

2/10/95
7/11/95

CHAPTER SIXTY-ONE REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO CATS

Preamble

As a result of the current rabies epizootic existing in the Town of Oxford, this by-law is enacted to protect the public health and welfare. By requiring the licensing of cats and that cats wear a tag identifying the cat and its license number, and further requiring that all cats must be properly vaccinated against rabies prior to being licensed, the Town seeks to curb the further spread of rabies and be able to better determine whether a cat is properly protected against rabies.

Section 1. General Requirements

A person, who at the commencement of a license period, is, or who during any license period, becomes, the owner or keeper of a cat six months old or over which is not duly licensed, and the owner or keeper of a cat when it becomes six months old during a license period, shall cause it to be registered, numbered, described and licensed until the end of such a license period. The owner or keeper of a cat so registered, numbered, described and licensed during any license period, in order to own or keep such a cat after the beginning of the succeeding license period, shall, before the beginning, thereof, cause it to be registered, numbered, described and licensed for such period. The registering, numbering, describing and licensing of a cat shall be in the office of the Oxford Town Clerk.

The Oxford Town Clerk shall not grant such a license for any cat unless the owner thereof provides the Town Clerk either a veterinarian's certification that such cat has been vaccinated in accordance with the provisions of section One-hundred and forty-five B of Chapter One hundred and forty of the Massachusetts General Laws or has been certified exempt from such provision as herein after provided, or a notarized letter from a veterinarian that a certification was issued or a metal rabies tag bearing an expiration date indicating that such certification is still in effect.

The Oxford Town Clerk or Oxford Animal Control Officer may grant an exemption from the provisions of the proof of vaccination for any cat which has not yet attained the age of six months, any cat which the Oxford Board of Health, for a specified period of time, declared exempt upon presentation of a veterinarian's certificate stating that because of infirmity, to her physical condition or regimen of therapy, that inoculation is thereby deemed inadvisable, or any cat in transit, or cat brought into the Town of Oxford, temporarily, for the sole purpose of showing in cat shows or exhibitions.

The license shall be in a form prescribed by the Town Clerk and Animal Control Officer, upon a blank to be furnished by the Town of Oxford. The owner of the cat may add descriptive words, not over ten in number, upon the license to indicate the color, breed, weight and special markings of the licensed cat. The owner or keeper of a licensed cat shall cause it to wear around its neck or body a collar or harness of leather or other suitable material, to which shall be securely attached a tag in a form prescribed by the Town Clerk and Animal Control Officer, and upon which shall

appear the license number the year of issue and the words "Town of Oxford". Such tags shall be furnished in the same manner as the license blanks, and if any such tag shall be lost, the owner or keeper of such cat shall forthwith secure a substitute tag from the Town Clerk at a cost of one dollar and fifty cents.

The licensing period shall be during the month of February, annually. The schedule of fees for the licensing of cats is as follows:

1. Spayed or neutered cats--six dollars per cat per license period or any portion thereof.
2. All other cats--ten dollars per cat per license period or any portion thereof.

In order to qualify for the spayed or neutered cat rate, a veterinarian's certification of the spaying or neutering, as a result of performing the procedure or by examination, must be presented to the Town Clerk at the time of licensure. If no certification is or can be provided at the time of licensure, the owner or keeper shall be liable for the "all other cats rate" of ten dollars.

2/12/09 No fee shall be charged for a license for a cat owned by an Oxford resident who, upon presentation of a valid form of identification, is aged 70 or over before April 30th of the year in which the license is to be obtained.

1/17/06 Section 2. Late Charges.

Each owner or keeper of a cat who fails to obtain a license for such cat within thirty days after the date prescribed in this by-law shall be required to pay, in order to obtain a license for such cat, a late charge in the amount of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) in addition to the license fee prescribed in this regulation.

2/12/09 No late charge shall be required in order to obtain a license for a cat owned by an Oxford resident who, upon presentation of a valid form of identification, is aged 70 or over before April 30th of the year in which the license is to be obtained.

Section 3. Enforcement

The Animal Control Officer shall enforce the provisions of this regulation and to that end shall have the authority to seek complaints in the District Court for violations thereof. He shall investigate complaints of alleged violations of this regulation. He also shall apprehend any cat found by him to be in violation of this by-law and impound such cat in a suitable place or order the owner or keeper thereof to cause it to be vaccinated for rabies and licensed before returning to said owner or keeper.

Section 4. Impoundment

The Animal Control Officer shall immediately notify the owner or keeper of any cat impounded by him under the provisions of this by-law, if such owner or keeper is known by him. If such owner or keeper is not known by him, no notice shall be necessary. The owner or keeper of any cat impounded under the provisions of this

regulation may redeem such cat provided he:

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- A. reimburses the Animal Control Officer for his expenses at a rate of not more than Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00) for his initial handling of such cat plus Ten Dollars (\$10.00) for each day, or portion thereof, that he has confined such cat, and
- B. procures from the Town Clerk a license and/or a tag for any such cat that is not licensed and/or not displaying the required license tag.

Any cat which has been impounded under the provisions of this by-law and has not been redeemed by its owner or keeper within three full days shall be disposed of in the same manner as provided in section one hundred and fifty-one A of Chapter one-hundred and forty of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended. In such a case for disposal as described in this section, if the owner or keeper of any disposed of cat is known by the Animal Control Officer, the owner or keeper shall be responsible for all of the costs incurred by the Animal Control Officer for the initial handling, daily keeping fee and/or the cost of disposal, that is whatever services are provided.

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Section 5. Penalty

Any person violating the provisions of this regulation shall forfeit not more than three hundred dollars.

In addition to the other methods of enforcement available herein, the provisions of this by-law may also be enforced, by the Animal Control Officer by non-criminal complaint pursuant to the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 21D. Each day on which a violation exists shall be deemed to be a separate offense. The fines for each violation shall be as follows: Twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense committed within a calendar year; thirty dollars (\$30.00) for the second offense committed within a calendar year; and fifty dollars (\$50.00) for the third and each subsequent offense committed within a calendar year.