

**HB 1133 - AS INTRODUCED**

2026 SESSION

26-2301

08/09

HOUSE BILL            **1133**

AN ACT                defining and regulating livestock guardian dogs.

SPONSORS:            Rep. Schamberg, Merr. 6

COMMITTEE:          Environment and Agriculture

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ANALYSIS

This bill defines livestock guardian dogs and requires that their status as such be noted at the time of annual dog registration with the town or city clerk. This bill also creates penalties for nuisance livestock guardian dogs.

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Explanation:          Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.  
                                Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~  
                                Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six*

AN ACT defining and regulating livestock guardian dogs.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 1 New Section; Livestock Guardian Dogs; Registration; Nuisance Behavior. Amend RSA 466 by  
2 inserting after section 1-d the following new section:

3 466:1-e Livestock Guardian Dogs.

4 I. For the purposes of this section, "livestock guardian dog" means a dog that is specifically  
5 trained and used for the purpose of protecting livestock from predators, and that is kept primarily  
6 with livestock in a pasture or similar environment.

7 II. At the time of annual dog registration under RSA 466:1, the owner or keeper of a  
8 livestock guardian dog may designate the dog as such on the registration form provided by the town  
9 or city clerk.

10 III. The owner shall provide a signed statement affirming that the dog is used for the  
11 purpose of guarding livestock, and may be required to provide proof of livestock ownership or lease.

12 IV. The town or city clerk shall maintain a record of all dogs registered as livestock guardian  
13 dogs and may issue a distinct tag or notation for such designation.

14 V. A livestock guardian dog shall be subject to the provisions of RSA 466:31 and RSA 466:31-  
15 a regarding nuisance, menace, or vicious behavior, except as outlined in RSA 466:30-c.

16 2 New Section; Livestock Guardian Dogs. Amend RSA 466 by inserting after section 30-b the  
17 following new section:

18 466:30-c Livestock Guardian Dogs.

19 I. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a dog may run at large while it is actively  
20 engaged in the protection, herding or management of livestock, provided that such dog is:

21 (a) Located on a parcel of land consisting of not less than one acre per dog, with a  
22 minimum parcel size of 5 acres for the use of more than 2 livestock guardian dogs;

23 (b) Registered with the town or city as a livestock guardian dog under RSA 466:1-e.

24 (c) Trained or in training for livestock protection; and

25 (d) Not exhibiting persistent nuisance behavior.

26 II. A livestock guardian dog shall not be deemed to be at large for the purposes of RSA  
27 466:28, provided that the livestock guardian dog remains within the boundaries of the parcel  
28 described in paragraph I and does not trespass onto neighboring properties or public ways.

29 III. Barking by a livestock guardian dog shall be considered excessive and subject to  
30 enforcement under RSA 466:31 if:

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1           (a) It continues for more than 10 consecutive minutes without the presence of a predator  
2 or livestock distress;

3           (b) It occurs repeatedly between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. without  
4 documented predator activity; or

5           (c) It interferes with the reasonable use and enjoyment of neighboring properties.

6           IV. Upon verified complaint, the local animal control authority or law enforcement agency  
7 may issue:

8           (a) A written warning for a first violation.

9           (b) A civil penalty of \$150 for a second violation, and require a reduction in the number  
10 of dogs or the implementation of bark mitigation measures.

11           (c) A civil penalty of \$500 for a third violation, and the revocation of the owner's right to  
12 allow livestock guardian dogs to run at large for 12 months.

13           (d) A civil penalty of \$1,000 for each subsequent violation and referral of the matter to  
14 the department of agriculture, markets, and food for further enforcement.

15           V. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the use of livestock guardian dogs  
16 by farms operating on parcels of 10 acres or more, provided that such use does not constitute a  
17 nuisance under RSA 466:31 or other applicable law.

18           3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.