

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA, TO AMEND CHAPTER 14, ARTICLE II, ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE, SECTION 14-27, STERILIZATION AND MICROCHIP IDENTIFICATION; SECTION 14-29, IMPOUNDMENT; SECTION 14-30, REDEMPTION OF IMPOUNDED ANIMALS; AND SECTION 14-31, ADOPTION FEES AND STERILIZATION.

Sec. 14-27. - Sterilization and microchip identification.

- (a) *Sterilization.* No impounded pet may be redeemed without (a) first having been surgically sterilized and a fee paid therefore, which fee shall not exceed the fee charged by the shelter for the sterilization of animals prior to adoption, or (b) paying ~~a redemption fee~~ an intact animal fine of \$200.00 to redeem the pet intact. If an intact pet comes to be impounded for a second or subsequent time in a calendar year, the ~~intact redemption fee~~ intact animal fine shall be \$1,000.00. ~~These provisions shall apply to pets whose owners' residence is within Beaufort County.~~

Sterilization under this section may not take place sooner than after the fifth working day following the pet's placement in the custody of the shelter, or when the owner appears at the shelter to redeem the animal, whichever is sooner.

The shelter must give written notice of the policies and options regarding redemption and sterilization set forth herein to owners seeking to redeem their pets.

- (b) *Microchip identification and fee.* When a dog or cat is adopted from the county animal shelter, the animal shelter may implant a microchip in the dog or cat identifying the owner and all other information as provided by law. The county animal shelter shall charge a fee for implantation of a microchip in an amount recommended by the county administrator.
- (c) *Fee for redemption of a microchipped animal.* A microchipped animal returned to the county animal shelter may be reclaimed by the owner upon the owner's payment to the county animal shelter of a redemption fee. A redemption fee shall be in the amount recommended by the county administrator.
- (d) *Fee for redemption and microchipping of an unmicrochipped animal.* All reclaimed animals are required to be microchipped prior to release to their owners along with payment of a redemption fee. Both the fee for implantation of a microchip and the redemption fee shall be in the amount recommended by the county administrator.

(Ord. No. 2010/7, 4-26-2010)

Sec. 14-28. - Restraint of animals by owners.

- (a) *Running at large.* It shall be unlawful for any owner or custodian of any dog, cat, or other animal to permit the dog, cat, or other animal to run at large at any time upon any street or highway or other property within the county (S.C. Code 1976, § 47-7-110).
- (b) *Control of animals generally.* No owner shall fail to exercise proper care and control of his animals to prevent them from becoming a public nuisance.
- (c) *Female dogs and cats in heat.* Every female dog and cat in heat shall be confined in such a manner that such female dog or cat cannot come into contact with another animal.

(Ord. No. 2010/7, 4-26-2010)

Sec. 14-29. - Impoundment.

- (a) *Seizure of animals running at large generally.* Any dog, cat, dangerous animal, or other animal running at large may be seized by an animal control officer and transported to the county animal shelter and there confined in a humane manner for a period of not less than five working days and may thereafter be disposed of in a humane manner if not claimed by the owner. However, if the animal is terminally ill, critically injured or a threat to the shelter staff and/or other animals being housed at the shelter, the County Veterinarian or Director may waive the five day hold period and the animal may be immediately disposed of in a humane manner.
- (b) *Disposition of animals at large.* When an animal is found running at large and its ownership is known to an animal control officer, such animal need not be impounded but can be returned to the owner, and the officer may cite the owner of such animal to appear before a county magistrate to answer to charges of violation of this article. Upon the seizure of any animal found running at large with a rabies tag, the county animal shelter and control will screen the rabies records and attempt to notify the owner or custodian by written notice and/or telephone that the animal is being held by a shelter for disposition (S.C. Code 1976, § 47-3-540). All animals will be scanned for microchip identification.
- (c) *Disposition of unclaimed animals.* Animals not claimed by their owners after notification or attempted notification or before the expiration of five working days, shall become the property of a the county animal shelter and control and

may be placed for adoption or euthanized at the discretion of the director of the county animal shelter and control.

- (d) *Records of impounded animals.* It shall be the duty of the director of the county animal shelter and control or other persons designated by the county council to keep accurate and detailed records of seizures and dispositions of all animals coming into their custody and to file this report with the county administrator or his designee each month. Any reports prepared by a designee shall also be filed with the director of the county animal shelter and control.
- (e) *Abandoned animals.* When determined that an animal has been left unattended for a period of 24 hours or longer, it will be considered abandoned. The animal control officers may enter the property for the purpose of removing the animal. The animal will then be taken to the animal shelter and confined there for a period of five working days. It is unlawful to abandon an animal.
- (f) *Diseased animals.* Any diseased animal presented to a county animal shelter and control whose condition endangers the health of other animals in the shelter or any severely injured animal may be euthanized immediately, notwithstanding the five working day holding period, as specified in subsections (a) and (c) of this section.
- (g) *Shelter space allocations.* At any time the number of animals presented to the county animal shelter and control for holding exceeds the holding space available, the animal shelter director shall ration the available spaces among the municipal, county and military animal control officers and the general public. If all local rescuers are full and the number of animals exceeds the holding space available, the Director can network with other organizations from within and outside Beaufort County for their care and placement.

(Ord. No. 2010/7, 4-26-2010)

Sec. 14-30. - Redemption of impounded animals.

- (a) *Procedure.* The owner shall be entitled to resume possession of any impounded animal upon proof of ownership and payment of impoundment fees and fines as set forth in this section.
- (b) *Failure to redeem within holding period.* The owner of an animal impounded and not redeemed within the required holding period shall be responsible for any costs incidental to impoundment in the amount set forth in this section.

- (c) *Payment of fees.* Any impounded animal may be redeemed as provided in this section upon payment of the fees by the owner to the county animal shelter and control.
- (d) *Redemption fees.* The redemption fee shall be ~~\$100.00~~ \$50.00 for the first 24 hours of confinement for the first impoundment; the redemption fee for the second impoundment will be ~~\$250.00~~ \$125 and the redemption fee for the third impoundment and each subsequent offense will be ~~\$500.00~~ \$250. ~~The director of the animal shelter has discretion to reduce or waive fees.~~
- (e) *Boarding fee.* A boarding fee not to exceed \$25.00 a day will be imposed following the first 24 hours.
- (f) *Posting of fees.* All fees shall be published and posted in a prominent place within the county animal shelter and control.
- (g) *Proof of rabies [vaccination].* In order to redeem an impounded animal from the county animal shelter and control, a current and valid rabies certificate must be presented at the time of redemption or obtained from a licensed veterinarian within three business days and provided to the county animal shelter. Proof of the rabies vaccination certificate must be presented or obtained at the time of the redemption. If a rabies certificate is not presented within 3 business days, an animal control officer will issue the owner a ticket, which will be processed through the Magistrate's Court in Beaufort County.

(Ord. No. 2010/7, 4-26-2010)

Sec. 14-31. - Adoption fees and sterilization.

- (a) *Adoption fee established.* Animal adoption fees shall be established by the administrator and the director of the county animal shelter and control.
- (b) *Sterilization.* Animals adopted from the county animal shelter and control will be sterilized prior to going into the adopted home. Sterilization fees shall be collected by the county animal shelter and control at the time of adoption.
- (c) *Authority to refuse adoption.* The county animal shelter and control director or designee shall have the authority to refuse adoption of an animal to any person deemed unable to provide proper shelter, confinement, medical care and food or to any person who has a past history of inhumane treatment of or neglect to animals. Any person seeking adoption of an animal more frequently than 90 days shall be subject to refusal of adoption. Any person who has been refused adoption of an animal may appeal his case to the deputy administrator for community services. If any person turns in an owned animal to the animal shelter and

control, they will not be able to adopt an animal for ninety days. Persons turning in more than one owned animal within one year will no longer be allowed to adopt an animal from the shelter.

(Ord. No. 2010/7, 4-26-2010)

Adopted this 8th day of November, 2010.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY


BY: 

Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Ladson F. Howell, Staff Attorney

ATTEST:


Suzanne M. Rainey, Clerk to Council

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