

Proposed Darlington County DOG AND CAT Population Control Ordinance 4-08-13 Draft

Section I—Definitions

For the purposes of this ordinance, the following definitions shall prevail:

Altered Animal – a dog or cat that has been surgically rendered incapable of reproduction. (“spayed” for a female, “neutered” for a male)

Animal - a dog/puppy or cat/kitten.

Animal Control Authority – Codes Enforcement personnel.

Animal Shelter—Darlington County Animal Shelter, designated by Darlington County for the purpose of impounding and caring for abandoned, stray, confiscated, or relinquished animals, as well as the reclaiming of stray animals and the placement of unowned, adoptable animals with new owners.

Foster Home – Homes of residents who house animals for the animal shelter for the purpose of placing them in new homes.

Owner - A person having the right of property or custody of a dog or cat, who keeps or harbors a dog or cat, or who knowingly permits a dog or cat to remain on or about any premises occupied by that person.

Person - Any individual, corporation, partnership, organization, or institution commonly recognized by law as a unit.

Registering Authority – Codes Enforcement of Darlington County or any designated representative thereof charged with administering the issuance of registration certificates under the provisions of this ordinance.

Unaltered animal – A dog or cat that has NOT been surgically rendered incapable of reproduction.

Section II—Registration

- A. No person shall own, keep, or harbor any dog or cat over 6 months of age within Darlington County unless such dog or cat is registered. The provisions of this section do not apply to animals owned by a licensed research facility or those held in a veterinary medical facility or government-operated or licensed animal shelter.

- B. Application for registration must be made within 30 days after obtaining a dog or cat 6 months of age or older. The application shall be for an “altered” animal or an “unaltered” animal. This requirement will not apply to a nonresident keeping a dog or cat within Darlington County for no longer than 60 days.
- C. New residents must apply for registration within 45 days of establishing residence.
- D. Written application for a dog or cat registration shall be made to Codes Enforcement and shall include the name and address of the owner and the name, breed, color, age, and sex of the animal.
- E. Applications can be made in person, or by US Postal Service.

Section III. Fees*

- A. Applicants also shall 1) pay the prescribed registration fee and 2) provide proof of current rabies vaccination as well as 3) submit a letter from a veterinarian certifying the alteration of an animal being registered as “altered.”

Registration Fees for Dogs/Puppies, Cats/Kittens of Residents:

- 1-4 Altered animals - \$10.00 per animal – animal lifetime registration
- 5+ Altered animals - \$50.00 for the pack – animal lifetime registration
- Unaltered animals - \$50.00 per animal per year, regardless of number

Registration Fees for Feral Cat Colonies and Domestic Farm Cats

- \$25.00 – lifetime registration, if all cats are altered.
- \$100.00 - per year, if all cats are not altered.

Registration fee for any dog or cat certified by a veterinarian as being Unalterable Due to Age or Health - \$10.00 animal lifetime registration

- B. Veterinarian Offices/Clinics, Boarding Kennels, Grooming Parlors and other Animal Services Establishments do not pay a registration fee.
- C. Registrations may be purchased for multiple years. Registration renewal may be applied for within 60 days prior to the expiration date of a current registration
- D. Registration fees shall be waived for dogs serving the blind or deaf, or government-owned dogs used for law enforcement. All other registration provisions shall apply.
- E. County residents 62 or more years of age will receive a \$2.00 per animal discount, up to \$10.00.

- F. Upon acceptance of the registration application and appropriate fee, Codes Enforcement shall issue a certificate, which the animal's owner shall produce upon request from any animal control, law enforcement, or peace officer.
- G. Darlington County shall maintain a record of all registrations, and such records shall be made available to the County Animal Shelter, Codes Enforcement, and Sheriff's Office.
- H. All fees and fines collected pursuant to this ordinance shall be designated for the funding of, first, the enforcement of this ordinance and then the operation of the Darlington County Animal Shelter, replacing funding currently provided from the General Fund..

*These are the fee amounts which will be recommended to County Council. Council will set the fees it feels are appropriate.

Section IV—Owner Responsibility

All county dog/puppy and cat/kitten owners shall register all of their animals.

Section V—Interference

No person shall interfere with, hinder, or molest any agent of Codes Enforcement in the performance of any duty as provided herein.

Section VI – Penalties

Persons who fail to register as required within the time period specified in Section II (B & C) will be subject to a delinquent fine of \$10.00 for each altered animal and \$25.00 for each unaltered animal.

Anyone interfering with Codes Enforcement, failing to register an animal after a warning, or violation of any other section of this ordinance is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be subject to a fine not exceeding \$500.00 or imprisonment not exceeding 30 days, or both fine and imprisonment. (Section 1-8, Darlington County Code of Ordinances)

Section VII—Repeals (Conflicting Ordinances)

All other ordinances of Darlington County that are in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section VIII —Severability

If any part of this ordinance shall be held invalid, such part shall be deemed severable and the invalidity thereof shall not affect the remaining parts of this ordinance.

Section IX—Applicability

This ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon the expiration of _____ days after its passage and publication.

This ordinance will be enforced along with the SC ordinances for containment and rabies vaccination.

Section X—Safety Clause

The Darlington County Council hereby finds, determines, and declares that this ordinance is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, safety, and welfare of Darlington County and the inhabitants thereof.