

AN ORDINANCE

NO.

An Ordinance adopting amendments to Chapter 5 of the Columbus Code pertaining to Animal Services in order to facilitate the implementation of a contract agreed to with Paws Humane Society for animal services which became effective on February 1, 2025 and to update various terms in the Chapter; and for other purposes.

SECTION 1.

Section 5-2 of the Columbus Code is hereby repealed and replaced with a revised code section 5-2 which shall read as follows:

“Sec. 5-2. Authority and enforcement, generally.

- (a) *Statutory authority.* The general authority for this chapter is O.C.G.A Title 4, chapters 8 and 11 as amended, which require governing authorities of each county and municipality to regulate dangerous and vicious dogs and license certain animals in the interest of rabies control.
- (b) *Animal control and enforcement division.* Ordinance No. 84-62, adopted by the Council of Columbus on June 21, 1984, established the animal control and enforcement division as an "enterprise activity" under the operational control of the Director of Public Services of the Consolidated Government of Columbus. On November 16, 2021, council approved amendments to this ordinance which allow the delegation of responsibility for all animal control activities to a private nonprofit vendor which will provide all animal control services previously provided by the animal control and enforcement provision. Council may from time to time designate the entity responsible for providing the enforcement and services officers with the primary responsibility for enforcing this chapter. The entity so designated by council to provide animal control services for the consolidated government, whether a division of the consolidated government or a non-profit private entity, shall be referred to as the animal services division throughout this ordinance and the chief executive of that division shall be referred to as the animal services director throughout this chapter. The Internal Auditor of the consolidated government shall serve as the contract administrator for the consolidated government for any agreement for the provision of animal control or enforcement services.
- (c) *Enforcement.* The animal services director and the duly sworn animal services officers employed by the animal services division are hereby charged with primary responsibility and are hereby empowered with the authority to enforce all provisions of this chapter.

SECTION 2.

Section 5-4. of the Columbus Code is hereby repealed and replaced with a revised code section 5-4. which shall read as follows:

“Sec. 5-4. Funding.

- (a) All funds generated pursuant to enforcement of this chapter, by the designated animal services division such as sale of animal permits, penalties and proceeds from court fines shall be remitted to the city treasurer to be credited to the general fund.

- (b) The animal services director shall prepare an annual proposed budget in accordance with policies and procedures of the finance department of the consolidated government. The proposed budget shall be reviewed by the animal control advisory board and submitted to the contract administrators who will forward the budget with his or her recommendations through the budget officer to the mayor.”

SECTION 3.

Section 5-13(c) of the Columbus Code is hereby repealed and replaced with a revised code section 5-13(c) which shall read as follows:

- “(c) When a resident of Columbus is no longer able to maintain a cat or dog of which he or she is the documented owner, he or she may apply to surrender the animal to the Columbus animal services division. The animal services division will provide appropriate counseling and schedule an available surrender time. A surrender fee not to exceed \$50.00, will be charged upon surrender, and the owner will sign a document releasing all ownership rights to the animal and waiving any future notices concerning the disposition of the animal. “

SECTION 4.

Section 5- 13.1(b) of the Columbus Code is hereby repealed and replaced with a revised code section 5-13.1(b) which shall read as follows:

“(b) *Adoption of animals.*

- (1) Only spayed/neutered animals will be eligible for adoption. Effective July 1, 2025, adoption fees shall not exceed \$150.00 and may be reduced to facilitate placements at the discretion of the animal services director.
- (2) No unclaimed dog or cat which is not neutered or spayed shall be released from the animal services division custody for adoption unless it is spayed or neutered.

SECTION 5.

Section 5- 17. of the Columbus Code is hereby repealed and replaced with a revised code section 5-17 which shall read as follows:

“Sec. 5-17. Complaints against animal services procedures or personnel.

Any citizen complaints about animal services procedures should be brought to the animal control advisory board at the regularly scheduled meeting. Citizen complaints about animal services personnel shall be referred to the animal services director for internal resolution, and if not satisfactorily resolved, should be referred to the contract administrator.

SECTION 6.

Sections 5- 30. and 5-31(a) of the Columbus Code are hereby repealed and replaced with revised code section 5-30 and 5-31(a) which shall read as follows:

“Sec. 5-30. Compliance with Code required.

It shall be unlawful for any person to keep within the corporate limits of the City of Columbus, any hoofed animal, except in compliance with the provisions of this chapter of the Code of Ordinances, and the Unified Development Ordinance.

Sec. 5-31. Restrictions on keeping certain hoofed animals.

- (a) Keeping of hogs and cows is permitted only in the rural areas of Columbus which are specifically designated and zoned A-1 (agriculture) in the zoning atlas of Columbus in accordance with the Unified Development Ordinance of the Columbus Code. “

SECTION 7.

Sections 5-2.1, 5-5(9), 5-6(c)(g) and (h), 5-8(f)(1)(b), 5-8(f)(2), 5-9 (E)(2), 5-10.(a)(1), 5-11(e), 5-13(b), 5-13.1(c), and 5-15(f)(2) of the Columbus Code are all revised to use the terms animal services director, animal services officer and animal services division consistently with the amendments made to Columbus Code Section 5-2 above.

SECTION 8.

All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the 8th day of April, 2025; and introduced on second reading at a regular meeting of said Council held on the ____ day of _____, 2025 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of ____ members of said Council.

- Councilor Allen voting _____
- Councilor Anker voting _____
- Councilor Chambers voting _____
- Councilor Cogle voting _____
- Councilor Crabb voting _____
- Councilor Davis voting _____
- Councilor Garrett voting _____
- Councilor Hickey voting _____
- Councilor Huff voting _____
- Councilor Thomas voting _____

Lindsey G. McLemore
Clerk of Council

B. H. “Skip” Henderson, III
Mayor