed a comprehensive behavior and temperament evaluation; dogs in the custody of Lowell Humane shall be exempt from the muzzle provision. See <http://www.ecode360.com/LO1990> (search pit bull)

**Lynn:** Requires special license, limits to 2 pit bulls, must be muzzled when off owner's property, spayed/neutered and sign posted, among other provisions. See [http://www.ci.lynn.ma.us/citydepartments\\_animalcontrol.shtml](http://www.ci.lynn.ma.us/citydepartments_animalcontrol.shtml)

**Medway:** "American Staffordshire, Stafford-shire Pit Bull Terrier, or Bull Terrier" must be muzzled when off the owner's premises. See Section 12.6: <http://www.townofmedway.org/Departments/AnimalControl/tabid/98/Default.aspx> (see dog bylaws)

**Plymouth:** Includes "pitbulls" as dangerous animals under Article IV "Wild Animals" and requiring a permit from the Board of Selectmen. See <http://bit.ly/rhg7mS> page 38 of document.

**Whitman:** Per ACO (no other information at this time)

**Worcester:** Requires special license, limits to 2 pit bulls, must be muzzled when off owner's property, spayed/neutered and sign posted, among other provisions. Exempts dogs trained and relied upon as a service dog or assistance dog by a person with a disability and dogs who have successfully completed a dog or canine training program from a facility or instructor possessing a nationally accredited certification in dog training unless otherwise deemed a dangerous dog. See <http://www.worcesterma.gov/city-clerk/ordinances-regulations>

## With Bans:

### Rockland:

No person shall keep or maintain within the boundary limits the breed of dog known as the American Staffordshire Terrier, the Staffordshire Pit Bull Terrier or Bull Terrier. In the case of doubt about whether a dog is a member of one

of these breeds or not, the determination is to be made by a licensed veterinarian.  
See Art II sec. 177-5 to 177-5. See <http://www.ecode360.com/RO2188> (search pit bull)

**Winthrop:** No person shall own, keep or have the custody, care or control of any of the breeds commonly referred to as belonging to the "Pit Bull" variety of terrier, which consists of the following breeds or breed types and mixtures: American Staffordshire Terrier, American Pit Bull and Pit Bull Terrier.  
See 6.04.090: [http://www.town.winthrop.ma.us/Pages/WinthropMA\\_Bylaws/toc](http://www.town.winthrop.ma.us/Pages/WinthropMA_Bylaws/toc) (click on Code of Town of Winthrop and look for Title 6 at left or search pit bull)

**Other information:**

Pending: Malden; MA state bill (S. 1033) that would prohibit breed-specific legislation

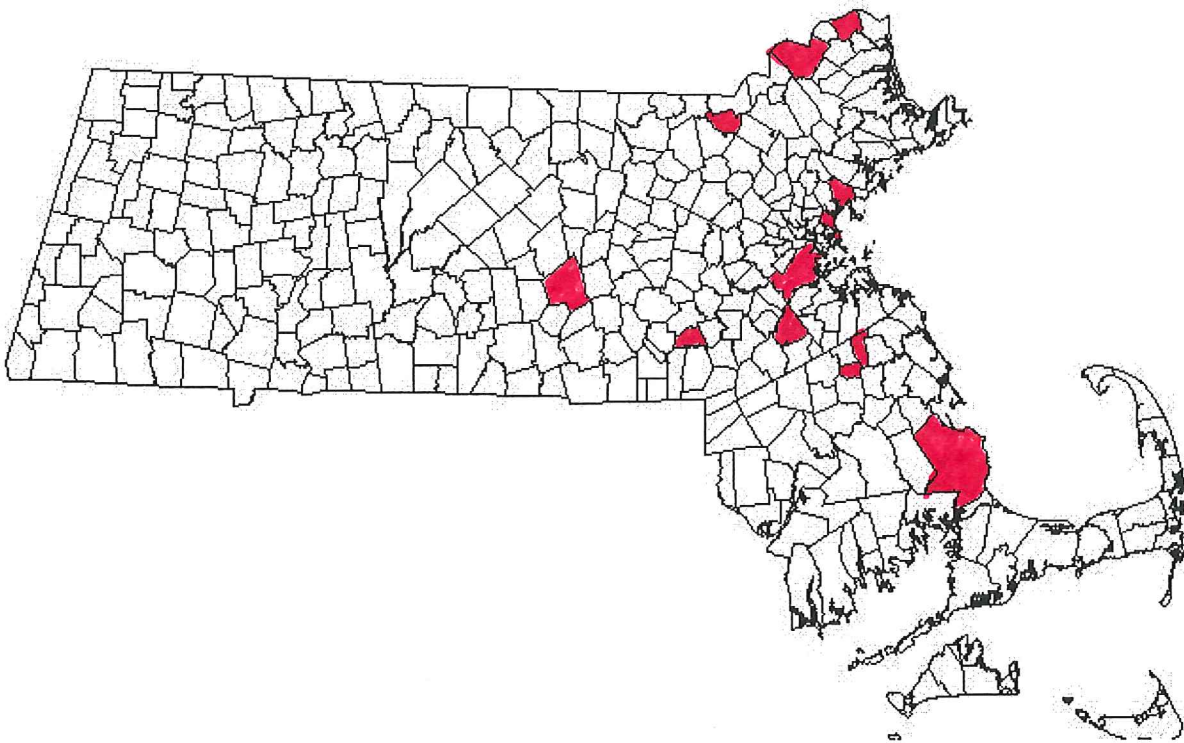
Repealed: Wellfleet (2009), New Bedford (2006)

Defeated: Salem (2006); Mashpee (2009); MA state bill to ban pit bulls (2007)

Discussed (in newspaper, etc., but not proposed/voted on): Waltham (2006), Bellingham (2002), Leominster (2010), Methuen (2006), Fall River (2006), Andover (2010), Fall River (2004)

**Please note:**

There are 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts; please note that not all information for all municipalities is available, so please check with a city or town if you need to know if a specific municipality has a form of BDL. Please also note that municipalities can change their bylaws, so please contact for updated information. Please email any corrections to [advocacy@mspca.org](mailto:advocacy@mspca.org). For more information: [www.mspca.org/bsl](http://www.mspca.org/bsl)



*Boston, Lynn, Worcester, Lowell all define pit bull as: pit bull - includes, but is not limited to, any dog that is an American Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, or any dog of mixed breed displaying the majority of physical traits of any one or more of the above breeds, or any dog exhibiting those distinguishing characteristics which substantially conform to the standards established by the American Kennel Club or United Kennel Club for any of the above breeds, such characteristics being identifiable even if there are technical deficiencies in any particular dog's conformance hereto; or any dog identifiable by a licensed veterinarian, animal control officer, or any other knowledgeable person whose identification is deemed credible by the (name of city) Police Department or the animal control officer as having American Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, and/or Staffordshire Bull Terrier as any element of its breeding, or any dog registered or licensed as a pit bull. Specifically excepted from this definition is any dog with proof by American Kennel Club or United Kennel Club papers or by a written certification or written notice from a veterinarian licensed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that the dog does not contain in its lineage any American Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, or Staffordshire Bull Terrier.*

