

Cat regulations

Sec. 6-X. Cat Registration and Licensing.

(a) Registration required. All cats over four months of age kept, harbored, or maintained within the city shall be registered with the animal control authority within 30 days of:

- (1) The cat reaching four months of age;
- (2) The owner acquiring the cat; or
- (3) The owner moving into the city with the cat.

(b) Registration requirements. To register a cat, the owner shall provide:

- (1) Proof of current rabies vaccination administered by a licensed veterinarian;
- (2) Proof of microchip identification or agreement to microchip within 30 days;
- (3) Owner's name, address, and telephone number;
- (4) Cat's description including sex, color, breed, and any distinguishing characteristics;
- (5) Registration fee as established by resolution.

(c) Registration renewal. Registration shall be renewed annually upon proof of current rabies vaccination.

(d) Registration tag. Upon registration, the animal control authority shall issue a tag that shall be worn by the cat at all times when off the owner's property, or the cat shall have a microchip meeting ISO standards.

Sec. 6-X. Mandatory Sterilization of Cats.

(a) Sterilization required. All cats over six months of age kept, harbored, or maintained within the city shall be spayed or neutered unless:

- (1) The cat is owned by a holder of a valid commercial kennel license or pet shop license;
- (2) A licensed veterinarian has certified in writing that sterilization would endanger the cat's life or health;
- (3) The owner holds a valid breeder's permit issued under subsection (c) of this section; or
- (4) The cat is used for legitimate medical research by an accredited institution.

(b) Proof of sterilization. Upon request by an animal control officer, the owner shall provide written proof from a licensed veterinarian that a cat has been sterilized or qualifies for an exemption under subsection (a).

(c) Breeder's permit.

(1) A breeder's permit may be obtained from the animal control authority upon payment of an annual fee as established by resolution and submission of:

- a. Proof that the applicant is engaged in legitimate breeding activities;
- b. Proof of current rabies vaccinations for all breeding cats;
- c. Proof that the breeding premises meets all health and safety standards;
- d. Agreement to allow inspections by animal control officers.

(2) Breeder's permits are valid for one year and must be renewed annually.

(3) Holders of breeder's permits shall maintain records of all breeding activities, sales, and transfers for a minimum of three years.

(d) Enforcement. Owners who acquire unsterilized cats shall have 60 days from the date of acquisition or from the cat reaching six months of age, whichever is later, to comply with this section.

Sec. 6-X. Cat Confinement and Control.

(a) Confinement required during certain hours. All cats shall be confined to their owner's property or under direct control of their owner or custodian between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

(b) Control methods. A cat is considered under control when:

- (1) Confined within the owner's residence or other building on the owner's property;
- (2) Confined within a secure outdoor enclosure (catio) on the owner's property from which the cat cannot escape;
- (3) On a leash or harness and under the direct supervision of a responsible person; or
- (4) Within the confines of a vehicle.

(c) Limit on free-roaming cats. No owner shall allow more than two cats to roam freely off the owner's property during permitted hours (6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.).

(d) Prohibition on abandonment. No person shall abandon any cat within the city. Cats shall be considered abandoned if left without adequate food, water, or shelter for 24 hours or more, or if left on public or private property without the property owner's consent.

Sec. 6-X. Feral and Community Cat Management.

(a) Definitions. For purposes of this section:

- (1) "Feral cat" means an untamed cat that has no owner, is unsocialized to humans, and is living in a wild state.

- (2) "Community cat" means a feral cat that is part of a managed colony.
 - (3) "Cat colony" means a group of three or more community cats that congregate together in a particular location.
 - (4) "Colony caretaker" means a person who provides food, water, or shelter to a cat colony and participates in a trap-neuter-return program.
- (b) Colony caretaker registration.
- (1) Any person acting as a colony caretaker shall register with the animal control authority and provide:
 - a. Name, address, and contact information;
 - b. Location of the colony;
 - c. Estimated number of cats in the colony;
 - d. Proof of participation in a trap-neuter-return program;
 - e. Registration fee as established by resolution.
 - (2) Registration shall be renewed annually.
- (c) Colony management requirements. Colony caretakers shall:
- (1) Ensure all cats are spayed or neutered, vaccinated against rabies, and ear-tipped for identification;
 - (2) Provide adequate food and water in a sanitary manner;
 - (3) Remove and properly dispose of food, containers, and waste after feeding;
 - (4) Make reasonable efforts to find adoptive homes for socialized cats and kittens;
 - (5) Maintain records of all cats in the colony including sterilization and vaccination status;
 - (6) Cooperate with animal control investigations and inspections;
 - (7) Not establish or maintain a colony within 200 feet of a school, daycare facility, restaurant, or food service establishment;
 - (8) Obtain written permission from the property owner if the colony is on private property.
- (d) Feeding stations. Feeding stations for community cats shall:
- (1) Be located on private property with the owner's written consent, or on public property with written approval from the city;
 - (2) Be kept clean and sanitary;
 - (3) Not create a public nuisance;

(4) Not be located within 50 feet of any neighboring residence without that resident's written consent.

(e) Exemptions. Community cats that are part of a registered colony managed according to this section are exempt from:

(1) Registration requirements under Sec. 6-X;

(2) Restraint requirements under Sec. 6-5 and 6-X;

(3) At-large restrictions.

(f) Trap-Neuter-Return programs. The city may authorize and cooperate with qualified animal welfare organizations to implement trap-neuter-return programs for feral cats.

Sec. 6-X. Cat Limit.

(a) Residential limit. No person shall keep, harbor, or maintain more than four cats over the age of four months on any residential premises within the city, unless:

(1) The person holds a valid commercial kennel license or pet shop license;

(2) The person holds a valid foster care permit under subsection (c);

(3) The person holds a valid breeder's permit under Sec. 6-X; or

(4) An exception is granted by the city council under subsection (b).

(b) Exceptions. The city council may grant exceptions to the four-cat limit upon finding that:

(1) The applicant can demonstrate ability to properly care for additional cats;

(2) The premises are adequate in size and facilities;

(3) No public nuisance will result;

(4) Neighboring property owners within 200 feet have been notified and given opportunity to comment.

(c) Foster care permit.

(1) A foster care permit may be issued to individuals working with recognized animal rescue organizations to temporarily care for cats pending adoption.

(2) Foster care permits allow up to eight cats on the premises.

(3) Foster care permits require:

a. Sponsorship by a recognized animal rescue organization;

b. Proof that all fostered cats are spayed/neutered or scheduled for sterilization;

- c. Proof of current rabies vaccinations;
- d. Annual renewal.

Sec. 6-X. Mandatory Microchipping.

- (a) Microchip required. All cats registered within the city shall be implanted with a microchip meeting ISO standards by a licensed veterinarian or authorized animal welfare organization.
- (b) Compliance timeline. Owners shall comply with this requirement:
 - (1) Within 30 days of initial registration; or
 - (2) For cats registered prior to the effective date of this section, within 90 days of the effective date.
- (c) Proof required. Upon request by an animal control officer, the owner shall provide proof of microchip implantation.
- (d) Updated information. Owners shall maintain current contact information in the microchip registry and notify the registry within ten days of any change in address, phone number, or ownership.

Sec. 6-X. Indoor Cat Shelter Requirements.

For cats kept primarily indoors, owners shall provide:

- (a) Adequate space appropriate for the number and size of cats;
- (b) Clean litter boxes in sufficient number (minimum one per cat plus one additional);
- (c) Adequate ventilation and temperature control;
- (d) Opportunities for exercise and environmental enrichment;
- (e) Separate areas for feeding, sleeping, and elimination;
- (f) Regular cleaning to prevent unsanitary conditions and odors.

Sec. 6-X. Cat-Specific Nuisances.

In addition to the nuisances described in Sec. 6-38, it shall be unlawful for a cat owner to allow:

- (a) Litter box waste. Cat litter or waste to be disposed of in a manner that creates offensive odors or unsanitary conditions affecting neighboring properties.
- (b) Property damage. Cats to repeatedly damage gardens, landscaping, or property of others.

(c) Excessive numbers. Cats to be kept in numbers or conditions that constitute hoarding, defined as:

- (1) Keeping more than 15 cats on any premises; and
- (2) Failure to provide adequate nutrition, sanitation, shelter, or veterinary care; and
- (3) Denial of the magnitude of the problem or its impact on the cats' health and welfare.

AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING SECTIONS

Amendment to Sec. 6-2 (Definitions) - Add:

Cat colony - See Sec. 6-X(a)(3).

Colony caretaker - See Sec. 6-X(a)(4).

Community cat - See Sec. 6-X(a)(2).

Feral cat - See Sec. 6-X(a)(1).

Trap-neuter-return (TNR) - A program in which feral cats are humanely trapped, evaluated, sterilized, vaccinated, ear-tipped, and returned to their original location.

Amendment to Sec. 6-140 (Domestic animals number restricted) - Revise to read:

"It shall be a violation of this article for any owner, heir to real property or person in charge or in control of any property within the city limits to allow or keep more than four domestic animals on any premises unless operating a duly licensed kennel or pet shop. Cat limits are specifically addressed in Sec. 6-X. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted by the city council when conditions are deemed appropriate. References to dogs and domestic animals only refer to animals older than three four months of age."

Sec. 6-X. Penalties for Cat-Related Violations.

(a) Violation of any provision in Sections 6-X through 6-X shall constitute a civil infraction subject to the following penalties:

- (1) First violation: Warning or fine up to \$100
- (2) Second violation within 12 months: Fine of \$100-\$250
- (3) Third violation within 12 months: Fine of \$250-\$500
- (4) Fourth or subsequent violation within 12 months: Fine up to \$500 and/or mandatory surrender of cats exceeding legal limits

(b) Each day a violation continues shall constitute a separate offense.

(c) In addition to fines, the court may order:

(1) Mandatory sterilization of cats at owner's expense;

(2) Prohibition on owning or harboring cats for a specified period;

(3) Mandatory compliance with all registration and licensing requirements;

(4) Reimbursement of impoundment and care costs.

