

THE CITY OF WARWICK
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

CHAPTER 4
ANIMALS AND FOWL

No..... Date.....

Approved.....Mayor

AN ORDINANCE REGARDING SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF CATS

Be it ordained by the City of Warwick:

1 SECTION I. Article IV of Chapter 4 of the Ordinances of the City of Warwick is amended by
2 adding thereto the following section:

3
4 **Sec. 4-116. Findings, purpose and intent.**

5
6 (a) The City Council finds and determines that:

7
8 (1) An unacceptable number of healthy but abandoned cats are euthanized annually in
9 Rhode Island.

10
11 (2) Due to the large number of stray and abandoned cats, euthanasia is not a cost effec-
12 tive, acceptable or ethical solution to the threats of public health and safety posed by large
13 populations of stray domestic animals.

14
15 (3) Stray and abandoned pets, specifically cats, create numerous public health and safety
16 problems, including transmission of disease and traffic hazards created by cats running
17 loose on public streets.

18
19 (4) A license system for breeding of cats owned or harbored in the City of Warwick
20 combined with a program for spaying/neutering is a reasonable and effective means of re-
21 ducing the population of abandoned or stray cats, and for eliminating the practice of
22 euthanizing homeless cats except those for whom euthanasia is an escape from suffering
23 or necessary to protect people and/or other animals from vicious behavior.

24
25 (b) Declaration of intent. The City Council hereby finds and declares that it intends to provide
26 for the public health, safety and welfare through a program requiring spaying and neutering cats
27 unless appropriate licenses are acquired.

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30 SECTION II. Article IV of Chapter 4 of the Ordinances of the City of Warwick is amended by
31 adding thereto the following section:

32
33 **Sec. 4-117. Spaying/Neutering.**

34
35 (a) No person shall own or harbor within the City any cat over the age of six months which has
36 not been spayed or neutered, unless such person holds a license to keep an unaltered cat, or a li-
37 cence for breeding cats issued by the Director of the Animal Shelter of the City of Warwick.

38
39 (b) A license to breed and sell shall be issued to an individual for an unaltered cat if the owner
40 pays a fee of \$100 per cat per year with a signed application. All funds from breeding licenses
41 shall be deposited in the City of Warwick's Spay/Neuter Account to be managed by the Director

1 of the Warwick Animal Shelter.

2
3 (c) Any person providing care or sustenance for a period of thirty days or longer shall be deemed
4 the owner of such cat and shall adhere to the provision of this section.

5
6 (d) Subsection (c) above shall not be interpreted to apply to a person caring for a colony of feral
7 cats if such person:

8
9 (1) Regularly feeds or arranges for the feeding of the colony, including on weekends and
10 holidays;

11
12 (2) Traps or makes a reasonable effort to trap all feral cats over the age of eight (8) weeks
13 in his/her care, and has them spayed or neutered;

14
15 (3) Has all trapped cats tested for feline leukemia and has those who test positive hu-
16 manely euthanized or isolated indoors;

17
18 (4) Identifies feral cats that have been spayed or neutered by means of ear notching, ear
19 tipping, or ear tagging; and

20
21 (5) Has all trapped cats vaccinated according to state and local laws.
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24 SECTION III. Article IV of Chapter 4 of the Ordinances of the City of Warwick is amended by
25 adding thereto the following section:

26
27 **Sec. 4-118. Breeding licenses.**

28
29 (a) No person shall cause or allow any cat owned or harbored in the City to breed without first
30 obtaining a breeding license under this Section.

31
32 (b) The Director of the City of Warwick Animal Shelter shall administer a license program to
33 allow breeding of cats consistent with criteria and according to procedures contained in the city
34 ordinances.

35
36 (c) Each applicant who is issued a license to breed cats under this section shall pay a breeding
37 license fee of \$100 per year per cat.

38
39 (d) No person shall cause or allow the breeding of a male or female cat without first obtaining a
40 breeding license issued by the Director of the Warwick Animal Shelter. Breeding licenses shall
41 be valid for twelve months, renewable on an annual basis. Fees for such licenses shall be as set
42 forth. All breeding licenses shall contain the following terms and conditions and be subject to all
43 of the following requirements:

44
45 (1) No offspring may be sold or adopted and permanently placed until reaching an age of
46 at least eight (8) weeks.

47
48 (2) Any license holder advertising to the public the availability of any cat for adoption or
49 sale must prominently display the license number in any publications in which they ad-
50 vertise. Further, the license number must be provided to any person adopting or purchas-
51 ing any cat bred by the license holder.

52
53 (3) The breeding license holder shall adhere to Minimum Standards regarding the care
54 and keeping of animals developed and approved by Rhode Island state law.
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1 SECTION IV. Article IV of Chapter 4 of the Ordinances of the City of Warwick is amended by
2 adding thereto the following section:

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4 **Sec. 4-119. Sale or adoption of cats.**

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6 (a) Any person who provides or offers to the public, whether or not for compensation, any
7 pet or pet related goods (where they are the primary products) or pet services shall provide to
8 their clients, free of charge, information relating to pet care and ownership, including information
9 on City laws pertaining to animal control. This required information will be prepared and pro-
10 vided by the person offering the pet or related goods.

11
12 (b) Any person offering cats for sale or adoption shall disclose to any purchaser or adoptive
13 owner information regarding the licensing requirements of the City of Warwick applicable to
14 such cats.

15
16 (c) No person shall offer for sale or adoption any cat on any public street, sidewalk, or public
17 park unless such person first obtains a license to sell pets or is a recognized pet rescue/adoption.

18
19 (d) Any cat adopted from any animal welfare agency shall be spayed or neutered as early as is
20 medically appropriate, but no later than six months of age, unless the adoptive owner obtains a
21 certificate from a licensed veterinarian certifying as to the health reasons for failing to alter such
22 animal, and the approximate date when the cat can be spayed or neutered.

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25 SECTION V. Article IV of Chapter 4 of the Ordinances of the City of Warwick is amended by
26 adding thereto the following section:

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28 **Sec. 4-120. Revocation of license.**

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30 (a) Any license issued may be revoked if the Director of the Animal Shelter has reasonable
31 cause to believe any of the following to be true:

32
33 (1) The licensee has violated any state or local ordinances relating to the keeping, care or
34 use of any animal.

35
36 (2) The licensee is in violation on any State health or safety law or regulation regarding
37 animal care or control;

38
39 (3) The licensee has failed to comply with any condition or requirement of the license or
40 has failed to pay any fee imposed under this ordinance;

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42 (4) The licensee refuses to allow inspection, upon forty-eight hours written notice, of any
43 cat covered by the permit;

44
45 (5) The licensee has transferred, sold or otherwise disposed of the cat for which the per-
46 mit was issued.

47
48 (b) If, after investigation, the Director of the Animal Shelter concludes that it is probable that
49 one or more of the above grounds for revocation has occurred, it shall cause written notice
50 thereof to be transmitted by mail to the address of the licensee. Said notice shall specify the
51 grounds of possible revocation of the license and shall specify a date and time for an informal
52 hearing to be held before the Director of the Animal Shelter. Said date shall not be less than five
53 days subsequent to the date the notice is mailed. After the informal hearing, the Director of the
54 Animal Shelter may modify the terms of the license or revoke the license.

1 SECTION VI. Article IV of Chapter 4 of the Ordinances of the City of Warwick is amended by
2 adding thereto the following section:

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4 **Sec. 4-121. Penalty for violation.**

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6 Any person who violates the provisions of this act shall have no more than 30 days to
7 have their cat spayed or neutered. The Director of the Animal Shelter may inform persons subject
8 to this law to the availability of reduced cost or free of cost spay/neuter programs sponsored by
9 local humane organizations. If an animal is not spayed or neutered within 30 days of notice they
10 shall be subject to a \$100 fine for each 30 days the subject animal is not spayed or neutered.

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13 SECTION VII. Article IV of Chapter 4 of the Ordinances of the City of Warwick is amended by
14 adding thereto the following section:

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16 **Sec. 4-122. Responsibility for enforcement.**

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18 The Director of the Animal Shelter shall be responsible for the enforcement and admini-
19 stration of this ordinance, with the assistance of Animal Control.

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22 SECTION VIII. Article IV of Chapter 4 of the Ordinances of the City of Warwick is amended by
23 adding thereto the following section:

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25 **Sec. 4-123. Transition.**

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27 Persons harboring a cat subject to this ordinance on the date it becomes effective shall
28 have 120 days from such date to comply herewith.

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31 SECTION IX. This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage and publication as prescribed by
32 law.

SPONSORED BY: COUNCILWOMAN TRAVIS
COUNCILMAN MEROLLA
COUNCILMAN DONOVAN

COMMITTEE: ORDINANCE