

Sec. 2.02.001 Impoundment and redemption

(a) Impoundment.

- (1) It is the duty of the enforcement agent to capture and impound such animals that are running at-large or which are required to be impounded pursuant to other laws or ordinances or to protect public safety. Any officer or citizen of the city is authorized to take up and deliver in a humane manner to the animal services facility any animal that may be found running at-large in the city.
- (2) The animal control officer shall impound and quarantine all dogs, cats and other animals exposed to, suspected to be exposed to, or infected with rabies, whether the dog, cat or other animal to be impounded is at-large, on a leash, or confined to its owner's premises or whether it is currently vaccinated. Any animal which a licensed veterinarian suspects of having rabies shall be humanely euthanized. Any animal exposed to a rabid animal shall be humanely euthanized or quarantined at the owner's expense for a period mandated by the Texas Department of State Health Services Zoonosis Control Division, not less than ten (10) days from the date of last known exposure.
- (3) The animal control officer shall impound an animal at the request of a peace officer when the owner of the animal has been arrested, hospitalized, is missing, or has died, and there is no person present, eighteen (18) years of age or older, who will assume the legal responsibility of providing food, water and shelter for such animal.

(b) Identification of impounded animals.

- (1) The animal control officer, or his/her deputies, upon receiving an animal for impoundment, shall make a complete registry, including the species, breed, color and sex of such animal, whether it has traceable identification, and the time and place of taking custody. If the animal has traceable identification, he shall enter the name and address of the veterinary clinic, year, the microchip number ~~of the registration tag~~, and any other pertinent information. When kennel space allows, animals with traceable identification shall be kept separate from animals that do not have identification. All animals impounded shall be scanned with a microchip reader.
- (2) If, by ~~registration tag~~microchip number, the owner of an impounded animal can be identified, the animal control officer shall, as soon as possible, notify the owner by telephone or mail; however, it is the responsibility of the owner to visit the animal services facility before the expiration of the designated holding period to reclaim lost pets.
- (3) Impounded animals with no means of traceable identification shall be kept for not less than three (3) days, unless earlier reclaimed by the owner under acceptable conditions or earlier euthanized as allowed by this article. It is the responsibility of the owner to visit the shelter before the expiration of the designated holding period to reclaim lost pets.
- (4) Animals with any type of traceable identification shall be kept for not less than ten (10) days, or not less than three (3) days from the time the owner is notified of their animal being impounded, whichever is the shorter time period, unless earlier reclaimed by the owner under acceptable conditions or earlier euthanized as allowed by this article. If an animal has a tag that does not list the owner's phone number or address, and the person or business that is in possession of the owner's contact information will not release it to the animal services division, then for the purposes of this section it shall be the responsibility of that person or business to notify the owner of the animal being impounded, and the animal shall be held for three (3) days after the animal control officer contacts the person or business in possession of the owner's contact information. It is the responsibility of the owner to visit the shelter before the expiration of the designated holding period to reclaim lost pets.
- (5) If an owner claims a dog or cat that has been impounded by animal control, that animal shall be spayed or neutered within 30 days of reclamation. Failure to do so will result in a citation. Every day is considered a separate offense.

(c) Retention of impounded animals.

- (1) An animal impounded at the request of an enforcement agent as required by this article shall be kept for not less than ten (10) days unless earlier reclaimed by the owner under acceptable conditions or earlier euthanized as allowed by this article. It is the responsibility of the owner to visit the animal services facility before the expiration of the designated holding period to reclaim such pets.
- (2) An impoundment period is not required for an animal voluntarily released to the animal control officer by its owner.

(d) Redemption of impounded animals.

(1) Any owner of an animal that has been impounded under this chapter who wishes to have it returned to him shall personally visit the animal services facility where it is impounded. The animal control officer shall return the animal if the owner can provide sufficient proof of being the animal's owner and if such release will not impair the safety of the public or the animal. The owner of the animal must pay any and all fees set forth herein and must agree to abide by all of the requirements of this chapter before the animal is returned. It is the responsibility of the owner to visit the shelter before the expiration of the designated holding period to reclaim lost pets.

(2) If an animal that requires a ~~permit or registration~~ microchip is impounded by the animal control officer for violating this chapter and the owner cannot prove that he is in possession of all required permit(s) or registration(s), the owner must meet all requirements of the required permit(s) or registration(s) and must purchase said permit(s) or registration(s) before the animal may be released from the animal services facility.

(3) If an animal that requires a rabies vaccination is impounded by the animal control officer for violating this chapter and the owner cannot prove that the animal has a current rabies vaccination, a citation for failing to vaccinate will be issued. The owner shall then have five (5) days to provide proof of obtaining a current rabies vaccination to the animal control officer or else he shall be cited again for violation of this article. Each subsequent day that passes after the five (5) day period shall be considered a separate offense. For the purposes of this section, a rabies tag alone is not sufficient proof of an animal's current rabies vaccination.

(4) If an animal is impounded by the animal control officer for violating this chapter and the owner cannot prove that the animal has been previously microchipped, the owner must purchase a microchip before the animal may be released from the animal services facility. The identification number provided by the microchip shall be maintained on file at the animal services facility or with a nationally recognized registry, for future identification purposes.