



Legislation Text

File #: 2009-0511, **Version:** 2

Clerk 09/16/2009

AN ORDINANCE facilitating the transfer of animals from the animal care and control section to rescue organizations; and adding a section to K.C.C. chapter 11.04.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

1. Ordinance 15801 established that the total number of cats and dogs euthanized by the animal care and control section is not to exceed fifteen percent in 2009.
2. Partnerships with animal rescue groups are critical to reducing the animal care and control section's euthanasia rate.
3. In transferring animals from King County animal shelters, animal rescue organizations reduce overcrowding at King County animal shelters and help animals find permanent homes.
4. According to the King County Animal Care and Control Program Report, in 2008 there were one thousand five hundred nineteen transfers to rescue groups from the animal care and control section.
5. The executive has reported to council that the current financial crisis will likely cause significant reductions in funding for the animal care and control section.
6. Findings from three independent studies illustrated significant shortcomings in the shelter and care animals at the animal care and control section receive.
7. It is the best interest of the animals in King County shelters and the taxpayers of King County to establish policies and procedures that facilitate the transfer of animals from King County

shelters to rescue organizations.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

NEW SECTION. SECTION 1. There is hereby added to K.C.C. chapter 11.04 a new section to read as follows:

A. The following definitions apply to this section

1. "Animal rescue organization" means a nonprofit organization that is registered as a nonprofit corporation by the state of Washington or as a organization under Section 501(c)(3) the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(3)), or government organization devoted to animal welfare that takes animals from the animal care and control section and seeks to find homes for those animals.

2. "Adoptable" means an animal that has met the legally required stray hold requirements, and is not subject to quarantine or any other legally mandated holds, whether or not the animal has been made available for adoption by animal care and control section.

B. The animal care and control section may transfer adoptable animals to animal rescue organizations. The animal care and control section shall work to establish transfer agreements with all rescue organizations by February 1, 2010. Each month, beginning on the effective date of this legislation and continuing through March 31, 2010, the animal care and control section shall provide a monthly report to the Council on its progress in establishing transfer agreements. Effective, February 1, 2010 an animal rescue organization must have a transfer agreement in place in order to receive transferred animals from the animal care and control section. The transfer agreements shall not require rescue organizations to sell pet licenses. The transfer agreements shall designate the names of the people from the animal rescue organization who are authorized to receive animals from the animal care and control section on the organization's behalf. Animal rescue organizations are responsible for notifying animal care and control of any changes to the designated names prior to retrieving any

animals.

C. There shall not be requirements for an adoptable animal to remain in the custody of the animal care and control section for additional time before being transferred to an animal rescue organization. Except as otherwise provided in subsection B. of this section, the animal care and control section shall not refuse to transfer an adoptable animal to an animal rescue organization at the organization's request, unless the owner of the animal has contacted the animal care and control section and indicated his or her intent to retrieve the animal from the custody of the animal care and control section within the next forty-eight hours.

D. The animal care and control section, shall implement a process through which animal rescue organizations may report any difficulties in communicating with animal care and control section regarding transfers of animals, in transferring animals out of animal care and control section or with issues of contagious disease related to transfers of animals out of the animal care and control section. The animal care and control section shall inform every animal rescue organization that has taken animals from animal care and control within the last two years of this ordinance and of a process for making complaints related to the transfer of animals, and shall develop a protocol to promptly resolve such complaints. Complaints shall be brought to the attention of the director of records and licensing, who shall be responsible for overseeing the satisfactory resolution of such complaints.

E. The animal care and control section shall designate a staff person who is responsible for receiving and immediately responding to inquiries from animal rescue organizations, as well as the animal care and control section staff who shall respond to the inquiries when the designated person is not available. The animal care and control section shall designate an email for inquiries from animal organizations, which shall be monitored by the animal care and control section daily, and the address of which shall be listed on each report made to animal rescue organizations as required in subsection F. of this section.

F. Except as otherwise provided in subsection G. of this section, the animal care and control section shall make available, at least weekly, an email update to animal rescue organizations that received animals during the last year from the animal care and control section. The email update shall include:

1. An inventory of adoptable animals by species, breed and approximate age;
2. The total population, listed by dogs, cats and other species, in the custody of the animal care and control section regardless of location;
3. The number of animals with contagious illnesses, by type of animal and illness;
4. Any other significant disease concerns within the past thirty days, such as disease outbreaks, suspected or confirmed cases of contagious disease other than feline upper respiratory infections or kennel cough and quarantines or limitations on admissions imposed as the result of disease.

G. The animal care and control section may make the information required under subsection F. of this section available on its website in lieu of, or in addition to, the email required under subsection F. of this section.