



DOGS IN BETHLEHEM TOWN PARKS

Here's what you need to know about the new Town law and how you can help keep our parks safe and clean for all users.

In the fall of 2019, the Bethlehem Town Board approved a law that changed Town Code to **allow dogs in all Bethlehem Town Parks**, with restrictions and enforcement measures.

As our parks transition to include dogs, it is important for park users to understand the rules and regulations that apply.

The responsible actions of all park users, especially those of dog owners, will ensure the new law benefits our residents while helping to keep our parks safe and clean for all.

Please read the information on the next pages to learn about the rules in place at all Bethlehem Town Parks. If you have any questions about use of our parks, please contact the Parks & Recreation office.



Thank you for your cooperation!



Rules for Dogs in Bethlehem Town Parks

It is unlawful for anyone who brings a dog to any Town Park to violate the rules listed below. Violators of these rules are subject to removal from the park and/or fines not to exceed \$100. For the formal code language visit www.ecode360.com/8991581.*

- Dogs **must be licensed** in accordance with Town Code § 61-8
 - Dogs must be a **minimum of four months old**
 - Dogs must be **on a leash** that is no longer than 6 feet in length (except in designated areas of the Town Dog Park)
 - Handlers must immediately **clean all fecal matter** and dispose of in a safe and sanitary manner
 - At all times dogs must be **accompanied by a responsible person** of at least 12 years of age, and under full control by that person
 - Female dogs, **when in heat, are prohibited**
 - Owners **MAY NOT ALLOW** their dogs to:
 - Engage in habitual loud howling, barking, crying, whining or conduct itself in such a manner as to unreasonably and habitually disturb any person other than the dog's owner
 - Uproot, dig or otherwise damage any vegetables, lawns, flowers, garden beds or other property
 - Chase, jump on or otherwise harass any person in such a manner as to reasonably cause intimidation or fear or to put such person in reasonable apprehension of bodily harm or injury
 - Habitually chase, run alongside of or bark at motor vehicles, motorcycles or bicycles
 - Cause damage or destruction to property or become a nuisance to any person
- *Additional rules apply to the Town Dog Park. Call (518) 439-4955 or visit www.townofbethlehem.org/257/Dog-Park.*

Dogs are **NOT PERMITTED** in the following areas in Town Parks:

- Elm Avenue Park Pool Complex
- Playgrounds
- Fitness stations
- On courts (basketball, tennis)
- On playing fields while in use
- Community gardens
- Areas temporarily closed due to maintenance, restoration, or weather conditions, as indicated by signs, fences, or flags

When Interacting With Dogs

follow the rule of

WAIT

WAIT

to make sure the dog is friendly and confirm with the handler before going to the dog. **STOP** if the dog looks afraid or angry.

ASK

the handler if you can pet their dog. **STOP** if the handler says NO and walk away slowly.

INVITE

the dog to sniff you. Use a quiet voice to talk to the dog. Stand with your hands at your sides. **STOP** if the dog does not come to sniff you; do not touch the dog.

TOUCH

the dog gently to pet and never pet near the face, head or tail.

Dogs can be “man’s best friend,” but it’s still very important to respect a dog’s personal space. Ask yourself: Would you just go up to a stranger without any precautions? Follow the rule of **WAIT** to become more safe and respectful around all dogs.

#BeCourteousBethlehem

Your Feedback Is Welcome

MAINTENANCE

Suggestions, comments or concerns regarding maintenance of a park may be directed to the
Parks & Recreation Department
261 Elm Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054
(518) 439-4955 x2131

VIOLATION & ENFORCEMENT

Comments or concerns regarding the violation or enforcement of park rules may be directed to the
Bethlehem Police Department
Animal Control (518) 439-9973



Special Thanks

We’re grateful to the Friends of Bethlehem Parks and Recreation, who researched and made recommendations about dogs in parks.



Bethlehem Parks and Recreation

02.27.20