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Public policy

## **Dog tax in Bocholt: rates remain stable, service becomes more digital**

### **Bocholt introduces tax exemption for shelter dogs and digital tag // New tariffs for dangerous dogs**

On 17 December 2025, the city council decided to amend the dog tax statutes. While the general tax rates will not be increased, the city council is introducing concessions for shelter dogs and a digital tax tag. New regulations have also been introduced for the keeping of dangerous dogs.

At its meeting on 17 December 2025, the municipal council decided not to increase the general dog tax. This means that the tax rate for the first dog will remain at €84 per year. The originally discussed adjustment of the rates was rejected after preliminary discussions in the specialised committees in order to avoid placing an additional burden on citizens.

One major change concerns animal welfare on site. In order to promote the placement of animals and relieve the burden on the local animal shelter, tax exemption will be granted in future for dogs that can be proven to have been adopted from the Bocholt animal shelter and originate from the Borken district. The tax exemption will also be maintained for dogs that are used exclusively for the protection and assistance of people who are in possession of a severely disabled person's pass with the corresponding markings. The same applies to dogs used for hunting.

A special tax rate of 600 euros has been introduced for dangerous dogs, which is intended to discourage the keeping of such animals. However, citizens have the option of reducing this increased rate to the normal tax rate as soon as they can prove that the animal has passed a character test. There is also a grandfathering provision: dangerous dogs that were already owned and registered by their owners before the effective date are exempt from the increase.

As a modern service component, the city of Bocholt will introduce the digital dog tax tag next year, which will replace the previous metal tag and serve as valid proof in future. This innovation offers practical advantages in everyday life, as the proof can be conveniently carried on a smartphone. For citizens who do not wish to use digital devices, there is the simple option of printing out the proof with the QR code and carrying it in their wallet as usual. The digital solution saves resources and enables immediate updating in the event of changes without having to replace the stamp.



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