



# U.S. ARMY OKINAWA

## ★ TORII STATION ★



### CLAIMS

• 652-4332 / 4742 • BUILDING 218, ROOM 222 •

## IF YOU OWN A DOG, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE!



We have all heard of dogs damaging property or killing/injuring people or other pets. SOFA members in Japan may own dogs, but they are responsible for them—which means more than just cleaning up after them.

**On base**, you must follow base housing rules in supervising your pets. According to the Joint Service Pet Policy for All Military Family Housing (MFH) on Okinawa published by the Department of Defense

(<https://www.housing.af.mil/portals/79/documents/afd-120525-022.pdf>):

- To maintain a safe and healthy quality of life in MFH, pet owners must maintain control of their pets at all times. Residents are responsible for ensuring pets/animals do not disturb any neighbors by excessive barking, howling or leaving excrement on other lawns.
- When taken outside and not within a fenced/enclosed area, dogs must be on a leash, harness, or in a carrier at all times and under the control of individuals possessing the physical strength to handle them in any situation. The Joint Service Pet Policy does not consider voice commands “control” of untethered/unleased pets.
- Immediately pick up animal waste/excrement from grounds areas and bag before putting in the trash.
- Maintain current immunizations on all pets.

**Off base**, Japanese law applies. Either on or off base, you are subject to criminal and civil action for the conduct of your dog.

**Japanese Penal Code:** If your dog causes bodily injury, you may receive a fine of up to 300,000 yen (approx. \$3,000) under Article 209 of the Japanese Penal Code.

**Under the Japanese Civil Code:** there is a civil remedy available to the victim against both the owner and the dog's caretaker. So owners should be selective when letting others care for their dogs.



Warnings such as “Beware of Dog” are helpful in warning potential victims, but these do not relieve the owner of responsibility. Be careful what type of dog you choose to own. The pet policy prohibits certain breeds in all MFH areas in Okinawa (Pit Bulls, Rottweilers, etc.). Take all necessary precautions to keep your dog from disturbing others, such as damaging property and harming others. It only takes a minute for a dog to escape from your quarters, break free from a leash, or crawl under a fence. Even if an attack happens in your yard, while the dog is on a leash, or in your home, you could be still be held liable.