



ORDINANCE O-03-24

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF CHAPTER 6 OF THE CODE OF WALKER COUNTY, GEORGIA REGARDING ANIMALS; TO PROVIDE FOR SPAY/NEUTER AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR CATS AND DOGS; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY AND OTHER PURPOSES

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners is the governing authority for Walker County, Georgia; and

WHEREAS, Walker County desires to address the growing number of unwanted animals in our community; and

WHEREAS, Walker County desires to amend its Animals Code to provide for spay/neuter requirements for cats and dogs;

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Walker County that Chapter 6 of the Code of Walker County, Georgia is amended as follows:

1.

ARTICLE II. DIVISION 1. Section 6-21 – Definitions is amended to include the following:

Altered animal: Any animal that has had its reproductive organs surgically removed or sterilized in order to render the animal unable to reproduce. This includes any surgery, procedure such as intratesticular injection, or event rendering the animal physically incapable of reproducing offspring. This includes the removal of ovaries or castration. This is commonly referred to as spay or neuter.

Microchip: An electronic device inserted under an animal's skin. The device, when scanned, reveals a unique identifier containing enough owner information to be contacted.

Unaltered animal: Any animal that has not been spayed, neutered or sterilized.

2.

ARTICLE II. DIVISION 1. Sections 6-26 – 6-53 are amended to include the following:

Section 6-26. - Spay/neuter requirements:

- (a) No person may own, keep, or be in possession of a dog that is six months of age or older which has not been spayed or neutered, unless they hold a license for an unaltered animal or are exempt from this requirement under subsections (e), (f), or (g) hereunder.
- (b) No person may own, keep, or be in possession of a cat that is four months of age or older which has not been spayed or neutered, unless they hold a license for an unaltered animal or are exempt from this requirement under subsections (e), (f), or (g) hereunder.



- (c) Whether a dog or cat shall have obtained the age set forth under subsections (a) or (b) above shall be determined by any authorized County animal control officer, or by any licensed veterinarian, or by reliable veterinarian medical records.
- (d) Prior to the court date listed on the citation, any citation issued for a violation of this section may be dismissed if the owner provides proof to the Walker County Magistrate Court that he or she has since had the animal altered so as to be in compliance.
- (e) Any dog or cat is exempt from the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) above if the person holds an active registered commercial breeder's license or a pet dealer's license issued by the Georgia Department of Agriculture.
- (f) Any dog or cat is exempt from the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) above if a licensed veterinarian has signed a document expressing a medical opinion that the dog or cat should not be spayed or neutered for health reasons for the duration of the relevant health condition.
- (g) Any dog or cat is exempt from the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) above if the dog or cat is deemed to be a working animal as hereinafter defined. A working animal is defined as a dog or cat trained and employed for farming, herding, hunting, service or show, with written proof such as training, law enforcement, or other actual activity as a working or documented service animal. A dog or cat is not a working animal if the dog or cat does only has the common traits of a working animal but does not frequently perform the activities of a working animal set forth above in this subsection.

Section 6-27. – Licensing of Unaltered Animals

- (a) It shall be the duty of each owner, custodian, or harbinger of any dog over six months or cat over four months of age kept, maintained, or harbored within the unincorporated area of Walker County to obtain a license for such dog or cat should they remain unaltered.
- (b) The fee for said license shall be set forth in the fee schedule for the Walker County Animal Shelter established by the Board of Commissioners of Walker County.
- (c) A license for an unaltered animal shall be issued on an annual basis. The beginning date of the license is the date it is purchased. Failure to renew the license within ten business days of the renewal date shall constitute a violation of this Code section.
- (d) The license will be issued in the form of a metal tag that shall be affixed to the animal's collar at all times.
- (e) Revenue generated from unaltered animal licenses shall be kept in a separate account from other funds of the County and earmarked exclusively to fund low cost spay / neuter and microchipping options for the community.

Secs. 6-28—6-53. - Reserved.

3.

This ordinance is effective immediately upon its adoption.

4.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.



5.

If any section, clause, sentence, or phrase of this ordinance is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, then said holding shall in no way affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.

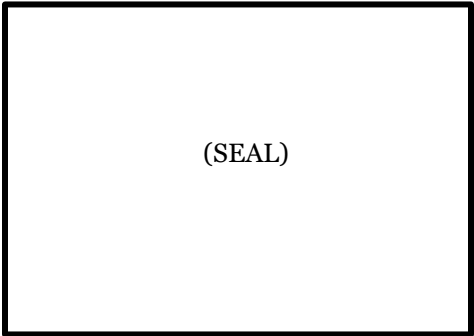
PASSED AND ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2024.

ATTEST:

WALKER COUNTY, GEORGIA

Jessica Staton, Deputy Clerk

SHANNON K. WHITFIELD, Chairman



The foregoing Ordinance received a motion for _____ from Commissioner _____, second by Commissioner _____, and upon the question the vote is _____ ayes, _____ nays to adopt the Resolution.