

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023**

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SENATE BILL 511

Short Title: Stray Hold Regulatory Changes. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Hanig and Alexander (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

April 4, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT REGARDING THE DISPOSITION OF UNOWNED CATS AND AMENDING
LAWS FOR DISPOSAL OF ANIMALS SURRENDERED TO AN ANIMAL SHELTER.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 19A-32.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 19A-32.1. Minimum holding period for animals in animal shelters; public viewing of animals in animal shelters; disposition of animals.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, all animals received by an animal shelter or by an agent of an animal shelter shall be held for a minimum holding period of 72 hours, or for any longer minimum period established by a board of county commissioners, prior to being euthanized or otherwise disposed of.

(a1) Healthy cats impounded at a shelter without discernible indicia of ownership may be sterilized, ear-tipped, vaccinated for rabies, administered other vaccinations as recommended by the treating veterinarian, and returned to the location where trapped with no minimum hold requirements under this section.

...

(j) Animal shelters shall maintain a record of all animals impounded at the shelter, shall retain those records for a period of at least three years from the date of impoundment, and shall make those records available for inspection during regular inspections pursuant to this Article or upon the request of a representative of the Animal Welfare Section. Animal shelters shall also maintain a record of cats disposed of as set forth in subsection (a1) of this section. These records shall contain, at a minimum:

- (1) The date of impoundment.
- (2) The length of impoundment.
- (3) The disposition of each animal, including the name and address of any person to whom the animal is released, any institution that person represents, and the identifying information required under subsection (i) of this section.
- (4) Other information required by rules adopted by the Board of Agriculture."

SECTION 2. G.S. 19A-65 reads as rewritten:

"§ 19A-65. Annual Report Required From Every Animal Shelter in Receipt of State or Local Funding.

Every county or city animal shelter, or animal shelter operated under contract with a county or city or otherwise in receipt of State or local funding shall prepare an annual report in the form required by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services setting forth the numbers, by species, of animals received into the shelter, the number adopted out, the number returned to owner, the number of cats returned to the location where trapped under G.S. 19A-32.1(a1), and



1 the number destroyed. The report shall also contain the total operating expenses of the shelter
2 and the cost per animal handled. The report shall be filed with the Department of Agriculture and
3 Consumer Services by March 1 of each year. A city or county that does not timely file the report
4 required by this section is not eligible to receive reimbursement payments under G.S. 19A-64
5 during the calendar year in which the report was to be filed."

6 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 130A-190(a) reads as rewritten:

7 "(a) Issuance. – A person who administers a rabies vaccine shall issue a rabies vaccination
8 tag to the owner of the animal. The rabies vaccination tag shall show the year issued, a
9 vaccination number, the words "North Carolina" or the initials "N.C." and the words "rabies
10 vaccine." Dogs shall wear rabies vaccination tags at all times. Cats and ferrets must wear rabies
11 vaccination tags unless they are exempt from wearing the tags by local ~~ordinance~~ordinance, or
12 are unowned outdoor cats that have been ear-tipped to indicate sterilization and vaccination as
13 set forth in G.S. 130A-192."

14 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 130A-192 reads as rewritten:

15 "**§ 130A-192. Animals not wearing required rabies vaccination tags.**

16 (a) The Animal Control Officer shall canvass the county to determine if there are any
17 animals not wearing the required rabies vaccination tag. If an animal required to wear a tag is
18 found not wearing one, the Animal Control Officer shall check to see if the owner's identification
19 can be found on the ~~animal~~animal, or if the animal is a cat with a tipped ear. A cat with a tipped
20 ear indicating that the cat has been sterilized and vaccinated is exempt from the requirement to
21 wear a rabies tag. If the animal is wearing an owner identification tag with information enabling
22 the owner of the animal to be contacted, or if the Animal Control Officer otherwise knows who
23 the owner is, the Animal Control Officer shall notify the owner in writing to have the animal
24 vaccinated against rabies and to produce the required rabies vaccination certificate to the Animal
25 Control Officer within three days of the notification. If the animal is not wearing an owner
26 identification tag and the Animal Control Officer does not otherwise know who the owner is, the
27 Animal Control Officer may impound the animal. The duration of the impoundment of these
28 animals shall be established by the county board of commissioners, but the duration shall not be
29 less than 72 hours. Healthy cats without discernable indicia of ownership may be sterilized,
30 ear-tipped, vaccinated for rabies, administered other vaccinations as recommended by the
31 treating veterinarian, and returned to the location where they were trapped without any minimum
32 impoundment period under this section. During the impoundment period, the Animal Control
33 Officer shall make a reasonable effort to locate the owner of the animal. If the Animal Control
34 Officer has access at no cost or at a reasonable cost to a microchip scanning device, the Animal
35 Control Officer shall scan the animal and utilize any information that may be available through
36 a microchip to locate the owner of the animal, if possible. If the animal is not reclaimed by its
37 owner during the impoundment period, the animal shall be disposed of in one of the following
38 manners: returned to the owner; adopted as a pet by a new owner; sterilized, ear-tipped,
39 vaccinated for rabies, administered other vaccinations as recommended by the treating
40 veterinarian, and returned to the location where it was trapped; or put to death by a procedure
41 approved by rules adopted by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services or, in the
42 absence of such rules, by a procedure approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association,
43 the Humane Society of the United States or of the American Humane Association.

44 ...

45 (a3) The Animal Control Officer shall maintain a record of all animals impounded under
46 this section which shall include the date of impoundment, the length of impoundment, the method
47 of disposal of the animal and the name of the person or institution to whom any animal has been
48 released. The Animal Control Officer shall also maintain a record of any cats sterilized,
49 ear-tipped, vaccinated, and returned to the location where trapped."

50 **SECTION 5.** This act becomes effective October 1, 2023.