

Within the city of Dyersburg a dog must meet one or more of the following criteria to be classified as vicious:

- * Any dog with a known propensity, tendency, or disposition to attack unprovoked, to cause injury to, or otherwise threaten the safety of human beings or domestic animals.
- * Any dog which, without provocation, attacks, bites, or has attacked or bitten, a human being or domestic animal, on public or private property.
- * Any dog that, without provocation, barks excessively, snaps, bites or manifests a disposition to bark excessively, snap or bite.
- * Any dog owned or harbored, primarily or in part, for dog fighting or any dog trained for dog fighting.
- * Any dog not owned by a governmental or law enforcement agency used primarily to guard public or private property.
- * Any dog that tends to endanger the safety of a human being by the habitual chasing of automobiles, trucks, bicycles, motorcycles, motorbikes, or motor scooters on either public or private property.

If the owner of a dog can be determined then they are issued a summons.

The judge must determine if the dog can be deemed vicious or that it has been maintained under the requirements of the city ordinance.

If the dog is determined to be vicious, then the judge can levy a fine of up to \$50, require that the dog be maintained under the city ordinance or order the destruction of the dog.

The judge can also assess court costs, any fees that the animal shelter has incurred due to the care and boarding of the animal and can hold the owner responsible for the costs of the humane destruction of the dog.

If a dog is allowed to go back to its owner, certain requirements must be met to allow for its return.

One condition would be the confinement of the animal inside or in a securely enclosed, locked structure outdoors with signs indicating the presence of a vicious dog.

Next, the caretaker of the dog is not able to go beyond the premises unless it is restrained on a leash with a secure muzzle.

The owner must also provide proof of liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$50,000 within 30 days and have the city of Dyersburg as an additional insured so they will be notified if the insurance is terminated, lapses or is canceled. Finally, a permit must be issued from an animal control officer saying all conditions have been met and a \$25 fee must be paid for the permit.

To report a vicious dog or dogs running loose, call the Dyer County Humane Society at 285-4889, or the Dyersburg Police Department at 285-1212.