

Marion County dog tethering laws

What is tethering?

Tethering is restraining a dog by using a rope, chain or other device to secure the dog to a stationary object (e.g. house, tree or fence post). Walking a dog on a leash or restraining a dog during transportation is not considered tethering.

What the Marion County ordinance says about tethering:

- **Dogs cannot be tethered outside without supervision.** The owner or responsible person must be outdoors with and in visible range of the tethered dog. That means the dog owner or responsible person can't leave the property while the dog is tethered outside and dogs can never be tethered on abandoned property.
- **If a dog is tethered (while supervised or during a temporary task), the tether must meet safety requirements outlined in the ordinance.**

There are two exceptions to the prohibition of unattended tethering:

1. The dog can be left tethered outside alone for up to 30 minutes while owners or those responsible for it go inside to complete a temporary task.

A **temporary task** means a short-duration activity for which a dog might need to be kept outside. Some examples include cooking meals, vacuuming carpets, mopping floors and bathing children. The **temporary task cannot exceed 30 minutes.**

2. This prohibition doesn't apply to dogs kept or used on working farms.

A **working farm** is an operation that has been granted an agricultural classification from the Marion County Property Appraiser.

What are the safety requirements for a tether?

Anytime your dog is tethered (while under supervision or during a temporary task), the tether must meet the following requirements to help protect the dog from accidental injury:

- The tether must be strong enough to **prevent escape.**
- The tether must be attached to a buckle-type nylon or leather collar, halter or harness using a **swivel hook**. On the other end, the tether must also use a swivel hook to attach to the stationary object or trolley system. This helps prevent injury to the dog from becoming tangled with other animals or objects.
- A tether can't be attached to a stationary object or trolley in a way that the dog could extend the tether over a fence or other similar object. This helps prevent the dog from being able to jump over a fence while still attached to the tether (which could result in injury or death).
- The tether can't exceed 1/16th of the dog's weight. It must be either at least five times the length of the dog (measured from nose to the tip of its tail) or 10 feet long.

How is this ordinance enforced?

Animal control officers enforce the animal-related portions of the Marion County Code through education, warnings, citations and fines.