



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
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Commissioner

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Health Department Takes New Dog Licensing Campaign to the Subway

*New online service makes it easier for owners to find lost dogs;
Campaign reminds cat owners to spay or neuter their cat*

Oct. 17, 2011 – The Health Department today launches a new dog licensing subway poster campaign featuring some of New York City’s pet dogs enjoying the city’s signature locations such as the Brooklyn Bridge and Times Square. The ads are part of a public education campaign promoting the benefits of dog licensing, such as locating a lost dog. The campaign includes a second component informing New Yorkers about a new law that requires all free-roaming cats to be spayed or neutered. Ads will run today through Jan. 8, 2012.

“Many New Yorkers don’t know that dogs must be licensed each year,” said Health Commissioner Thomas Farley. “This campaign launches our effort to inform owners that licensing their dogs makes them legal, makes it easier to find them if they are lost, and helps support the care and adoption of abandoned animals. A license has never been easier to obtain -- owners can apply for a new license or renew an existing license online or by mail.”

“My dogs Sadie and Justin are as New York as I am,” said City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn, responding to the Health Department’s new campaign. “I’ve made sure they’ve been licensed and I encourage all New Yorkers to do the same. Licensing your dog will make sure they’re found and returned to you quickly if they’re lost, and will help support the care and adoption of abandoned animals.”

“Licensing is the law - and for good reason,” said Council Member Jessica Lappin. “It helps you keep your dog safe.”

One ad asks “Is your dog a real New Yorker?” and lists a key benefit of dog licensing, such as access to city parks, followed by the tagline, “Got a dog? Get a license.” The campaign highlights additional benefits of dog licensing that the public may not be aware of including how a license helps owners recover lost dogs via the new NYC Dog eLocator System.



A second ad featuring a kitten with the tagline, “Love your pet? Get your cat spayed or neutered ” aims to remind cat owners that spaying or neutering can improve their cat’s health and wellbeing and reduce the risk of certain kinds of feline cancer. Cats account for the majority of abandoned animals in the city shelters. The City law requiring that free-roaming cats be spayed or neutered is meant to reduce the number of unwanted kittens that are born and that are ultimately brought to the City’s shelters.

Dog licensing is a legal requirement in New York City. Failure to display license tags on dogs in public could result in a \$200 fine. The fee to license your dog in New York City is \$8.50 if your dog is spayed/neutered or \$34 if you do not provide proof that your dog is spayed or neutered. Dog licenses are quick and easy to get on-line. In addition to the public education campaign, the Health Department will promote licensing at dog licensing events around the city. Dog owners who do not have a license for their dog are encouraged to go to NYC.gov and search for ‘Dog License.’

Licensing contributes to animal control and protects the public in the following ways:

- Information about licensed dogs assists in the medical follow-up of individuals potentially exposed to infected dogs, especially during rabies outbreaks.
- Licensing helps reunite lost dogs with their owners.
- Licensing is important to family emergency preparedness planning to ensure a dog and its owner is reunited in case of separation during an emergency.
- Licensing helps support the operation of animal shelters, and supports free and low-cost spray and neutering services for dogs and cats. Spaying or neutering is in the best interest of your pet because it helps reduce the stray animal population and may help reduce unwanted behaviors as well.

The Health Department’s new NYC Dog eLocator System is an on-line service available to anyone who finds a lost dog that is wearing a New York City dog license. By entering either a telephone number or an email address into the Dog eLocator System on the Health Department’s website, a person who finds a lost dog can send his or her contact information directly to the dog’s owner.



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