



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney St.
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Animal Services

ACM: Frank Dixon, Assistant City Manager

DATE: May 7, 2024

SUBJECT

Consider adoption of an ordinance of the City of Denton, Texas, by replacing Chapter 6 of the Code of Ordinances in its entirety; amending section 1-12 titled “General Penalty” of the Code of Ordinances by increasing the maximum fine to \$500 for violations of Chapter 6 of the Code of Ordinances; providing a repealer clause; providing a savings clause; providing a severability clause; providing a penalty clause; providing for publication; providing codification; and providing an effective date.

BACKGROUND

The City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 6 Animals, provides the framework and policies for the regulation of the care and control of animals within the City of Denton. The ordinance was adopted by Council on December 19, 2000, Ord. No 2000-460. Under guidance from the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee and the City Attorney’s Office, amendments and updates are being requested to bring Chapter 6 up to new industry standards and best practices to ensure community health and safety.

Proposed changes are summarized below. A “redlined” draft version of the ordinance with all proposed changes is attached for review (**Exhibit 3**) along with a “clean” draft incorporating proposed changes for review (**Exhibit 4**).

Summary of Proposed Changes

- **General updating throughout**
 - Updated definition and verbiage to industry standards
 - Removed definitions that were redundant or no longer used
 - Added definitions
 - Rewording of some areas for clarification
- **Sec. 6-9 Animal nuisances**
 - Added (4), (4)a, & 4(b)
 - Provides for a citizen living within close proximity to an animal noise violation to file a complaint with Animal Services to initiate an investigation of the offense

- Makes it unlawful for any person to be the owner of an animal that has been impounded or citations for animal at large on 3 or more occasions
 - (a) Allows animal services to seek a hearing in municipal court to determine if the animal is a nuisance for at large violations and (b) allows the court to order the animal to be removed from city limits within 30 days of a court order
 - Helps to prevent repeat offenders that do not mitigate situation and helps protect the animal from the dangers of running at large
- **Sec. 6-14 Registering of cats and dogs**
 - (a) Updated to microchipping requirement, brings in line with industry standards
 - (b) Allows for microchipping of all animals upon intake
 - (c) Allows Animal Services to offer microchipping services to the public for a nominal fee to be set by Council
- **Sec. 6-29 Wild animals**
 - Added section to address nuisance issues, protect wildlife
 - Allows for an exemption for licensed rehabilitators or educational purposes
- **Sec. 6-30 Prohibited animal permit and impoundment**
 - Updated to make Animal Shelter Advisory Committee the granting body for permits
- **Reduction of hold periods from 96 hours to 72 hours**
 - For strays, protective custody, impounds
 - Brings in line with industry standards
 - Reduces overall length of stay for animals
 - Sec. 6-15, 6-16, 6-17, 6-18, 6-24
- **Feral Cats**
 - Currently, Article III Sec 6.40-48- addresses registering, oversight, and enforcement of feral cat colonies.
 - No current registered colonies; restrictive, outdated practice
 - Removing entire section, replacing with Sec. 6-25.
 - New section provides a method for addressing nuisance feral cats
- **Article II Dangerous dog**
 - Updated to bring in line with Chapter 822 Subchapter D. Dangerous Dogs of the Texas Health and Safety Code
 - Added Sec 6-39.3 Animals deemed dangerous by other jurisdictions
 - Bans the bringing of dogs deemed dangerous by other jurisdictional bodies into the city
- **Article III Humane trapping**
 - Added to regulate the placement of traps
 - Requires the use of humane traps, prohibits use of traps that cause injury or death
 - Provides for humane treatment of all animals trapped
 - Aimed at reducing unnecessary trapping of healthy wildlife
- **Sec. 6-33 Commerce in live animals**
 - Added to address health and safety concerns
 - Prohibits the sale or display of live animals on a roadside or public area

Additionally, Section 1-12 of the Denton Code of Ordinances will be updated to add (a)(5) to update the penalty for a violation of Chapter 6 from two hundred dollars (\$200.00) to five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per violation.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the ordinance.

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROJECT

This ordinance shall become effective fourteen (14) days from the date of its passage.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

The City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 6 Animals, was adopted by Council on December 19, 2000 (Ord. No. 2000-460)

May 17, 2023, the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee reviewed the first proposed draft changes to the ordinance and provided feedback to staff (ASAC23-003).

November 28, 2023, the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee reviewed the final proposed draft and provided feedback to staff (ASAC23-010)

December 5, 2023, Council reviewed proposed changes and updates in a work session (ID: 23-2273)

January 10, 2024, the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee reviewed Council feedback from December 5, 2023, work session.

March 6, 2024, results of the public input meetings and a final proposed draft were discussed with the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee (ASAC24-003).

March 19, 2024, Council received update on community feedback to proposed changes in a work session (ID: 24-302).

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1- Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2- Ordinance

Exhibit 3- Chapter 6 (Redline)

Exhibit 4- Chapter 6 (Clean)

Respectfully submitted:
Nikki Sassenus, Director of Animal Services