



# Pet Breeder Regulations

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**Alachua County Animal Services**

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- The Board moved to:
  1. Refer back to staff to come up with potential exemptions for situations where the County is not concerned about having to do inspections.
  2. Return with more specificity of the fee schedule.
  3. Convene a stake holders meeting so interested parties can provide direct input.
  4. Seek the cooperation of the veterinary community in the registration and licensing of all animals.



# Current Regulatory System (State)

- Florida law currently has no comprehensive pet breeder regulatory framework, but does have medical standards and veterinary certificate record retention requirements
- State law allows Animal Services to inspect animals offered for sale and veterinary inspection certificates of those animals
- Ultimately, enforcement lies with FDACS and the State Attorney's Office (misdemeanor)

# Issues

- The County has noticed an increase in pet breeding that results in an abundance of dogs
- More than ten Florida counties have established breeder regulations to maintain the safety of their citizens and animals



## Recommended Action: Establish Pet Breeder Regulations

- Ensure the safety and well-being of the public
- Reduce the fiscal impact to the County of unaltered animals
- Regulate breeding conditions to prevent inhumane treatment
- Decrease the number of unwanted animals



# Types of Breeders



# Three Types of Breeder

- Accidental Breeder
- Hobby Breeder
- Commercial Breeder



# Accidental Breeder

- Personal pet owner whose pet is unaltered and may be unintentionally impregnated
- Currently, spay and neuter is incentivized through discount on pet license required by Alachua County Code and owners are required to confine animals in heat





# Hobby Breeder

- Distinct class of breeders above the “accidental breeder” level, but below a separate defined “commercial breeder” or “pet dealer” standard
- Usually a small operation, often family-run out of a private residence



# Commercial Breeder or Pet Dealer

- Defined in Florida Statute § 828.29(13):
  - Business or individual engaged in annual sale of more than 2 litters, or 20 dogs or cats, whichever is greater
- State law protects consumers from false advertising, omissions, medical issues, and otherwise unsavory business practices, but doesn't comprehensively regulate the operation



# Local Solutions



# Regulate Intact Animals

- Regulate breeders by limiting the number of intact cats and dogs allowed on a premises by requiring permits with escalating fees for ranges of intact animals
  - Jacksonville's Excessive Unsterilized Animals code – escalating permit for more than 5 unsterilized animals on premise

# Regulate Intact Animals (continued)

- Prohibit unsterilized animals without breeder permit
  - Palm Beach County
- Require spay/neuter of cats unless certain exemptions are met for licensed breeders, pedigrees, medical exceptions
  - Citrus County
- Currently, County regulates intact animals through differential licensing and a requirement to confine animals in heat
- These options would cover “accidental breeders”



# Regulate Active Breeders

- Require anyone engaging in breeding, selling, or owning a stud to obtain a Breeders Permit
  - Ordinance includes:
    - Retention of all veterinary and transaction records for 1 year from sale
    - Consent to inspections of premises housing breeding operations and animals
    - Yearly fee, established by fee schedule depending on the intensity of the breeding, to cover costs of enforcement
    - Revocable permit if conditions not met



## Regulate Active Breeders (continued)

- Many jurisdictions distinguish hobby from commercial breeding by setting maximum number of animals offered for sale
  - Most common definition for hobby breeder allows sale of up to 20 animals, or 2 litters, a year
- Hobby breeders have lower permit fees

# Enforcement

- Enforcement includes:
  - Revocation of permit
  - Codes enforcement for failing to have appropriate permit or failing to meet defined standards
  - Cruelty petitions for cruel or neglectful breeders where conditions observed during inspections demonstrate inadequate care
  - Injunction to require breeder to comply with Breeder's License program or cease breeding/sale of animals



# Fee Schedule

- Animal Services Fee Schedule would be updated with a differential licensing cost for all intended breeding animals under the ownership of hobby breeder or commercial breeder.
- Cost would be established in fee schedule, to curb accidental breeders and incentivize sterilization

# Fee Schedule (continued)

- Commercial Breeder License: **\$200**
- Hobby Breeder License: **\$100**
- Or fall into licensing schedule for accidental breeder and non-breeder license holders
  - License for not sterilized and/or microchipped animal: **\$40**
  - License for sterilized and microchipped animal: **\$10**

# Recommendation



- Adopt the Pet Breeder Regulations ordinance establishing a Breeder's License program with the following standards:
  - Discounted licensing for all animals, with costs established in the fee schedule, to curb “accidental breeders” and incentivize sterilization
  - A breeder's permit program for hobby, and commercial, breeders of dogs subject to:
    - 1) Retention of all veterinary and transaction records for 1 year from sale;
    - 2) Consent to inspections of premises housing breeding operations and animals;
    - 3) Standards of husbandry and veterinary care for animals;
    - 4) Maximum number of adult intact animals at a breeding facility;
    - 5) Fees (established by fee schedule) depending on intensity of breeding