

**TOWN OF CORTLAND  
COUNTY OF DEKALB  
STATE OF ILLINOIS**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-XX**

**AN ORDINANCE ALLOWING DOMESTICATED HENS AND BACKYARD  
COOPS/ENCLOSURES SUBJECT TO CERTAIN REGULATIONS**

**ADOPTED BY THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE TOWN  
OF CORTLAND, DE KALB COUNTY, ILLINOIS ON THE  
\_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.**

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**TOWN OF CORTLAND, ILLINOIS**

**AN ORDINANCE ALLOWING DOMESTICATED HENS AND BACKYARD  
COOPS/ENCLOSURES SUBJECT TO CERTAIN REGULATIONS**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Cortland (the “Town”) is a non home-rule municipality created in accordance with the Constitution of the State of Illinois of 1970 and the laws of the State; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Sections 11-5-3, 11-5-6, and 11-20-9 of the Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS 5/11-5-3, 5/11-5-6, and 5/11-20-9), the Town of Cortland has the power to regulate the keeping of animals including domesticated hens within the Town; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Town Board deem it appropriate to modify the provisions of Title 5, “Police Regulations” of the Cortland Municipal Code in order to allow and regulate the keeping of domesticated hens within backyard coops/enclosures in furtherance of the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the Town of Cortland;

**THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE TOWN OF CORTLAND, DE KALB COUNTY, ILLINOIS, THAT:**

**SECTION ONE:** That Title 4, “Public Health and Safety” shall be amended by modifying the current subsection M of Section 4-2-1 to provide as follows (strikeout below to be deleted):

**4-2-1: Nuisances Enumerated**

- M. *Keeping Animals or Fowl.* To keep or suffer any swine, goats, ~~chickens~~, ducks, and geese in any enclosure or pen within the town unless within an agricultural zoning district, or to keep house or pasture within the town any swine, sheep, goats, ~~chickens~~, ducks or geese so as to be offensive to those residing in the vicinity.

**SECTION TWO:**

That Title 5, “Police Regulations” shall be amended by adding a new Article B as follows:

**CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE B– DOMESTICATED HENS**

**5-1B-1: Definitions**

- Coop: An enclosed structure with a roof for housing hens.

- Domesticated Hen: A female chicken (*Gallus gallus domesticus*) kept on residential property as permitted.
- Rooster: A male chicken (*Gallus gallus domesticus*); prohibited within town limits.
- Slaughtering: Killing of hens for any purpose (except for humane reasons); prohibited.

#### **5-1B-2: Keeping of Domesticated Hens**

- A. Hens may only be kept in accordance with the provisions of this Article.
- B. The keeping of hens must avoid nuisances and unhealthy conditions.
- C. No keeping of hens shall unreasonably interfere with the use of neighboring properties.

#### **5-1B-3: Restrictions**

- A. Only lots zoned and used for single-family purposes that are 11,000 square feet or larger may have hens.
- B. No more than six (6) hens per lot shall be permitted.
- C. Roosters are prohibited.
- D. Coops must be in rear yards and at least thirty (30) feet distant from neighboring dwellings and not less than ten (10) feet from property lines.
- E. Slaughtering is prohibited.

#### **5-1B-4: Coop and Fence Requirements**

- A. A chicken coop up to one hundred and forty-four (144) square feet and an outside run of at least thirty-two (32) square feet is required.
- B. No electric connection made via extension cords shall be allowed.
- C. Hens must be confined within the coop at all times.
- D. A privacy or solid fence must enclose the yard.

#### **5-1B-5: Sanitation**

- A. Coops must be rodent-free, clean, and sanitary.
- B. Feed must be stored in sealed containers.
- C. Waste must not cause detectable odors on adjacent lots.
- D. Noise from hens must not disturb neighboring residents.

#### **5-1B-6: Permit Required**

- A. A permit application must be submitted to the Town of Cortland, which shall include:
  1. Owner's permission (if tenant).
  2. A yearly \$50 non-refundable permit fee (permitted properties are subject to inspection during reasonable hours [8 AM to 8 PM] by the Town).

- B. In the event that excessive complaints are made regarding a permit holder and revocation or suspension is recommended by the Town of Cortland Police Department, the Mayor may summarily revoke or suspend such permit in his or her sole discretion.

**5-1B-7: Enforcement and Compliance**

Complaints will be investigated by the Town of Cortland Police Department. Violations may result in citations and fines through the administrative adjudication process or any other process permitted by law.

**SECTION THREE:** Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage and publication as provided by law.

**PASSED and APPROVED** this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025

**AYES:**

**NAYS:**

**ABSENT:**

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_, Date \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_ / 2025  
Mayor, Town of Cortland

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_, Date: \_\_\_\_/ \_\_\_\_ / 2025  
Town Clerk, Town of Cortland