

Fact Sheet Updated November 2007

Dogfighting: State Laws

Dogfighting is illegal in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and the interstate transportation of dogs for fighting purposes is prohibited by the federal Animal Welfare Act. 48 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have made dogfighting a felony offense; 47 states, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands prohibit the possession of dogs for fighting; and 46 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands prohibit being a spectator at a dogfight.

| State | <i>Dogfighting: on the Law Books</i> | <i>Dogfighting: a Felony or a Misdemeanor</i> | <i>Loophole: Possession of Dogs for Fighting</i> | <i>Loophole: Being a Spectator at a Dogfight</i> |
|--------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Alabama | α 3-1-29 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Alaska | α 11.61.145 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor ³ |
| Arizona | α 13- 2910.01 to 02 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Arkansas | α 5-62-120 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| California | α 597.5 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Colorado | α 18-9-204 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Connecticut | α 53-247 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Delaware | 11 Del.C. α 1326 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Florida | α 828.122 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Georgia | α 16-12-37 | Felony | Legal | Legal |
| Hawaii | α 711- 1109.3 | Felony | Felony | Legal |
| Idaho | α 25-3507 | Misdemeanor | Legal | Legal |
| Illinois | α 720 ILCS 5/26-5 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Indiana | α 35-46-3-4 to 9.5 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Iowa | α 717D.1 to 6 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Kansas | α 21-4315 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Kentucky | α 525.125 to 130 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Louisiana | 14:102.5 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Maine ² | 17 MRS α1033 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Maryland | Criminal Law, αα 10- | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |

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| | 605 & 607 | | | |
| Massachusetts | Ch. 272 § 94 to 95 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Michigan | § 750.49 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Minnesota | § 343.31 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Mississippi | § 97-41-19 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Missouri | § 578.025 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Montana | § 45-8-210 | Felony | Felony | Legal |
| Nebraska | § 28-1005 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Nevada | § 574.070 | Felony | Legal | Felony ¹ |
| New Hampshire | § 644:8-a | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| New Jersey ² | § 4:22-24 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| New Mexico | § 30-18-9 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| New York | Agr & M § 351 | Felony | Misdemeanor | Misdemeanor |
| North Carolina | § 14-362.2 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| North Dakota | § 36-21.1-07 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Ohio | § 959.15 to 16 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Oklahoma | 21 § 1694 to 1699.1 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Oregon | §§ 167.365 & 167.370 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Pennsylvania | 18 Pa.C.S. § 5511 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Rhode Island | § 4-1-9 to 13 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| South Carolina | § 16-27-10 to 80 | Felony | Felony | Felony ¹ |
| South Dakota | § 40-1-9 to 10.1 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Tennessee | § 39-14-203 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |

State Dogfighting: on the Law Books Dogfighting: a Felony or a Misdemeanor Loophole:
Possession of Dogs for Fighting Loophole: Being a Spectator at a Dogfight

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|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Texas | § 42.10 | Felony | Misdemeanor | Misdemeanor |
| Utah | § 76-9-301.1 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Vermont | 13 VSA § 352 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| Virginia | § 3.1-796.124 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Washington | § 16.52.117 | Felony | Felony | Felony |
| West Virginia | §§ 61-8-19 to 19b | Felony | Misdemeanor | Misdemeanor |
| Wisconsin | § 951.08 | Felony | Felony | Misdemeanor |
| Wyoming | § 6-3-203 | Misdemeanor | Misdemeanor | Misdemeanor |

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|--|------------------------|--|--------------|---|--|
| 48 <i>Felony</i> 2 <i>Misdemeanor</i> | | 43 <i>Felony</i> 4 <i>Misdemeanor</i> 3 <i>Legal</i> | | 19 <i>Felony</i> 27 <i>Misdemeanor</i> 4 <i>Legal</i> | |
| Washington, DC | DC ST § 22- 1015 | Felony | Felony | <i>Misdemeanor</i> | |
| American Samoa | Legal | Legal | Legal | Legal | |
| Guam | § 34205 | Violation | Legal | Legal | |
| Puerto Rico | 15 LPRA § 235 | Felony | Legal | <i>Misdemeanor</i> | |
| Virgin Islands | VI St T. 19 § 2613a | Felony | Felony | Felony | |

1 A repeated offense can trigger a felony prosecution.

2 These states do not have felony or misdemeanor offenses per se, but rather have felony and misdemeanor equivalent penalties.

3 A second offense is a misdemeanor.