AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA ADDING SECTION 4-511 TO PROHIBIT ANY COMMERCIAL PET STORE FROM SELLING, OFFERING FOR SALE, DISPLAYING OR TRANSFERRING FOR CONSIDERATION ANY DOG OR CAT OBTAINED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FROM A COMMERCIAL BREEDER; AND PROVIDING FOR THE SEVERABILITY THEREOF.

§ 1. WHEREAS, the members of the Animal Welfare Oversight Committee provide advice and recommendations to the City Council related to the Norman Animal Shelter and issues pertaining to animal care and welfare, animal rescue, fostering and adoption, control of the animal population, standards for animal shelters, recruiting volunteers, budget priorities as identified by the Committee and suggest modifications to the City of Norman Code of Ordinances; and

§ 2. WHEREAS, on September 16, 2026, the members of the Normal Animal Welfare Oversight Committee voted unanimously to recommend adoption of an ordinance that would prohibit any commercial pet store from selling, offering for sale, displaying or transferring for consideration any dog or cat obtained directly or indirectly from a commercial breeder; and

§ 3. WHEREAS, the City has a legitimate governmental interest in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of persons and animals within the City and ensuring that dogs and cats offered for retail sale are obtained from sources that provide for the health, welfare, humane treatment, and responsible placement of such animals; and

§ 4. WHEREAS, commercial pet stores selling live animals have traditionally been a sales outlet for young dogs and cats bred in “puppy mills” and “kitten mills” both in the United States and abroad. According to the Humane Society of the United States, it is estimated that 10,000 puppy mills produce more than two million puppies a year in the United States and that most pet store puppies and kittens come from puppy and/or kitten mills. When consumers buy puppies and kittens from pet stores, there is a strong likelihood that they unknowingly support the puppy or kitten mill industry; and

§ 5. WHEREAS, restricting the retail sale of dogs and cats to only those sourced from animal welfare organizations is likely to increase demand for animals from animal welfare organizations and thereby reduce the number of abandoned or stray animals and animal control costs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA:

§ 6. THAT Section 4-511 of the Code of the City of Norman, Oklahoma, shall be added to read as follows:

(a) Definitions.

For purposes of this section:

Animal care facility means an animal control center or animal shelter, maintained by or under contract with any state, county or municipality, whose mission and practice, in whole, or significant part, is the rescue and placement of animals in permanent homes or rescue organizations.

Animal rescue organization means any non-profit organization which has tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code, whose mission and practice is, in whole or in significant part, the rescue and placement of animals in permanent homes. This term does not include an entity that is a breeder or broker or one that obtains animals from a breeder or broker for profit or compensation.

Commercial breeding means a person or entity, licensed by the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry under the Commercial Pet Breeders and Animal Shelter Licensing Act, 4 O.S. §§ 30.1 et seq. (2025), that breeds dogs or cats and sells, transfers, or otherwise provides dogs or cats to another person or entity for compensation or other consideration, whether directly or through an intermediary, broker, agent, distributor, or other third party.

Broker means a person that transfers a dog or cat from a breeder for resale by another person.

Dog means a domestic canine.

Cat means a domestic feline.

Offer for sale means to advertise, display, solicit an offer for, or otherwise represent that a dog or cat is available for purchase or other transfer for consideration.

Commercial pet store means a retail establishment where dogs and cats are sold, exchanged, bartered or offered for sale as pet animals to the general public at retail. Such definition shall not include an animal care facility or animal rescue organization, as defined.

Transfer for consideration means the transfer of a dog or cat in exchange for money, goods, services, fees, or anything else of value, whether directly or indirectly.

(b) Restriction on the Sale of Animals. It shall be unlawful for any commercial pet store to sell, deliver, offer for sale, barter, auction, give away, or otherwise transfer or dispose of dogs or cats obtained directly or indirectly from commercial breeding. Nothing in this section prohibits pet stores from collaborating with animal care facilities or animal rescue organizations to offer space for such entities to showcase adoptable dogs and cats, provided the pet store does not have any ownership interest in the animals offered for adoption and does not receive a fee for providing space for the adoption of any of these animals. The restriction in this Section does not apply to any breeder, broker, animal care facility or animal rescue organization.

(c) Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this ordinance is for any reason, held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance, except, that the effective date provision shall not be severable from the operative provisions of the ordinance.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2026.

_____
Mayor

NOT ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2026

_____
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
City Clerk