



NEWS RELEASE
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RESTRICTIONS ON FIGHTING DOGS SET BY HOST NATION AUTHORITIES

HEIDELBERG, GE – U.S. Army, Europe dog owners of specific breeds need to be aware of pending changes in host nation laws regarding their animals.

Growing concern within host nation states over the aggressiveness of some types of dogs is leading to additional legislation in various locations, and these laws apply to U.S. Forces personnel and their families.

Below is a summary of current restrictions by German states. Currently there are no restrictions in Italy. Information on the Netherlands and Belgium is still being researched. Personnel should note that this list is subject to change, based on host nation determinations.

The state of Baden-Württemberg is going to ban the breeding of fighting dogs. It is expected that the new decree will be published in early August this year. In the future, ownership of a fighting dog will require special permission from local authorities. Additionally, local authorities may require owners of all dangerous dogs to have a special public liability insurance. There will be a requirement for all owners of dangerous dogs - irrespective of their breed - to muzzle their dogs and walk them on a leash when in public. Three breeds are considered extremely dangerous: Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, and Bullterrier.

The characteristic features of a fighting dog may also apply to dogs of the following breeds, their crossbreeds or with crossbreeds of the dogs listed above, if they show signs of heightened aggressiveness and dangerousness towards human beings and animals: Bullmastiff, Staffordshire Bullterrier, Dogo Argentino, Bordeaux Dogge, Fila Brasileiro, Mastin Espanol, Mastino Napoletano, Mastiff, Tosa Inu.

Once the new decree is issued, dog owners have to inform local authorities within four weeks that they have a fighting dog. Host nation officials then have the option to ban the ownership in cases of reasonable doubts and may order further measures.

FIGHTING DOGS/2-2-2

Dogs which are not classified as fighting dogs under the new decree may also be classified as dangerous. Dogs are considered dangerous if they are (a) vicious or (b) aggressively jump at human beings and animals in a dangerous way, or (c) show a tendency to chase or attack game or other animals. Such animals must be muzzled and walked on a leash.

The state of Hessen will also introduce new laws to protect citizens from dog attacks. As of July 15, there will be a general prohibition against breeding, trading and obtaining 16 canine breeds. Owners of the specified breeds have until August 15 to request an official license. The dogs must be registered, pass a "temperament test," sterilized and always kept on a leash and muzzle. The law applies to the following breeds: American pit bull terrier or pit bull terrier, American Staffordshire bull terriers or American Stafford terrier, Staffordshire bull terrier, American bulldog, bandog, bull mastiff, bull terrier, Bordeaux mastiff, Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro, Kangal (Karabash), Caucasion Owtscharka, mastiff, Mastin Espanol, Mastino Napoletano, Tosa Inu. Animals classified as dangerous and not registered by August 15 will be confiscated and killed if they do not pass the temperament test.

In Rheinland-Pfalz, the Minister of the Interior has also drafted a tighter decree concerning dangerous dogs. The following measures would be added to the existing decree: there will be a general prohibition against breeding, trading and reproduction of all dangerous dogs. The following breeds are classified as dangerous dogs: Pitbull Terriers, American Staffordshire Terriers and Staffordshire Bullterriers. These breeds and crossbreeds must now be sterilized and castrated respectively. All these dogs are to be registered and marked. Persons who show weakness of character (e.g. felony conviction) will not be allowed to own or walk dangerous dogs. Individuals violating this decree can be fined up to DM 10,000.

The German state of Bavaria was the first state to tackle the fighting dog issue and issued an extremely tight "fighting dog decree" in 1992. With this decree, the state of Bavaria issued very rigid rules concerning dogs showing increased aggressiveness and dangerousness. The breeding or crossbreeding of fighting dogs is prohibited and violations will be fined up to DM 100,000. Local authorities must grant permission to own a fighting dog. This permission will only be granted under very strict prerequisites. Five breeds, e.g., Pit Bulls, are always classified as dogs with the characteristics of a fighting dog. Nine other breeds, e.g. Bullterriers, are suspected of showing the characteristics of a fighting dog unless proof is furnished that the dog does not show enhanced aggressive behavior and poses a hazard to the life and health of human beings and animals based on their behavior.

AETV-MB-EO
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INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Change of Law Regarding 'Fighting or Dangerous Dog Breeds' in Germany

1. Recent events have resulted in German states passing a Dangerous Dog Ordinance (DDO), placing restrictions upon the ownership of certain types of dogs. This DDO affects military personnel assigned in Germany who own these dog breeds as well as personnel moving to Germany.
2. The local German Offices of Public Order (OPO) at city and county levels have been appointed to enforce the DDO. The breeds affected vary from German state to state, but automatically included in the definition of dangerous dogs are American pit bull terriers or pit bull terriers, American Staffordshire bull terriers or American Stafford terriers, Staffordshire bull terriers, and mixes involving these breeds. The following breeds are also regulated in some states: American Bulldog, Rhodesian Ridgeback, Bull Terrier, Bullmastiff, Mastiff, French Mastiff, Spanish Mastiff, Neapolitan Mastiff, Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro, Tosa Inu, Bandogge, Kangal (Karabash), Caucasion Owtscharka, and mixes involving these breeds. The DDO also defines dangerous dogs as animals either known to be vicious, having indicated an inclination to attack game or livestock, having attacked persons, or having shown unusual aggressiveness. Breeding, reproduction and trade of dangerous dogs are prohibited.
3. Soldiers who own a dog in the above categories will be required to register with local German authorities, microchip the dog, pass a personal qualification aptitude test, and spay/neuter them in order to keep them in Germany. All expenses for registering the dog will be paid by the owner. In public areas, including common areas in multi-family housing, dangerous dogs must be on a leash and wear a muzzle. Persons walking dogs in public must be 18 years or older, physically able to control the dog, and not disqualified from handling the dog. A person may only walk one dog at a time.
4. The German Federal Government plans to pass laws that prohibit the importation of dangerous dogs and to make violations of the state DDO criminal offenses punishable with confinement. At this time, the maximum penalty is an administrative fine of DM 10,000 (about \$5000).
5. Dogs thought to be dangerous may be retained or impounded at the airport upon arrival and kept at owner expense until disposition is decided. It is the recommendation of the Commander, 100th Medical Detachment (VS HQ) that Dogs fitting the criteria in paragraph 2 should not be imported to Germany, and current owners within Germany should consider returning their dogs to the US.

100th Medical Detachment (VS HQ)
DSN 371-2868

SUBJECT: Dangerous Dog Ordinance Implementation in Baden-Württemberg

To All:

The cities of Mannheim, Heidelberg and Stuttgart have stated their final position on implementation of the Baden-Württemberg Dangerous Dog Ordinance. Heidelberg and Stuttgart are identical in applying the state-level ordinance while Mannheim has its own more stringent ordinance.

All three cities require registration of *every single dog* of the three prime breeds (American Staffordshire Terrier, Pitbull Terrier and Bullterrier) by 13 Sep 00. In the meantime, since 16 Aug 00 when this ordinance went into effect, these breeds require a muzzle and short leash when out in public. German police officers, during their normal patrols, will be informing all affected dog owners - German and U.S. alike - about this ordinance until 13 Sep 00, after which fines can be assessed if registration has not been accomplished. Registration will be done for all U.S. forces ID card holders through the U.S. Veterinary Clinics in Mannheim, Heidelberg and Stuttgart, and these offices will deliver the U.S. registration forms to the proper authorities. A confirmation of registration will be forwarded to the dog owners through the Clinic. The registration forms are now available at all three clinics and the clinic personnel will assist in filling out the forms. *Registration is free of charge.*

A muzzle is required in public until the owner and dog pass the voluntary temperament test, which can demonstrate that a dog is not dangerous. German officials (Police dog handler and veterinarian in German public service) will conduct these tests for U.S. ID cardholders at the three U.S. Veterinary Clinics on 16 Sep 00 at the earliest, on dates still to be determined. The Baden-Württemberg ordinance stipulates a charge of DM 300 - at the cost of the owner - for the temperament test. Persons who do not want to have their dog(s) take the test may elect to keep the animal muzzled. When a test is successfully passed, it is valid in all parts of Baden-Württemberg except in Mannheim, where the muzzle remains a permanent requirement.

In the cities of Heidelberg and Stuttgart, when a dog has passed the temperament test, the muzzle may be removed. A certificate attesting to passing the test will be issued. When in public, a dog still must be kept on a short leash and a copy of the certificate must be in the possession of an authorized adult while walking the dog in public.

In the City of Mannheim, all dogs of the three identified breeds will be muzzled at all times when inside the city limits. Even dogs that have passed the temperament test will remain muzzled and on a leash. A dog that has passed the test may have the muzzle removed when leaving the City of Mannheim. The Mannheim test is valid for all parts of Baden-Württemberg, but has no affect inside the city limits. The only advantage in taking the test for Mannheim residents - including U.S. personnel -- is that the owner can travel freely with a "cleared" dog to any other part of Baden-Württemberg without muzzling the animal.

The cities of Mannheim, Heidelberg, and Stuttgart have all determined that U.S. forces dog control regulations, rules and laws will apply inside U.S. military installations that are not open to the general public and may be entered only with a valid U.S. forces ID card. The purpose of the ordinance is to protect the general public at large in Germany. Therefore, except for the mandatory registration of *every dog of the three identified breeds* by 13 Sep 00, U.S. housing areas inside closed installations such as Patch Barracks, Kelley Barracks, and Patrick Henry Village are not affected by the new dangerous dog ordinance *as far as patrolling German police are concerned*. German police will not patrol and control the dangerous breeds in such installations. However, when a dog owner takes an animal of the dangerous breeds outside closed installations, the dog must be muzzled until it has passed the temperament test.

Open U.S. housing areas, such as Benjamin Franklin Village, Mark Twain Village, Robinson Barracks and Panzer Kaserne housing in Böblingen, are subject to the full impact of the ordinance. That is, all

dogs must be muzzled now, and must remain so until taking the voluntary temperament test. (In Benjamin Franklin Village, however, the muzzle remains a permanent requirement due to Mannheim's strict ordinance.)

In Heidelberg and Stuttgart, when a dog has passed the temperament test, it may be freed of the muzzle and be walked on a leash in the open U.S. housing areas. This is in accordance with the state-level ordinance that applies in all of Baden-Württemberg (except for Mannheim). This also applies to U.S. ID cardholders residing on the German economy who own dogs of these breeds.

However, in Mannheim, Benjamin Franklin Village is inside the city limits of Mannheim and is an open housing area. Therefore, even dogs that pass the temperament test must be muzzled and on a leash when outside, in accordance with the ordinance of the City of Mannheim.

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U.S. Forces Liaison Officer
Baden-Württemberg