

Voluntary Shelter Contributions on Dog License Renewals

Updates to Law Effective Date: December 2025

Items in **Bold are additions to the law*

Section 109 of the agriculture and markets law, as amended by section 4 of part T of chapter 59 of the laws of 2010, paragraph (b) of subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 349 of the laws of 2018, subdivision 3 as amended by chapter 446 of the laws of 2012, is amended to read as follows:

(c) The application shall state the sex, actual or approximate age, breed, color, and municipal identification number of the dog, and other identification marks, if any, and the name, address, telephone number, county and town, city or village of residence of the owner. The application shall include space where an owner may elect to make a contribution in support of the pound or shelter managed by the municipality where the owner resides or any organization which is contracted by such municipality to provide animal shelter services. The space for contribution shall be clearly marked and distinct with bold lettering or on a separate page; to make clear it is a voluntary contribution and not a part of the license fee. **The application shall list the organization in which the contribution will be sent and may list suggested reasonable contribution amounts with an option for any amount. Municipalities may also require additional information on such application as deemed appropriate.**

(d) The application shall be accompanied by the license fee prescribed by section one hundred ten of this article, **the contribution, if elected by the owner**, and a certificate of rabies vaccination or statement in lieu thereof, as required by subdivision two of this section. In the case of a spayed or neutered dog, every application shall also be accompanied by a certificate signed by a licensed veterinarian or an affidavit signed by the owner, showing that the dog has been spayed or neutered, provided such certificate or affidavit shall not be required if the same is already on file with the clerk or authorized dog control officer. In lieu of the spay or neuter certificate an owner may present a statement certified by a licensed veterinarian stating that **the veterinarian** has examined the dog and found that because of old age or other reason, the life of the dog would be endangered by spaying or neutering. In such case, the license fee for the dog shall be the same as for a spayed or neutered dog as set forth in subdivision one section one hundred ten of this article.

4. Municipalities shall deposit all monies collected from voluntary contributions pursuant to paragraph (c) of subdivision one of this section into a dedicated fund. The proceeds of such fund shall be properly accounted for and be given to the organization listed on the application annually. In no event shall the funds derived from voluntary contributions replace any existing funding commitments to such organizations.

Clerk Program Software:

- January 30, 2026 this additional change to the shelter law that went into effect in December 2025 was discovered. Once discovered contact was made with Clerk software companies, **Williamson Law Book** and **B.A.S./Edmunds GovTech** about this change.
- Both companies had recently been made aware of this change by clerks using their software and programmers were busy at work making the changes to the programs. The initial ETA from both companies at that time was mid-March for completion of the programming update.
- Upon follow-up in mid-March both companies said it was taking longer than expected since more than one area of the program required updating.
- On April 7, 2026 **Williamson Law Book** confirmed that they had completed the program changes and had begun to contact clerks using their program to have the update installed and they will continue to contact their customers until everyone is completed.
- As of April 15, 2026 **B.A.S./Edmunds GovTech** has the shelter contributions portion of the program update back on track, and are bundling it with a mandatory state change for rabies verification on 2- and 3- year renewals, so they only have one update to roll out. They expect to have their updates complete by mid-May and roll out the update to Clerks by the end of May.

What do Clerks need to do?

- All dog license renewal forms will have a space provided where residents are able to make a contribution to the shelter that the municipality contracts with for shelter services.
- A separate budget line-item account (A2705.#) will need to be created for shelter donations which will accumulate throughout the year, and once per year the monies collected are to be paid to the contracted shelter.
- Clerks will enter the donation as part of the dog license renewal screen and record the donated amount where indicated.
- Donations will show as a separate account item on monthly reports and year-end reports. This will make reconciling the collected amounts clear and easy for the bookkeeper to determine the amount to pay out annually (*most likely in January*) and the amount can be verified against the clerk's year end report.
- If you are a Town that runs your own shelter service, the monies will become an annual revenue for the shelter services budget line (A2705.#).