



PASCO COUNTY, FLORIDA TO REQUIRE PERMITS AND AMEND OTHER ANIMAL LAWS

*** BREEDERS AND PET DEALERS IMPACTED ***

**** VOTE SET FOR JANUARY 24TH ****

The Issue:

The Pasco County, Florida Board of County Commissioners is set to vote on [proposed amendments](#) to the county's animal control ordinance. The proposed changes, among other things, amend the definition of a "breeder"; impose permit requirements on kennels, pet dealers and breeders; restrict certain sales of cats and dogs; and establish provisions for declaring dogs dangerous. The Board originally heard the proposed amendments at its December 6, 2011 meeting, but delayed a vote until January 24, 2012. **Be aware that if the Board votes in favor of this ordinance at the January 24th meeting it will take effect within 10 days after adoption.**

The Impact:

Breeder Definition

The amendments create a new definition of "breeders" providing that a breeder is "any person that owns, harbors or keeps dogs or cats that reproduce more than two litters or more than 20 animals in any rolling [consecutive] 12- month period for any purpose."

New Permit Requirements

The amendments state that all kennels, pet dealers and breeders must obtain a permit from the County Animal Services Division in order to operate. A "pet dealer" is defined as "any person that offers for sale, has sold, or intends to sell, either concurrently or in aggregate, more than 20 dogs or cats in any rolling (consecutive) 12- month period." This definition includes pet shops and persons. The ordinance defines a "kennel" as "any person or entity who owns, harbors or keeps more than 15 dogs or cats, in aggregate, at a property or structure, for any purpose, including, but not limited to, housing, boarding, breeding, training, show or exhibition, hunting, sale, rescue, adoption or personal pet or use."

The proposal states that an application and permit will be on a form that can be obtained from the County Administrator, and a fee for application, issuance and renewal of a permit may be set by the Board of County Commissioners. Prior to the issuance of a permit the following is required:

- Within 30 business days of a complete application submitted to the Division, the Division will inspect the premises for conditions and standards of care; and
- Within 10 business days of inspection the Division will make the decision to grant or deny any permit and inform the applicant in writing. All permits must be renewed annually.

NOTE: The proposal provides a list of conditions and standards of care for these facilities, including requirements for ventilation, lighting, storage and sanitation.

“Dangerous” Dog Provisions

The proposal defines a “dangerous dog” as “any dog that according to the records of the county Animal Services Division or any authority with jurisdiction in the state that:

- Has aggressively bitten, attacked, or endangered or has inflicted severe injury on a human being on public or private property;
- Has more than once severely injured or killed a domestic animal while off the owner's property; or
- Has, when unprovoked, chased or approached a person upon the streets, sidewalks, or any public grounds in a menacing fashion or apparent attitude of attack, provided that such actions are attested to in a sworn statement by one or more persons and dutifully investigated by the appropriate authority.”

The Animal Services Division will be responsible for investigating dangerous dog complaints and owners of the dog will be afforded the opportunity for a hearing. (Details can be found in the [text of the proposed ordinance](#).)

Licensing Tag Requirements

Under the proposal, any person who keeps, harbors or owns any dog four months of age or older within the county must obtain a current Pasco County license tag for each dog. Any person who has relocated a dog to Pasco County either with or without valid animal license tags from another jurisdiction must obtain Pasco County license tags or rescue tags, if applicable, within 30 days from relocating such dog or canine hybrid to Pasco County. **NOTE:** No license tag fee schedule is provided in this proposal.

Sale Restrictions

This proposal bans the sale of dogs and cats, to include puppies and kittens, at the following places:

- any public or private streets and rights-of-way (or within 50 feet of any right-of-way);
- any flea market,
- private parking lots; or
- any open air venue (such as parades, concerts and festivals).

The sale of dogs and cats by a breeder, kennel or pet dealer may only take place at the licensed premises of the entity. Humane organizations and government agencies are exempt from these restrictions.

Recordkeeping Requirements on Dog and Cat Sales

The ordinance provides that every person who sells a dog or cat must maintain a record of every transaction, showing the following:

- the date of the transaction;
- the name and address of the person from whom each dog or cat was purchased or otherwise obtained and to whom it was sold; and
- a sufficient description of the dog or cat (i.e. breed, sex, color, markings and distinguishing features).

The record must be available at all times for inspection by officers and any other law enforcement officer, and sellers must records for a period of one year from date of sale.

Tethering

If these amendments are enacted, it will be unlawful for a person to tether a dog outdoors UNLESS all of the following conditions are met:

- The dog is in visual range of the owner, harbinger or keeper, and such person is outside with the dog;
- The tether is connected to the dog by a buckle-type collar or a body harness which is not less than one inch in width;
- The tether is at least five times the length of the dog's body measured from nose to base of tail, terminates at both ends with a swivel, does not weigh more than 1/8 of the dog's body weight, and is free of tangles;
- The dog is tethered in such a manner to prevent injury, strangulation or entanglement;
- The dog is not tethered outside during a period of extreme weather, including but not limited to, heat, near-freezing temperatures, thunderstorms, tornadoes, tropical storms or hurricanes;
- The dog has access to water, shelter and dry ground;
- The dog is at least six months of age;
- The dog is not injured;
- Pulley, running lines or trolley systems are at least 15 feet in length; and
- If multiple dogs, each is tethered separately.

PIJAC Position:

PIJAC supports reasonable regulation ensuring humane care of pet animals but opposes overly-burdensome restrictions on the keeping or sale of such animals. PIJAC also opposes excessive redundant requirements at the local level if adequate state standards are already in place.

Recommended Action:

Any person who may be adversely affected by any of these provisions should immediately [contact County Commissioners](#) to express their concerns, and are strongly urged to attend the January 24th hearing to publically speak to such concerns.

The hearing is scheduled to take place on January 24th at 10:00 a.m. in the West Pasco Government Center (Board Room, 1st Floor), 8731 Citizens Drive, New Port Richey, FL.

For additional information about these proposals, please contact PIJAC's Bambi Osborne via email at bambi@pijac.org or by phone at: 202/452-1525, ext. 105.

PIJAC Members! PIJAC Fans! Join US...

The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) has been protecting and promoting responsible pet ownership for nearly forty years. Follow our successes, events, and action alerts through Facebook and/or Twitter at PIJAC4pets. If you are not already a Member, please join us today by visiting www.pijac.org/membership. For additional information on PIJAC and its many exciting campaigns, please visit: www.pijac.org. Or, contact us at 1-800-553-PETS (1-800-553-7387); members@pijac.org.

On behalf of pets, responsible pet owners, and the pet industry, we thank you!