



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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Committee on Finance
Chicago City Council Meeting September 18, 2019

ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, in 2018, Chicago Animal Care and Control took in 7,271 stray cats, dogs and other animals to the city's municipal open admission shelter; and,

WHEREAS, Chicago Animal Care and Control has continued to make improvements in its 2018 live outcomes, including 1,892 adoptions and 8,959 animal transfers to one of the hundreds of homeward bound partnering organizations; and,

WHEREAS, Chicago Animal Care and Control has only been able to directly return 1,573 animals to their original owners; and,

WHEREAS, there does not exist a singular user-friendly portal for Chicago residents searching for their lost animal to access in their own preferred language; and,

WHEREAS, the possibility of some owners not wanting to retrieve their lost pet is possible there are many lost opportunities to return these missing pet family members back to their original owners because of stray-hold policies and homeward bound practices that do not acknowledge the possibility of original owners taking longer to find their pets; and,

WHEREAS, stories of pets taken to Chicago Animal Care and Control and transferred out before the animal's original owner can claim them are emerging, most notably the story of Kobe and the Moises Family, whom came forward searching for their rightful dog only to be rebuffed by a rescue organization and their adoptive clients; and,

WHEREAS, protective measures needed to assist pet owners searching for their lost animal while navigating various social media platforms, websites, rescues and the municipal shelter before their ownership rights are voided; now therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. Section 7-12-060 of the Municipal Code of Chicago is hereby amended by inserting the language underscored, and by deleting the language struck through, as follows:

7-12-060 Redemption of impounded animals.

a) Subject to the exceptions provided in subsections (b), (c), and {d} £e), the Department, or any agency the Department may designate to take possession of animals for the purposes of impounding, shall hold impounded animals for a minimum of seven days, unless the owner redeems the animal sooner, during which time reasonable means shall be used to facilitate their return to the rightful owners. The owner of any animal impounded in any animal control center may, at any time during visiting hours at the animal control center, and before the sale or other disposal as provided in this chapter, redeem such animal by paying the required fees or charges and, in the case of an unlicensed animal, by complying with the license requirements. The seven-day holding period shall not apply to an animal relinquished by its owner to the Department under owner signature authorizing the Department to make immediate disposition of the animal at its discretion, nor shall any required holding period apply to an animal received for impounding in obviously critical physical condition or for which immediate euthanasia shall be deemed proper for humane reasons by the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee.

b) Any impounded animal of unknown ownership that remains unredeemed after three days shall be the property of the Department. The Executive Director may allow the adoption or transfer of any animal of unknown ownership after three days of impoundment, or any other disposition of the animal after five days of impoundment. In the event the Executive Director determines that an animal of unknown ownership suffers from severe behavioral issues, the Executive Director may allow any disposition of the animal after three days impoundment. Wild animals which are noxious by their very nature, such as wild rats and undomesticated rodents, may be euthanized at once following an examination for zoonotic diseases.

c) The Executive Director may allow the immediate adoption, or immediate transfer to an animal shelter or similar facility, of: (1) any impounded cat of unknown ownership; and (2) any impounded litter of puppies aged four months or younger of unknown ownership, as well as their mother, if she is present. The Executive Director also may allow the immediate transfer or other disposition of any impounded unweaned neonate animal of unknown ownership.

d) Any animal that becomes the property of the Department pursuant to subsection (b) or subsection (c)(1) shall only be adopted or transferred with the condition that if the animal's owner at the time of impoundment ("original owner") attempts to redeem the animal within two weeks of the animal's adoption or within four weeks of the animal's impoundment, whichever is less, any subsequent owner shall relinquish the animal to the original owner. If a subsequent owner incurred any costs in the adoption or medical care of the animal, including, but not limited to, adoption fees, vaccines, and routine medical care, but not including feeding and supplies, then the original owner shall reimburse such subsequent owner. Should the original owner fail to reimburse a subsequent owner for costs incurred, such

subsequent owner need not relinquish ownership. The original owner may enforce this Section in a court of law.

(e) The Executive Director shall have the authority to adopt rules necessary for the administration of this section.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon passage and publication. - ^-7- ~?