Recent Ordinance Revisions

Denver Animal Protection enforces Denver City Ordinances as outlined in Chapter 8 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code 2018: Most recent revision process

Reasoning:
• Cleanup of language throughout ordinance: referencing humane euthanasia, the Department, and department personnel
• Update of Ordinance: many sections had not been updated since 1950
Ordinance Updates - 2018

• Barking ordinance
• Animal cruelty
• Animal neglect
• Conditions of release of impounded animal
• Contestation of animal impoundment or ownership determinations

• Stratification for aggressive animal determinations created:
  Animal bite or attack
  Potentially dangerous animal
  Dangerous animal
• Cost of Care ordinance (added)
Recent Revisions From Legislators and Voters

By City Council:
• Cat declawing made illegal (November 2017)

By Voters:
• Breed ban amended to allow “pit bull” breeds within the City and County of Denver if the owner obtains a Breed-Restricted Permit and abides by conditions of the permit (November 2020, effective January 1, 2021)
Organizational Changes
Since 2018
For Breed-Restricted Permit Process
• Compliance Administrator position added
• Training and certification of staff
• Policies and standards created
• Statistics being collected in a structured way in preparation for 2023 presentation to City Council
Organizational Changes Since 2018

- Standards created regarding when to mandate spay or neuter prior to release of an impounded animal
- Created permit program for potentially dangerous animals
- Cost of Care Program oversight
- Barking dog process update
- Neglect investigations involving lack of veterinary care
Why Revise Chapter 8 Now?

• Clean up of confusing, conflicting, or redundant language
• Simplify sections
• Prosecution issues
• Terminology
• Streamline court processes
• Enhance public safety, public health, and the environment
Significant Revisions

Notification and Opportunity of a Hearing for Owner of Impounded Animal

• Codify and streamline a pet owner’s appeal rights in one place in the chapter for all impoundments having a criminal case pending, or if an animal was simply picked up roaming in the City, or if there was a final notice or order issued by the Department.
Significant Revisions

Animal Attack or Bite:
- Update language for affirmative defenses to mirror the language in state statutes
- Prior Language “Threatened or attacked an owner or keeper of the animal” and “Attempted to assault another person”

Dangerous Animals:
- Update definition to include animals that have been declared dangerous by similar statutes in other jurisdictions

Potentially Dangerous Animal:
- Modify language to state that affirmative defenses apply unless an animal has been potentially dangerous in another jurisdiction
Significant Revisions

Neglect of Animals Prohibited
• Update language around veterinary care – old language: “veterinary care needed to prevent the animal from suffering”

Definitions:
• Add a definition of “Provoke” – “means any action or activity, whether intentional or unintentional, which would be reasonably expected to cause a normal animal in similar circumstances to react in a manner similar to that shown by the evidence”
Breed-Restricted Permit Update

• Ease of access – permit conditions
• Notification to permit holders
• More clearly defined decision-making process
• Other permits
Questions?

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