



PET OWNERSHIP COULD BECOME MORE DIFFICULT IN ST. LOUIS, MO.

**** PROPOSED BAN ON RETAIL DOG & CAT SALES UP FOR POSSIBLE VOTE TOMORROW (SEPTEMBER 16TH)****

The Issue:

The St. Louis, Missouri Board of Aldermen is considering [an ordinance](#) that would ban the sale of dogs and cats in city pet stores. The proposed ordinance amends current city animal laws and would require mandatory spay/neuter and microchipping for all dogs and cats in the city. New permit requirements are also presented in the proposal. **These measures were preliminarily approved by the Board's Health & Human Services Committee on July 7th and will be up for consideration at the Board's full meeting tomorrow (September 16th).**

The Impact:

Pet Sale Ban

The ordinance proposes to ban pet stores from offering for sale any dog, puppy, cat or kitten. It defines a "pet store" as "any corporation, association, individual, partnership or entity operating a mercantile establishment for the retail sale of animals."

Any pet store found in violation of this ban **will be subject to a fine of between \$100 to \$500, face imprisonment of up to 90 days, or both.**

Mandatory Spay/Neuter and Microchipping

No dog or cat will be permitted within the city limits of St. Louis unless the animal has been:

- Spayed or neutered;
- Micro-chipped for identification; and
- Vaccinated against rabies.

The animal must also, at all times, wear a current, unexpired registration tag, and the owner must possess a certificate issued in accordance with existing city laws.

This mandatory sterilization requirement does not apply to:

- any animal that is to be trained and actively used by law enforcement agencies for law enforcement and rescue activities;
- any guide, signal or service dog;

- any animal documented and certified by a licensed veterinarian as not being a proper subject for spaying and neutering or micro-chipping due to health or age reasons; and
- all animals owned by certified and licensed breeders.

Anyone found in violation of these requirements is subject to a fine of between \$100 to \$500, imprisonment for up to 90 days, or both. Anyone guilty of a second violation will receive a minimum fine of \$300, imprisonment of up to 90 days, or both. Third and subsequent violators will face a minimum fine of \$500 and minimum imprisonment of 10 days. This provision will take effect one year after this ordinance becomes law.

New Permit Requirements

The proposed amendments call for pet stores, commercial and non-commercial kennels, and hobby and show breeders to obtain permits **if they maintain four or more domestic animals on their premises.**

Persons wishing to obtain one of these permits must apply, in writing, with the city Health Commissioner. Applications must contain the following information:

- Name of the applicant;
- Address for which the permit is sought;
- Address and telephone number at which the applicant can be contacted;
- Maximum number of animals which the applicant proposes to house at the kennel; and
- Any additional information requested by the Health Commissioner.

No application for a permit shall be accepted by the Health Commissioner unless accompanied by a \$200 inspection fee. Permits are only valid for one year from the date on which they are issued.

These permit provisions will take effect one year after this ordinance becomes law. Any violation of permit requirements, resulting in a conviction, is **punishable by a fine of between \$100 to \$500, imprisonment for up to 90 days, or both.**

PIJAC Position:

PIJAC strongly supports the right to keep pets, and the right of pet owners to have options as to where they obtain their companion animals based on the pet owner's individual circumstances, needs and preferences. Pet stores provide healthy, responsibly raised pets to the public, and should serve as one of the options pet owners may turn to in choosing a companion animal. Discriminatory bans against the sale of animals by pet stores are poor public policy, and are harmful to pets and pet owners. Such bans do not benefit animals or the pet owning public. In fact, pet bans drive legitimate retailers out of business and create an underground market for illegitimate sellers of pets who need not observe the extensive regulatory requirements to which pet stores are subject.

Recommended Action:

This proposed ordinance will be considered by the [St. Louis Board of Aldermen](#) on September 16th (Room 230, City Hall at 10:00 a.m.). It is critical that [Board Members](#) be contacted by pet stores and other businesses dealing with pets and pet products, as well as pet owners and others who love pets. If a hearing is scheduled, all persons able to do so should attend!

Those having questions about this proposal should contact PIJAC's Bambi Osborne via email at bambi@pijac.org or by phone at 202-452-1525, ext. 105.