

**RULES AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO REGULATION OF DOGS AND CATS  
IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

WHEREAS, the County Commission for Williamson County enacted a resolution for the promulgation of rules and regulations concerning dogs and cats on September 18, 1978; and further amended that resolution on March 19, 2004, June 21, 2010, and May 12, 2014.

WHEREAS, the need has arisen for amendments to this resolution in order that dogs and cats within the county be effectively regulated,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED pursuant to Tenn.. Code Ann. § 5-1-120, that in regular session at its January 9, 2023 meeting, the County Commission for Williamson County enacts amendments to the rules and regulations concerning dogs and cats so that they shall read in their entirety as follows:

I. Terms defined. For the purpose of these rules and regulations, the definitions assigned to words defined in state law related to animals (for example, the definition of "Cruelty" contained in Tenn. Code Ann. §39-14-202) shall govern. In addition, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them by this Section:

A. "Abandonment" shall mean:

1. leaving a dog or cat for a period in excess of twenty-four (24) hours without providing for someone to feed, water and check on the animal's condition;
2. leaving a dog or cat by a roadside or other area; or
3. leaving a dog or cat on either public or private property without the property owner's consent. Humane surrender of an animal to Williamson County Animal Center at a time when personnel are present shall not be considered abandonment. Williamson County Animal Center shall encourage any person surrendering a litter of puppies or kittens born to an animal owned by that person to allow WCAC to spay the mother animal (at no cost to the surrendering owner).

B. "Animal Control Officer" shall mean the Animal Control Officer and/or Animal Control Department of Williamson County, Tennessee.

C. "Confined" means securely confined indoors, within an automobile or other vehicle solely for transportation in a humane and safe manner or confined in a securely enclosed pen or structure or fence, electronic or otherwise, upon the premises of the owner of such animal. Under no circumstances is an electronic or similar fence sufficient to confine a guard dog, an animal in heat or a vicious or dangerous dog. When a dog or cat is transported on public roads in an open air vehicle, truck bed or a vehicle with the windows rolled down, the animal shall be confined or restrained in such a manner that the animal cannot fall or jump out of the vehicle and will not be at risk of injury, entrapment or strangulation. Adequate space for an enclosure for a confined animal means a sufficient space for adequate exercise suitable to the age, size, species and breed of animal. For dogs, adequate space will be based on the size of the dog. The determination of size will be a visual estimation; an exact weight using a scale is not required. Adequate space for dogs shall be as follows:

Weight of Dog in Pounds	Minimum Total Square Footage of Enclosure
Up to 30 pounds	120 square feet
31—60 pounds	150 square feet
Over 60 pounds	250 square feet

D. "Guard Dog" shall mean a dog trained to protect persons or property by attacking or threatening to attack, and which will cease to attack at command.

E. "Health Officer" shall mean an appropriate designee of the Board of Health of Williamson County, Tennessee.

F. "Humane" shall mean marked by compassion, kindness, sympathy and consideration for an animal's welfare.

G. "Leash" shall mean any cord, chain, rope, thong or other device affixed to a dog or cat and used by the owner to restrain the movement of the dog or cat, which cord, chain, rope, thong or other restraining device is no greater than fifteen feet in length.

H. "Necessary care" shall mean taking action necessary to maintain an animal's health by taking into consideration such factors as its breed, weight, coat and age. It shall include, but not be limited to ensuring that the animal receives veterinary care for illness or to relieve distress from injury, neglect, disease, untreated parasitism, or any malformations. It shall further include necessary effort to maintain the animal's coat and skin in a reasonably healthy condition.

I. "Necessary food" shall mean food that is not spoiled or contaminated and is of sufficient quantity and quality to allow for normal growth or maintenance of body weight. Food must be provided at least once a day, unless a licensed veterinarian instructs an owner to do otherwise.

J. "Necessary Shelter" shall mean:

Shelter that is of adequate size and provides adequate protection to maintain the animal in a state of good health and prevent pain, suffering or significant risk to the animal's health. Adequate shelter shall consist of a completely enclosed structure or enclosure that has a solid roof and constructed floor and four solid sides with an opening that is of adequate size to allow ingress and egress by the animal. If the shelter is constructed of wood, it shall be raised at least two inches off the ground to prevent seepage or rotting. Examples of inadequate shelter include, but are not limited to, lean-tos, abandoned vehicles porches, decks, tarps, crates, airline carriers, metal drums or barrels and cardboard boxes. Plastic barrels may be used only if all other requirements for adequate shelter under this section I.J are met.

Bedding for outdoor shelter should consist of quick-drying material such as straw or wood shavings rather than blanket material. Bedding must be sufficient to maintain comfortable temperatures within the structure when the outside temperature is below freezing or during periods of extreme heat.

The shelter must be kept clean and dry. It must afford sufficient shade and must be sufficient to protect the animal from the elements including inclement weather and extreme heat and cold. The opening shall be of heavy plastic or rubber or other material that will protect from the wind, rain and snow during the months of November through March, and from April through October, the structure must either be shaded or moved out of direct sunlight. The floor shall not allow for accumulation of moisture and shall not expose the animal to contact with extreme hot or cold surfaces.

Necessary shelter must also be of sufficient weight to prevent overturning, and of sufficient size to allow each animal to stand upright, turn around and lie down in a natural position and go in and out of the structure comfortably; and

A shelter or enclosure is considered unclean when it contains an excessive amount of animal waste and is considered unhealthy when its condition is likely to cause illness or injury to the animal.

K. "Necessary water" shall mean accessible clean water provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in sufficient quantity to satisfy the animal's needs. Snow and ice are not to be deemed an adequate water source.

L. "Owner" shall mean any person, firm, business, corporation or other entity having a right of property in either a dog or cat, or who keeps or harbors a dog or cat for a period of at least thirty days, or who has a dog or cat in his care or custody, or who knowingly permits a dog or cat to remain on or about any premises which is owned, rented, and/or leased by such person, firm, business, corporation or other entity.

M. "Premises" shall mean any real property titled in the name of or held in fee by or rented or leased to the owner of a dog or cat. For purposes of this article, land surrounding apartments, condominiums and mobile home courts shall not be considered premises of the tenant unless such land is owned outright in fee or otherwise, or rented by lease or other rental agreement. Sporting dogs and multiple dogs housed together may be kept at any reasonable location on occupied premises. (See VI.C.4. for required "confinement" standards.) No one dog shall be confined or restrained in a location isolated from daily outdoor activities. Furthermore, no dog, other than a livestock guard dog or other trained guard dog, shall be kept on any unoccupied premises.

N. "Restrained" means secured on the premises of the owner using a stationary point or trolley system or, whether on or off the premises, secured by leash or lead under the control of a person physically capable of restraining the animal and/or obedient to that person's commands.

O. "Running at large" shall mean a dog that is off the premises of the owner and that is not under the control of an owner by leash as defined herein (other than dogs within the confines of an authorized Dog Park.) A dog found on the owner's premises shall be considered to be running at large when the owner is not on the premises and the dog has been cited off the owner's premises by the Animal Control Officer or other law enforcement officer but has returned to the premises during pursuit by the Animal Control Officer or other law enforcement officer. A dog shall not be considered to be "running at large" when the dog is a hunting dog employed by the owner in hunt and/or chase or in training for hunt and/or chase and, when under such circumstances, accompanied by the owner.

P. "Sanitary" shall mean an area that is reasonably clean and free of excessive amounts of animal waste, excessive debris or refuse, or other potentially hazardous waste materials.

Q. "Stationary Point" shall mean a fixed, unchanging point, such as an anchor or stake in the ground, or a structure or fixture.

R. "Tree Trolley System" shall mean a tethering system using one tree or other single stationary point which allows the tethered dog to move freely 360 degrees around the tree or other fixed point.

S. "Vaccination" shall mean the process whereby an animal is immunized against rabies using a vaccine and a technique authorized by State law.

T. "Vicious dog" shall mean a dog that has bitten (so as to cause serious injury), maimed or killed one or more human beings in one or more unprovoked attacks. A "dangerous dog" shall mean a dog that causes a substantial puncture of a person's skin by teeth or nails without causing serious injury; provided, however, that a nip, scratch, or abrasion shall not be sufficient to classify a dog as dangerous. An "aggressive dog" is one who, while off the owner's property or not under the owner's control kills or seriously injures a domestic animal (Dog or cat); provided, however that this definition shall not apply where the death of such pet animal is caused by a dog that is working or training as a hunting dog, herding dog, or predator control dog and the owner has upon him/her a valid hunting license and proof of vaccinations. For purposes of the animal control officer's authority to regulate confinement of animals, a dog may also be considered aggressive if it has been trained to attack upon command, signal or reflex and to guard, protect, or patrol premises, including a dog used as an attack, search and security dog for any law enforcement agency.

II. Rabies vaccination and registration required.

A. It shall be unlawful for any owner to own, keep, harbor or permit to remain on the premises of such owner any dog or cat over six months of age that has not been vaccinated against rabies in accordance with Tenn. Code An. 68-8-101 through 68-8-114, as may be amended from time to time. It is recommended that dogs be vaccinated against rabies between the ages of 3 — 6 months. A certificate of such vaccination shall be issued by a licensed veterinarian duly authorized to administer such a vaccination and such certificate shall be kept by the owner, subject to the inspection of the Animal Control Officer, Health Officer or law enforcement officer.

B. Standard for vaccination. It shall be the duty of the veterinarian, duly licensed by the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners and approved by the Board of Health, to administer such a vaccination and to perform such vaccination in such a manner as meets the standards prescribed by the Health Officer, and the laws of the State of Tennessee.

C. Dogs to wear rabies tags:

1. It shall be unlawful for any owner to own, keep, harbor or permit to remain on or about the premises of such owner any dog six months of age and older that does not wear a tag evidencing that the dog has been vaccinated in accordance with the provisions of these rules and regulations.

2. It shall be presumed that any dog not wearing a rabies tag as required herein has not been vaccinated, unless otherwise established. Proof of vaccination, however, shall not relieve an owner of a dog not wearing the required rabies tag from sanction for violation of these rules and regulations.

3. Tags evidencing that a dog has been vaccinated in accordance with the provisions of these rules and regulations shall be obtained from the Animal Control Officer or any agent(s) that he/she may from time to time designate (including duly licensed veterinarians) and pursuant to such requirements as the Animal Control Officer may set forth, including the right to charge a reasonable fee for such rabies tag. Each rabies tag shall contain an individual serial number, the name of the county, and the year of vaccination. In the event that a rabies tag shall be lost, the Animal Control Officer or an appointed agent, on request by the owner, shall issue a duplicate tag, for which the owner may be required to pay a reasonable fee as required by the Animal Control Officer and approved by the Public Health Committee of the Williamson County Board of Commissioners. No refunds shall be available on any rabies tag.

4. The Animal Control Officer shall require that each owner present satisfactory proof that the dog for which a rabies tag is sought has received a vaccination in accordance with the provisions of these rules and regulations.

5. Upon purchasing any rabies tag as herein provided, the owner shall receive a certificate of receipt. Each certificate shall contain the following information: (a) whether the rabies tag is purchased for a dog; (b) the owner's name, address and telephone number; (c) type of breed and color and gender of the dog; (d) date and place of vaccination; (e) serial number on rabies tag issued and (f) date of re-vaccination.

6. It shall be unlawful to transfer a rabies tag, from one dog to another.

7. Any owner moving into Williamson County from out of state shall acquire a Williamson County rabies tag, as herein provided, or be in violation of this Section. An owner moving into Williamson County with a valid rabies tag from another Tennessee county need not obtain a Williamson County tag until the date of expiration of the tag from the other County.

8. A dog that is seized or impounded and is not wearing a rabies tag may be subject to disposition as deemed appropriate by the Animal Control veterinarian (or Director in the absence of the veterinarian) when not claimed

by the owner within five (5) business days, **excluding Sundays, legal holidays, and the day of impoundment or seizure.** If such animal is otherwise eligible for adoption, the animal may be placed for adoption upon ensuring that vaccination is current.

9. Any dog lawfully impounded pursuant to the provisions of this resolution may be microchipped at the discretion of the Animal Control Officer.

III. **Running at large prohibited.** It shall be unlawful for any owner, as defined herein, or other person who has control or custody over a dog, whether such control or custody shall be temporary or otherwise, to allow a dog to run at large. Any unaltered animal that has been impounded two (2) times within any twelve (12) month period or a total of five (5) times over any time period, shall be spayed or neutered at the owner's expense prior to release from the shelter.

IV. **Cruelty, Abuse & Neglect Prohibited.** It shall be a violation of these rules and regulations for any person to:

- A. Torture, maim or grossly overwork an animal;
- B. Intentionally inflict pain or suffering upon an animal. In the case of activities where physical pain is necessarily caused, such as medical, research, food processing, customary and normal veterinary and agricultural husbandry practices, pest elimination, and animal training and hunting, "cruelty" means a failure to employ the most humane method reasonably available;
- C. Fail to provide necessary food, water, care (including necessary veterinary care) or shelter for an animal in the person's custody, or refuse to provide a reasonable remedy or relief recommended by the Animal Control Officer for an injured or diseased animal (provided, however, that it shall not be considered a violation of these rules and regulations to refuse or fail to provide a remedy or relief where a licensed veterinarian states in writing that such decision is a reasonable course of action);
- D. Abandon an animal in the person's custody. Any animal control officer shall have authority to intervene to provide necessary care for any dog or cat so abandoned or neglected.
- E. Transport or confine an animal in a cruel manner or in an inhumane manner that exposes the animal to extreme heat or cold resulting in physical distress or suffering;
- F. Knowingly tie, tether, or restrain a dog in a manner that results or may reasonably be expected to result in the dog suffering cuts, abrasions, contusions, disfigurement, physical pain, temporary illness or impairment of a bodily member, organ or function;
- G. Cause an animal to drag any unreasonably heavy object, including but not limited to cinder blocks, heavy weights, bricks, chains, or logs;
- H. Hoard animals, including to collect animals and fail to provide them with humane/adequate care, collect dead animals that are not properly disposed of as required by this resolution and state law; or collect, house, or harbor animals in filthy, unsanitary conditions that constitute a health hazard to the animals being kept, and/or to the animals or residents of adjacent property.

Any animal control officer or other officer empowered to act by law may impound any animal found to be in distress due to cruelty, abuse, or neglect as defined herein and by applicable state law.

V. **Vicious/dangerous/aggressive dogs shall be securely restrained or confined:**

- A. It shall be unlawful for any owner, as defined herein, or other person who

has control or custody over a dog, whether such control or custody shall be temporary or otherwise, to own, keep, harbor or permit to remain on or about the premises of such owner a vicious or dangerous dog unless such vicious, dangerous or aggressive dog shall be securely restrained or confined to an area so as to prevent contact with other animals and persons. Any person having control or custody over a vicious, dangerous or aggressive dog, as defined herein, shall obtain approval from the Animal Control Officer as to the adequacy of the restraint or confinement used to secure the vicious or dangerous dog so as to prevent contact with other animals and persons. A vicious, dangerous or aggressive dog not restrained or confined as provided herein may be seized by the Animal Control Officer or any law enforcement agency for impoundment or confinement. Any such animal shall remain so impounded until the requirements for confinement or restraint imposed by the Animal Control officer are met, and/or pending further legal action.

B. It shall be unlawful for any owner to own, keep, harbor or permit to remain on or about the premises of such owner a vicious, dangerous or aggressive animal without posting notice on the premises in an area in plain view to the general public that a vicious, dangerous or aggressive animal is on the premises.

C. Upon receiving a report of a dog believed to be subject to classification as a vicious, dangerous or aggressive dog as defined in this resolution, the animal control officer shall make such investigation as necessary to determine whether such dog is subject to such classification. If the dog poses an immediate threat to public safety, the dog shall be immediately seized and impounded and kept at the animal center until an appropriate resolution of the matter can be reached.

If the dog owner has taken immediate action to ensure the dog cannot pose a public threat and has proven he can properly contain the dog, the animal control officer may, in the agency's sole discretion, allow the dog to remain with the dog owner with specific directions to contain the dog. This section does not exempt any requirements related to rabies quarantine in the case of an animal to human bite.

When the animal control officer determines that any dog is subject to classification as an aggressive, dangerous or vicious dog, the animal control officer shall mail a dated notice to the dog's owner within 72 hours. The notice shall include identifying information for the dog and shall detail the events leading to the conclusion that the dog is aggressive, dangerous or vicious. The notice shall include a summary of the animal control officer's recommendations for confinement or restraint of the animal, or in an instance where the animal control officer does not believe that the animal can be rehabilitated, a recommendation for humane euthanasia of the animal.

The animal control officer may return the animal to the owner upon reaching agreement with the owner of the aggressive, dangerous or vicious dog for certain restrictions as ordered by the animal control officer, which may include but are not limited to:

1. A proper enclosure designed to securely confine the dog on the owner's property, indoors, or in a securely locked and enclosed pen, fence, or structure suitable to prevent the dog from leaving such property, together with a written agreement by the owner of the dog to keep the animal so confined;
2. Clearly visible warning signs posted at all entrances to the premises where the dog resides; and/or;
3. A microchip containing an identification number and capable of being scanned is injected under the skin between the shoulder blades of the dog and the owner provides the registration number to the animal control officer. The owner shall keep the registration information updated, and be able to provide evidence upon inspection and recertification of such update.

If the owner does not comply with the safeguards ordered by the animal control officer, the officer may pursue appropriate civil and criminal penalties, including surrender of the animal. Unless determined otherwise by the Animal Control Officer in his/her sole discretion, the dog shall remain in the custody of

Williamson County Animal Center pending the outcome of any such legal action.

If any animal that has been designated as a vicious, dangerous or aggressive dog is the subject of a Court order or a signed agreement with the animal control officer, and such animal again injures another person or domestic animal (dog or cat) under circumstances that would justify the designation, the animal control officer may seize and impound the animal, and may move forward with legal process to humanely euthanize the animal if deemed necessary.

**VI. Restraint & Confinement Regulations.** The following shall apply to restraint and confinement of animals on the owner's premises or other premises when used as a primary means of confinement or restraint in any twenty-four hour period.

A. No person shall allow any animal to remain confined or restrained in an area that is not sanitary as defined herein, or to remain confined or restrained in such a manner as to restrict the animal's ability to move around naturally. Tethering must be by trolley system or tree trolley system rather than a rope or chain at a stationary point that may result in the animal becoming entangled so as to restrict reasonable movement throughout the day and night. This section shall not apply to the restraint of an animal while the owner or other responsible individual is walking with or accompanying the animal on a leash as defined herein. Unaltered animals may not be tethered, but rather must be confined indoors or in a securely fenced area.

B. Trolley System. If confining by trolley system, the dog must be restrained by a cable or cord that is at least ten (10) usable feet in length, with swivels on both ends, and is properly attached to a pulley or trolley mounted on a cable which is also at least ten (10) usable feet in length and mounted at least four (4) feet and no more than seven (7) feet above ground level in a manner so as not to interfere or become entangled with objects on the property. The animal must be able to fully lie down with head comfortably on the ground and have enough usable cord/cable to enter and exit necessary shelter head first.

C. Tree Trolley System. If confining by tree trolley system, the dog will be restrained with a system whereby a loose-fitting cable or cord (preferably vinyl covered steel cable or any smooth material that cannot dry rot or break easily) with a loose-fitting metal ring sliding easily around it is attached seamlessly around a tree. A cable or cord of a minimum of 15 ft. in length is then attached at one end to the metal ring and at the other end to the collar or harness of the dog allowing the dog to move freely around the tree or other fixed point. All other restraint and confinement regulations in Section VI apply.

D. When any animal is restrained on a trolley system or tree trolley system or confined in any manner:

1. The cable or cord restraining the animal should be lightweight and may not be more than one-tenth (1/10) of the body weight of the animal;

2. A swivel must be located at both ends of the cable or cord (the end attached to stationary object and the end attached to the animal);

3. The cable or cord must be attached to a properly fitted collar or harness that is commonly recognized as a pet collar or harness (choke and pinch collars or chains of any kind are prohibited while tethered);

4. The area where the animal is restrained or confined is primarily level ground and said ground must be clear hazardous substances and clear of objects that may cause the animal to become injured or entangled or cause strangulation. If more than one animal is tethered, the animals must be tethered separately and with sufficient distance from the other so as not to allow the animals or their tethers to become entangled. The area must be of safe distance from a roadway, cliff, or any other location that may endanger the animal's life; and

5. The system employed shall not allow the animal to go beyond the owner's property.

E. Confinement. An indoor enclosure or crate is overcrowded unless its area is at least the square of the length of each enclosed or crated animal in inches (from tip of nose to base of tail) plus six (6) inches for each animal confined therein. When a dog/cat is confined outside in a pen or an enclosure, the pen must be a minimum on all sides of four (4) times the length of the dog/cat (head to base of tail) plus space for shelter. See I.J. for "necessary shelter" standards. For each additional dog/cat sharing the pen, a minimum of one additional dog/cat length (using, measurement of largest dog/cat) is required for each side.

VII. Unprovoked attack by a dog or cat.

A. The owner of any dog or cat that attacks by biting, maiming or killing a person shall surrender such dog or cat to seizure, confinement and/or examination, including external examination or submission of the dog or cat to rabies testing, as may be required by the Animal Control Officer, Health Officer and/or any law enforcement authorities. Bite quarantine/isolation protocols adopted by Williamson County Animal Center and available for review upon request shall be incorporated fully herein, and shall govern supervision of the animal in the days following the occurrence.

B. If a dog or cat is on its own property or on a leash off property and is a victim of an unprovoked attack by a dog or cat, the incident shall be reported to the Animal Control Officer. An Animal Control Officer shall take a report from the owner and from any eyewitnesses and shall advise the victim's owner of his/her right to file a complaint in General Sessions Court for recovery of damages such as veterinary fees, in addition to any citation issued hereunder by the Animal Control Officer. The owner of the attacking animal shall, at a minimum, be cited by the Animal Control officer and be fined \$50.00 for allowing the animal to run at large if the offending animal has attacked a dog or cat on the victim animal's owner's property or while the victim animal was on a leash and the offending animal was not on a leash or was not properly controlled by the owner. Further, the Animal Control Officer may impose appropriate requirements for confinement and control of the dog or cat, including barring a dog from public dog parks if the incident occurred in such a park.

C. The owner of a dog that bites, maims or kills one or more persons in one or more unprovoked attacks may be required to surrender the animal for destruction pursuant to the procedure defined by state law. The owner of a dog or cat that kills or maims one or more other domesticated animals in one or more unprovoked attacks or the owner of a cat that bites one or more persons may be required to surrender the dog or cat on written order of the Animal Control Officer. An owner may appeal to a court of competent jurisdiction for review of the order of the Animal Control Officer by filing a petition in that court within five days of receipt of the written order issued by the Animal Control Officer.

VIII. Reporting of dog and cat bites.

A. It shall be unlawful for any owner of a dog or cat, or other person who has control or custody over a dog or cat, whether such control or custody shall be temporary or otherwise, to fail to report to the Animal Control Officer or police department any incident of such dog or cat biting one or more persons, provided that such owner or other person having control or custody over the dog or cat shall have knowledge of or a reasonable basis to know that a biting occurred. "Biting" shall be reported pursuant to this section if the animal's teeth broke the skin of a person.

B. It shall be unlawful for any person who provides medical treatment to another for a dog, cat or other warm-blooded animal bite to fail to report the bite to the Animal Control Officer or police department

IX. Seizure and Impoundment – Circumstances, Process and Disposition.

A. Any dog that is not wearing a tag as required by these rules and regulations, or any vicious, dangerous or aggressive dog not restrained and confined as provided in these rules and regulations, or any dog or cat that has contracted or is suspected of having contracted rabies, or any animal that has been bitten by a dog, cat or other animal that has contracted or is suspected of having contracted rabies, or any dog running at large, as defined herein, or any dog who has killed or damaged livestock, or any dog that has attacked by biting, maiming or killing one or more persons or other animals, or any dog or cat reasonably believed to be in a life-threatening situation (including threats during domestic violence) or to be suffering as a result of cruelty, abuse, neglect or abandonment, may be seized by the Animal Control Officer, and/or any law enforcement agency, and their agents.

B. Seizure may be accomplished by any means necessary (including the use of a tranquilizer gun) to subdue and seize the animal by the Animal Control Officer, and/or law enforcement agency, and their agents. Such authorities shall also have the authority to exercise the use of a deadly force against any dog or cat or other animal that has contracted or is suspected of having contracted rabies, or that is attacking or threatening to attack by biting, maiming or killing one or more persons or other animals.

C. Any dog or cat seized pursuant to these rules and regulations may be impounded and/or confined to such areas as prescribed by the Animal Control Officer.

D. When any dog or cat wearing a tag or other emblem to identify the owner shall be seized and impounded or confined, the Animal Control Officer shall obtain available contact information from the veterinarian who issued the rabies tag and shall cause notice of such seizure to be sent by registered mail to the owner, such notice to be addressed to the last known mailing address of the owner. Other reasonable attempts to obtain available contact information (including scanning for microchips) and to send notice shall be made. Notice shall provide the reason that the dog or cat has been seized and impounded or confined and shall state that the owner must appear to claim the dog or cat within five (5) days subsequent to the date the notice was mailed, and that upon failure to so appear the Animal Control Veterinarian or Director may place for adoption or euthanize the dog or cat. Litters of kittens or puppies that are obviously abandoned may be placed for adoption after three (3) working days at the discretion of the Animal Control Officer. For purposes of this Section, the five-seven days shall not include Sunday or legal holidays, and shall not include the day of seizure, regardless of the time of day such dog or cat is seized.

E. If the owner appears to claim or redeem the dog or cat, he shall pay to the Animal Control Officer a fee as established by a fee schedule implemented by the Health Officer and/or Animal Control officer for each day that the dog has been held in impoundment or confinement. In addition, any animal impounded or confined pursuant to this section shall be microchipped before return to the owner, at the owner's cost. The fee schedule shall be uniform in application and may be amended from time to time by the Williamson County Board of Commissioners. On payment of the impoundment and microchip fees, the dog or cat may be returned to the owner, unless other violations of state law or this resolution (such as failure to vaccinate, neglect or cruelty, etc.) cause the Animal Control Officer or law enforcement officer to conclude that there is good cause for the dog or cat to remain impounded or confined. Should the Animal Control Officer and/or any law enforcement agencies direct that a dog or cat remain impounded or confined for any period of time after the owner pays the fee referenced above, such direction shall be in writing, stating the reasons therefore, and a copy shall be provided for the owner on request. If charges under state law or this resolution are not brought within ten (10) days of the owner's payment of the fee, the animal shall be released to owner.

F. When any dog lacking a tag or other emblem to identify the owner or any cat lacking a means to identify the owner shall be seized and impounded or confined, the Animal Control Officer shall hold such dog or cat for three (3) days, unless directed by the Animal Control Officer, Health Officer, and/or any law enforcement agency to impound or confine the dog or cat for an additional period of time. For purposes of this Section, the three (3) days shall not include Sundays and shall not include the day of seizure regardless of the time of

day such dog or cat is seized

G. At the expiration of the time required by this Section or by the Animal Control Officer, Health Officer and/or law enforcement agency for the impoundment or confinement of a dog or cat, the Animal Control Veterinarian (or Director in the Veterinarian's absence) may place for adoption or humanely euthanize such dog or cat.

H. The impoundment or confinement period, as set forth in this resolution, may be waived by the Animal Control Officer and his/her agents when any dog or cat seized is determined to be suffering from an infectious or dangerous disease or is determined to be suffering from an illness or physical injury that requires immediate medical treatment or humane euthanasia. When the five-day period is waived, the Animal Control Officer shall obtain contact information as described above and shall attempt to contact the owner as stated on the tag or on any other emblem of identification found on the dog or cat by telephone prior to disposition of the dog or cat. In instances where the impoundment or confinement period is waived, the dog or cat involved may be placed for adoption, humanely euthanized or subject to other appropriate placement as determined by the Animal Control Veterinarian (or Director in the Veterinarian's absence), consistent with applicable law and policy.

I. Any dog or cat that has contracted rabies or that is suspected of having contracted rabies or that has attacked by biting, maiming, or killing one or more persons shall be impounded or confined subject to the directions and orders regarding the place of impoundment or confinement, the care, custody, treatment, observation, examination, and disposition of such dog or cat as issued by the Animal Control Officer, Health Officer and/or any law enforcement agency.

X Animal Fighting:

A. It is unlawful for any person to:

1. Own, possess, keep, use or train any bull, bear, dog, cock, swine or other animal, for the purpose of fighting, baiting or injuring another such animal, for amusement, sport or gain;
2. Cause, for amusement, sport or gain, any animal referenced in subdivision (a)(1) to fight, bait or injure another animal, or each other;
3. Permit any acts stated in subdivisions (a)(1) and (2) to be done on any premises under the person's charge or control, or aid or abet those acts;
4. Be knowingly present, as a spectator, at any place or building where preparations are being made for an exhibition for the fighting, baiting or injuring of any animal, with the intent to be present at the exhibition, fighting, baiting or injuring;
5. Knowingly cause a person under eighteen (18) years of age to attend an animal fight; or
6. Possess, own, buy, sell, transfer, or manufacture cock fighting paraphernalia with the intent that the paraphernalia be used in promoting, facilitating, training for, or furthering cock fighting.

It is not an offense to own, possess or keep cocks, or aid or abet the ownership, possession or keeping of cocks, for the sole purpose of selling or transporting cocks to a location in which possession or keeping of cocks is legal, as long as it does not violate state or federal law.

“Cock fighting paraphernalia” means gaffs, slashers, heels, or any other sharp implement designed to be attached in place of the natural spur of a cock or game fowl.

XII. Confinement of unaltered female dogs and cats in season. It shall be unlawful for any owner of a dog or cat, as defined herein, or any other person having control or custody over a dog or cat, whether such control or custody be temporary or otherwise to fail to confine an unaltered female dog or cat in an enclosed area during the time such dog or cat is in season or in heat. The confinement shall be for a period of twenty-four (24) days in such a manner that will prevent the unaltered female dog or cat from leaving the confined area and shall be sufficient to prevent the unaltered female dog from being reached by any male dogs, except for planned breeding. When

exercised, the animal shall be properly leashed. Any unaltered female dog or cat not so confined may be impounded by the Animal Control Officer, and/or law enforcement agency. Dogs or cats impounded two (2) times or more due to improper or inadequate confinement while in season must be spayed at the owner's expense prior to release from the Animal Control facility.

**XIII. Disposition of dead dogs and cats.** Persons who own, keep, or harbor dogs or cats shall be required to dispose of such dog or cat remains in a proper and lawful manner upon the death of such animal.

**XIV. Interference with or violation of orders issued by the Animal Control Officer, Health Officer or any law enforcement agency.** it shall be unlawful for any person to interfere with or hinder, or to harass, verbally or physically any animal Control Officer, Health Officer, or any law enforcement agency while such officer are in the performance of their duties prescribed in accordance with these rules and regulations. It shall further be unlawful for any person to violate any orders issued by the Animal Control Officer, Health Officer, or any law enforcement agency regarding the seizure, impoundment, or confinement of a dog or cat as provided herein. It shall further be unlawful for any person to knowingly or willfully provide false information regarding an animal to any Animal Control Officer, Department Personnel or Health Officer.

**XV. Violations-penalty.** In addition to all applicable remedies and penalties under State law, any person found in violation of any of the provisions of these rules and regulations shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be fined fifty (\$50.00) dollars per violation. Each day that a violation exists shall constitute a separate offense under this provision. Each animal affected by a violation shall also constitute a separate offense. For violations of Section XIV above, each separate act of interference, disobedience, or misrepresentation shall constitute a separate offense. Payment of the fine without curing the violation shall not constitute compliance. Further, where authorized hereunder, such person may be subject to forfeiture of the animal(s). At the discretion of the Animal Control Officer, first offenders may be permitted to attend a designated course on animal care and custody in lieu of being cited for violation.

All fines collected shall be designated for the Williamson County Animal Control budget to further the health and welfare of animals and education of the public related to animal health and welfare.