



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 4

Agenda Date: December 5, 2024

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Animal Care Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Michael Shannon, Interim Director

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Ordinance approving amendments to Chapter 5 of the City Code, regarding animal ordinance violations and sterilization requirements.

SUMMARY:

This ordinance will amend Chapter 5, Animals, Section 5-21 to increase minimum fees for repeat Chapter 5 violations and amend Sections 5-150, 5-156, and 5-160 to clarify sterilization requirements for animals found free of restraint.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On May 2, 2024, Council District 7, submitted a City Council Request (CCR) recognizing that San Antonio is experiencing an ongoing issue with dangerous, loose, and roaming dogs. The CCR requests the following measures to address habitually irresponsible pet ownership, the overpopulation of roaming pets, and public safety issues related to dangerous dogs:

- 1) Increase fines for repeat offenders for roaming dog violations.
- 2) Sterilize pets found free of restraint.
- 3) Implement a pseudonym program to protect the identity of people filing Dangerous Dog affidavits.

Current minimum fines for Free of Restraint violations are based on offense:

- \$100 for first offense
- \$200 for second offense
- \$300 for third offense

ACS also issues Sterilization Orders to owners whose pets are found free of restraint and reclaimed. The orders require sterilization of the pet within 30 days of issuance. In FY 2024, 1,825 sterilization orders were issued, 70% of which were followed up on for compliance.

ISSUE:

ACS is recommending several changes to Chapter 5 of the City Code to implement the measures outlined in the CCR.

1) Section 5-21: Increase minimum fines for repeated Chapter 5 violations as follows:

- \$100 for first offense
- \$500 for second offense
- \$750 for third and subsequent offense

2) Section 5-21: Add increased fines specifically for violations of Section 5-150(3), Failure to Prevent Bite, as follows:

- \$1,000 for first offense
- \$1,500 for second offense
- \$2,000 for third and subsequent offense

3) Sections 5-150, 5-156, and 5-160: Clarify language to allow City to either sterilize pets found free of restraint before being reclaimed or issue sterilization orders requiring the owner to sterilize the animal within 30 days of reclaim.

ALTERNATIVES:

Council could choose not to approve the ordinance, resulting in fines for Chapter 5 violations remaining as is and also still requiring the City to release loose animals back to owners before sterilization.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed changes to Chapter 5 of the San Antonio City Code.

