

By: Representative Bomgar

To: Public Health and Human Services; Judiciary A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1548

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE RESTAURANTS AND OTHER RETAIL FOOD  
 2 FACILITIES THAT REQUIRE A FOOD PERMIT FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
 3 HEALTH TO ALLOW PET DOGS TO BE PRESENT AT THE RESTAURANT OR FOOD  
 4 FACILITY UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS; TO PROVIDE THAT A RESTAURANT OR  
 5 FOOD FACILITY THAT WISHES TO ESTABLISH A DINING AREA WHERE PET  
 6 DOGS ARE PERMITTED MUST FIRST SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE  
 7 DEPARTMENT; TO PROVIDE THAT A RESTAURANT OR FOOD FACILITY SHALL  
 8 NOT BE REQUIRED TO APPLY FOR OR OBTAIN A VARIANCE FROM THE FOOD  
 9 CODE USED BY THE DEPARTMENT, OR TO PAY AN INSPECTION FEE OTHER  
 10 THAN THE REGULAR ANNUAL INSPECTION FEE, IN ORDER TO ALLOW PET DOGS  
 11 TO BE PRESENT AT THE RESTAURANT OR FOOD FACILITY; AND FOR RELATED  
 12 PURPOSES.

13 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

14 **SECTION 1.** (1) A restaurant or other retail food facility  
 15 that requires a food permit from the State Department of Health  
 16 may allow pet dogs to be present at the restaurant or food  
 17 facility as provided in this section.

18 (2) In order for a restaurant or other retail food facility  
 19 to allow pet dogs to be present at the food facility, the  
 20 restaurant or food facility must comply with the following  
 21 conditions:

22 (a) Pet dogs shall not be allowed to be present in the  
 23 interior of a restaurant or food facility or in a nondesignated



24 outdoor area of the restaurant or food facility, with the  
25 exceptions of service animals.

26 (b) A restaurant or food facility must establish a  
27 separate outside entrance to the designated outdoor dog-friendly  
28 area.

29 (c) A restaurant or food facility must have proper  
30 signage at the entrance of all dining areas stating that the  
31 restaurant or food facility is dog-friendly and has a designated  
32 outdoor area for pet dogs, dogs are only allowed in the designated  
33 outdoor area, and dogs may only access the designated outdoor area  
34 from an outside entrance.

35 (d) All dishes, utensils and other tableware used in  
36 the dog-friendly area must be disposable single-service or  
37 single-use.

38 (e) Pet dogs shall not be allowed to come in contact  
39 with serving dishes, utensils, tableware, linens or any other  
40 items involved in food service operations.

41 (f) Pet dogs must be kept on a leash and under  
42 reasonable control at all times, and employees may not touch or  
43 handle the dog. Employees who do come into contact with a pet dog  
44 must immediately wash their hands.

45 (g) Any accident involving dog waste must be cleaned up  
46 immediately and the area sanitized with appropriate products  
47 provided by the restaurant or food facility.



48 (3) A restaurant or food facility may deny service to a pet  
49 owner who fails to exercise reasonable control over the pet dog,  
50 or if the dog behaves in a manner that compromises the health or  
51 safety of any person in the restaurant or food facility.

52 (4) A restaurant or food facility that wishes to establish a  
53 dining area where pet dogs are permitted must first submit an  
54 application to the State Department of Health. After the  
55 department receives the application, the department shall perform  
56 an inspection of the facility to ensure that dog-friendly  
57 requirements of this section are met. Restaurants and food  
58 facilities with dog-friendly dining areas shall be inspected at  
59 least twice a year. A restaurant or food facility shall not be  
60 required to apply for or obtain a variance from the Food Code used  
61 by the department, or to pay an inspection fee other than the  
62 regular annual inspection fee, in order to allow pet dogs to be  
63 present at the restaurant or food facility.

64 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
65 and after July 1, 2020.

