

COMMERCIAL DOG AND CAT OPERATOR INSPECTION ACT
AND RELATED STATUTES

- Administration: The Act is administered by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509. Telephone: (402) 471-2351. The Department also administers limited portions of the related statutes. Section 54-603 is included for informational purposes only.
- Adoption: The Act was last revised during the 2015 session of the Nebraska Legislature.
- Rules: A regulation has been promulgated under the Act, known as Title 23, Chapter 18, Nebraska Administrative Code - Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Regulations.

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54-625. Act, how cited. Sections 54-625 to 54-643 shall be known and may be cited as the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act.

54-626. Terms, defined. For purposes of the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act:

(1) Animal control facility means a facility operated by or under contract with the state or any political subdivision of the state for the purpose of impounding or harboring seized, stray, homeless, abandoned, or unwanted animals;

(2) Animal rescue means a person or group of persons who hold themselves out as an animal rescue, accept or solicit for dogs or cats with the intention of finding permanent adoptive homes or providing lifelong care for such dogs or cats, or who use foster homes as the primary means of housing dogs or cats;

(3) Animal shelter means a facility used to house or contain dogs or cats and owned, operated, or maintained by an incorporated humane society, an animal welfare society, a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, or another nonprofit organization devoted to the welfare, protection, and humane treatment of such animals;

(4) Boarding kennel means a facility which is primarily used to house or contain dogs or cats owned by persons other than the operator of such facility. The primary function of a boarding kennel is to temporarily harbor dogs or cats when the owner of the dogs or cats is unable to do so or to provide training, grooming, or other nonveterinary service for consideration before returning the dogs or cats to the owner. A facility which provides such training, grooming, or other nonveterinary service is not a boarding kennel for the purposes of the act unless dogs or cats owned by persons other than the operator of such facility are housed at such facility overnight. Veterinary clinics, animal control facilities, animal rescues, and nonprofit animal shelters are not boarding kennels for the purposes of the act;

(5) Breeding dog means any sexually intact male or female dog six months of age or older owned or harbored by a commercial dog breeder;

(6) Cat means any animal which is wholly or in part of the species *Felis domesticus*;

(7) Commercial cat breeder means a person engaged in the business of breeding cats:

(a) Who sells, exchanges, leases, or in any way transfers or offers to sell, exchange, lease, or transfer thirty-one or more cats in a twelve-month period beginning on April 1 of each year;

(b) Who owns or harbors four or more cats, intended for breeding, in a twelve-month period beginning on April 1 of each year;

(c) Whose cats produce a total of four or more litters within a twelve-month period beginning on April 1 of each year; or

(d) Who knowingly sells, exchanges, or leases cats for later retail sale or brokered trading;

- (8) Commercial dog breeder means a person engaged in the business of breeding dogs:
- (a) Who sells, exchanges, leases, or in any way transfers or offers to sell, exchange, lease, or transfer thirty-one or more dogs in a twelve-month period beginning on April 1 of each year;
 - (b) Who owns or harbors four or more dogs, intended for breeding, in a twelve-month period beginning on April 1 of each year;
 - (c) Whose dogs produce a total of four or more litters within a twelve-month period beginning on April 1 of each year; or
 - (d) Who knowingly sells, exchanges, or leases dogs for later retail sale or brokered trading;
- (9) Dealer means any person who is not a commercial dog or cat breeder or a pet shop but is engaged in the business of buying for resale or selling or exchanging dogs or cats as a principal or agent or who claims to be so engaged. A person who purchases, sells, exchanges, or leases thirty or fewer dogs or cats in a twelve-month period is not a dealer;
- (10) Department means the Bureau of Animal Industry of the Department of Agriculture with the State Veterinarian in charge, subordinate only to the director;
- (11) Director means the Director of Agriculture or his or her designated employee;
- (12) Dog means any animal which is wholly or in part of the species *Canis familiaris*;
- (13) Foster home means any person who provides temporary housing for twenty or fewer dogs or cats that are six months of age or older in any twelve-month period and is affiliated with a person operating as an animal rescue that uses foster homes as its primary housing of dogs or cats. To be considered a foster home, a person shall not participate in the acquisition of the dogs or cats for which temporary care is provided. Any foster home which houses more than twenty dogs or cats that are six months of age or older in any twelve-month period or who participates in the acquisition of dogs or cats shall be licensed as an animal rescue;
- (14) Harbor means:
- (a) Providing shelter or housing for a dog or cat regulated under the act; or
 - (b) Maintaining the care, supervision, or control of a dog or cat regulated under the act;
- (15) Housing facility means any room, building, or areas used to contain a primary enclosure;
- (16) Inspector means any person who is employed by the department and who is authorized to perform inspections pursuant to the act;
- (17) Licensee means a person who has qualified for and received a license from the department pursuant to the act;
- (18) Normal business hours means daily between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. unless an applicant, a licensee, or any other person the department has reasonable cause to believe is required by the act to be licensed provides in writing to the department a description of his or her own normal business hours which reasonably allows the department to make inspections;
- (19) Operator means a person performing the activities of an animal control facility, an animal rescue, an animal shelter, a boarding kennel, a commercial cat breeder, a commercial dog breeder, a dealer, or a pet shop;
- (20) Pet animal means an animal kept as a household pet for the purpose of companionship, which includes, but is not limited to, dogs, cats, birds, fish, rabbits, rodents, amphibians, and reptiles;
- (21) Pet shop means a retail establishment which sells pet animals and related supplies;
- (22) Premises means all public or private buildings, vehicles, equipment, containers, kennels, pens, and cages used by an operator and the public or private ground upon which an operator's facility is located if such buildings, vehicles, equipment, containers, kennels, pens, cages, or ground are used by the owner or operator in the usual course of business;
- (23) Primary enclosure means any structure used to immediately restrict a dog or cat to a limited amount of space, such as a room, pen, cage, or compartment;

(24) Secretary of Agriculture means the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States Department of Agriculture;

(25) Significant threat to the health or safety of dogs or cats means:

(a) Not providing shelter or protection from extreme weather resulting in life-threatening conditions predisposing to hyperthermia or hypothermia in dogs or cats that are not acclimated to the temperature;

(b) Acute injuries involving potentially life-threatening medical emergencies in which the owner refuses to seek immediate veterinary care;

(c) Not providing food or water resulting in conditions of potential starvation or severe dehydration;

(d) Egregious human abuse such as trauma from beating, torturing, mutilating, burning, or scalding; or

(e) Failing to maintain sanitation resulting in egregious situations where a dog or cat cannot avoid walking, lying, or standing in feces;

(26) Stop-movement order means a directive preventing the movement of any dog or cat onto or from the premises; and

(27) Unaltered means any male or female dog or cat which has not been neutered or spayed or otherwise rendered incapable of reproduction.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 14. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

54-627. License requirements; fees; premises available for inspection. (1) A person shall not operate as a commercial dog or cat breeder, a dealer, a boarding kennel, an animal control facility, an animal shelter, an animal rescue, or a pet shop unless the person obtains the appropriate license. A pet shop shall only be subject to the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act and the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated pursuant thereto in any area or areas of the establishment used for the keeping and selling of pet animals. If a facility listed in this subsection is not located at the owner's residence, the name and address of the owner shall be posted on the premises.

(2) An applicant for a license shall submit an application for the appropriate license to the department, on a form prescribed by the department, together with a one-time license fee of one hundred twenty-five dollars. Such fee is nonreturnable. Any license issued on or before November 30, 2015, shall remain valid after expiration unless it lapses pursuant to this section, is revoked pursuant to section 54-631, or is voluntarily surrendered. Upon receipt of an application and the license fee and upon completion of a qualifying inspection, the appropriate license may be issued by the department. The department may enter the premises of any applicant for a license to determine if the applicant meets the requirements for licensure under the act. If an applicant does not at the time of inspection harbor any dogs or cats, the inspection shall be of the applicant's records and the planned housing facilities. Such license shall not be transferable to another person or location and shall lapse automatically upon a change of ownership or location.

(3)(a) In addition to the license fee required in subsection (2) of this section, an annual fee shall also be charged. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the annual fee shall be determined according to the following fee schedule based upon the daily average number of dogs or cats harbored by the licensee over the previous twelve-month period:

(i) Ten or fewer dogs or cats, one hundred seventy-five dollars;

(ii) Eleven to fifty dogs or cats, two hundred twenty-five dollars;

(iii) Fifty-one to one hundred dogs or cats, two hundred seventy-five dollars;

(iv) One hundred one to one hundred fifty dogs or cats, three hundred twenty-five dollars;

(v) One hundred fifty-one to two hundred dogs or cats, three hundred seventy-five dollars;

(vi) Two hundred one to two hundred fifty dogs or cats, four hundred twenty-five dollars;

(vii) Two hundred fifty-one to three hundred dogs or cats, four hundred seventy-five dollars;
(viii) Three hundred one to three hundred fifty dogs or cats, five hundred twenty-five dollars;
(ix) Three hundred fifty-one to four hundred dogs or cats, five hundred seventy-five dollars;
(x) Four hundred one to four hundred fifty dogs or cats, six hundred twenty-five dollars;
(xi) Four hundred fifty-one to five hundred dogs or cats, six hundred seventy-five dollars; and

(xii) More than five hundred dogs or cats, two thousand one hundred dollars.

(b) If a person operates with more than one type of license at the same location, the person shall pay only one annual fee based on the primary licensed activity occurring at that location as determined by the number of dogs or cats affected by the licensed activity.

(c) The annual fee for a licensee that does not own or harbor dogs or cats shall be one hundred fifty dollars.

(d) The annual fee for an animal rescue shall be one hundred fifty dollars.

(e) The annual fee for a commercial dog or cat breeder shall be determined according to the fee schedule set forth in subdivision (a) of this subsection based upon the total number of breeding dogs or cats owned or harbored by the commercial breeder over the previous twelve-month period.

(f) In addition to the fee as prescribed in the fee schedule set forth in subdivision (a) of this subsection, the annual fee for a commercial dog or cat breeder, pet shop, dealer, or boarding kennel shall include a fee of two dollars times the daily average number of dogs or cats owned or harbored by the licensee over the previous twelve-month period numbering more than ten dogs or cats subject to subdivision (g) of this subsection.

(g) The fees charged under subdivision (a) of this subsection may be increased or decreased by rule and regulation as adopted and promulgated by the department, but the maximum fee that may be charged shall not result in a fee for any license category that exceeds the annual fee set forth in subdivision (a) of this subsection by more than one hundred dollars. The fee charged under subdivision (f) of this subsection may be increased or decreased by rule and regulation as adopted and promulgated by the department, but such fee shall not exceed three dollars times the number of dogs or cats harbored by the licensee over the previous twelve-month period numbering more than ten dogs or cats.

(4) A commercial dog or cat breeder, dealer, boarding kennel, or pet shop shall pay the annual fee to the department on or before April 1 of each year. An animal control facility, animal rescue, or animal shelter shall pay the annual fee to the department on or before October 1 of each year. Failure to pay the annual fee by the due date shall result in a late fee equal to twenty percent of the annual fee due and payable each month, not to exceed one hundred percent of such fee, in addition to the annual fee. The purpose of the late fee is to pay for the administrative costs associated with the collection of fees under this section. The assessment of the late fee shall not prohibit the director from taking any other action as provided in the act.

(5) An applicant, a licensee, or a person the department has reason to believe is an operator and required to obtain a license under this section shall make any applicable premises available for inspection pursuant to section 54-628 during normal business hours.

(6) The state or any political subdivision of the state which contracts out its animal control duties to a facility not operated by the state or any political subdivision of the state may be exempted from the licensing requirements of this section if such facility is licensed as an animal control facility, animal rescue, or animal shelter for the full term of the contract with the state or its political subdivision.

(7) Any fees collected pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Program Cash Fund.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 15. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

54-627.01. Licensees; maintain written veterinary care plan or written emergency veterinary care plan. A dealer or pet shop licensed under section 54-627 shall maintain a written veterinary care plan developed in conjunction with the attending veterinarian for the dealer or pet shop. An animal control facility, an animal rescue, an animal shelter, or a boarding kennel licensed under section 54-627 shall maintain a written emergency veterinary care plan.

54-628. Inspection program; department; powers; reinspection fee; prohibited acts; penalty.

(1) The department shall inspect all licensees at least once in a twenty-four-month period to determine whether the licensee is in compliance with the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act.

(2) Any additional inspector or other field personnel employed by the department to carry out inspections pursuant to the act that are funded through General Fund appropriations to the department shall be available for temporary reassignment as needed to other activities and functions of the department in the event of a livestock disease emergency or any other threat to livestock or public health.

(3) When an inspection produces evidence of a violation of the act or the rules and regulations of the department, a copy of a written report of the inspection and violations shown thereon, prepared by the inspector, shall be given to the applicant, licensee, or person the department has reason to believe is an operator, together with written notice to comply within the time limit established by the department and set out in such notice. If the department performs a reinspection for the purpose of determining if an operator has complied within the time limit for compliance established pursuant to this subsection or has complied with section 54-628.01 or if the inspector must return to the operator's location because the operator was not available within a reasonable time as required by subsection (4) of this section, the applicant, licensee, or person the department has reason to believe is an operator shall pay a reinspection fee of one hundred fifty dollars together with the mileage of the inspector at the rate provided in section 81-1176. The purpose of the reinspection fee is to pay for the administrative costs associated with the additional inspection. Any fees collected pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Program Cash Fund. The assessment of the reinspection fee shall not prohibit the director from taking any other action as provided in the act.

(4) The department, at its discretion, may make unannounced inspections of any applicant, licensee, or person the department has reason to believe is an operator during normal business hours. An applicant, a licensee, and any person the department has reason to believe is an operator shall provide the department, in writing, and keep updated if there is any change, a telephone number where the operator can be reached during normal business hours. The applicant, licensee, or person the department has reason to believe is an operator shall provide a person over the age of nineteen to be available at the operation for the purpose of allowing the department to perform an inspection.

(5) If deemed necessary under the act or any rule or regulation adopted and promulgated pursuant to the act, the department may, for purposes of inspection, enter, without being subject to any action for trespass or damages, the premises of any applicant, licensee, or person the department has reason to believe is an operator, during normal business hours and in a reasonable manner, including all premises in or upon which dogs or cats are housed, harbored, sold, exchanged, or leased or are suspected of being housed, harbored, sold, exchanged, or leased.

(6) Pursuant to an inspection under the act, the department may:

(a) Enter and have full access to all premises where dogs or cats regulated under the act are harbored or housed or are suspected of being harbored or housed;

(b) Access all records pertaining to dogs or cats regulated under the act or suspected of pertaining to such dogs or cats and examine and copy all records pertaining to compliance with the act and the rules or regulations adopted and promulgated under the act. The department shall have authority to gather evidence, including, but not limited to, photographs;

(c) Inspect or reinspect any vehicle or carrier transporting or holding dogs or cats that is in the state to determine compliance with the act or any rules or regulations adopted and promulgated under the act;

(d) Obtain an inspection warrant in the manner prescribed in sections 29-830 to 29-835 if any person refuses to allow the department to conduct an inspection pursuant to the act; or

(e) Issue and enforce a written stop-movement order pursuant to section 54-628.01.

(7) For purposes of this section, the private residence of any applicant, licensee, or person the department has reason to believe is an operator shall be available for purposes of inspection only if dogs or cats are housed in a primary enclosure within the residence, including a room in such residence, and only such portion of the residence that is used as a primary enclosure shall be open to an inspection pursuant to this section.

(8) An applicant, licensee, or person the department has reason to believe is an operator shall not seek to avoid inspection by hiding dogs or cats regulated under the act in a private residence, on someone else's property, or at any other location. An applicant, licensee, or person the department has reason to believe is an operator shall provide full and accurate information to the department regarding the location of all dogs or cats harbored by the operator.

(9) Any applicant, licensee, or person the department has reason to believe is an operator who intentionally refuses to answer the door, fails to be available as provided in subsection (4) of this section, fails to comply with subsection (8) of this section, or otherwise obstructs the department's attempt to perform an inspection shall be in violation of section 54-634 and subject to an administrative fine or other proceedings as provided in section 54-633 or 54-634. *Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 16. Operative Date: December 1, 2015*

54-628.01. Director; stop-movement order; issuance; contents; hearing; department; powers; costs; reinspection; hearing. (1) The director may issue a stop-movement order if he or she has reasonable cause to believe that there exists (a) noncompliance with the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act or any rule or regulation adopted and promulgated pursuant to the act, including, but not limited to, unreasonable sanitation or housing conditions, failure to comply with standards for handling, care, treatment, or transportation for dogs or cats, operating without a license, or interfering with the department in the performance of its duties, or (b) any condition that, without medical attention, provision of shelter, facility maintenance or improvement, relocation of animals, or other management intervention, poses a significant threat to the health or safety of the dogs or cats owned or harbored by a violator.

(2) Such stop-movement order may require the violator to maintain the dogs or cats subject to the order at the existing location or other department-approved premises until such time as the director has issued a written release from the stop-movement order. The stop-movement order shall clearly advise the violator that he or she may request in writing a hearing before the director pursuant to section 54-632. The order issued pursuant to this section shall be final unless modified or rescinded by the director pursuant to section 54-632 at a hearing requested under this subsection.

(3) Pursuant to the stop-movement order, the department shall have the authority to enter the premises to inspect and determine if the dogs or cats subject to the order or the facilities used to house or transport such dogs or cats are kept and maintained in compliance with the requirements of the act and the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated pursuant to the act or if any management intervention imposed by the stop-movement order is being implemented to mitigate conditions posing a significant threat to the health or safety of dogs or cats harbored or owned by a violator. The department shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the violator or any personnel of the violator due to such departmental action or in enforcing the stop-movement order. The department shall be reimbursed by the violator for the actual costs incurred by the department in issuing and enforcing any stop-movement order.

(4) A stop-movement order shall include:

(a) A description of the nature of the violations of the act or any rule or regulation adopted and promulgated pursuant to the act;

(b) If applicable, a description of conditions that pose a significant threat to the health or safety of the dogs or cats owned or harbored by the violator;

(c) The action necessary to bring the violator into compliance with the act and the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated pursuant to the act or, if applicable, to mitigate conditions posing a significant threat to the health and safety of the dogs or cats harbored or owned by the violator;

(d) Notice that if violations of the act or any rule or regulation or any conditions that pose a significant threat to the health or safety of the dogs or cats owned or harbored by the violator persist, the department may refer the matter to appropriate law enforcement for investigation and potential prosecution pursuant to Chapter 28, article 10; and

(e) The name, address, and telephone number of the violator who owns or harbors the dogs or cats subject to the order.

(5) Before receipt of a written release, the person to whom the stop-movement order was issued shall:

(a) Provide the department with an inventory of all dogs or cats on the premises at the time of the issuance of the order;

(b) Provide the department with the identification tag number, the tattoo number, the microchip number, or any other approved method of identification for each individual dog or cat;

(c) Notify the department within forty-eight hours of the death or euthanasia of any dog or cat subject to the order. Such notification shall include the dog's or cat's individual identification tag number, tattoo number, microchip number, or other approved identification;

(d) Notify the department within forty-eight hours of any dog or cat giving birth after the issuance of the order, including the size of the litter; and

(e) Maintain on the premises any dog or cat subject to the order, except that a dog or cat under one year of age under contract to an individual prior to the issuance of the order may be delivered to the individual pursuant to the contractual obligation. The violator shall provide to the department information identifying the dog or cat and the name, address, and telephone number of the individual purchasing the dog or cat. The department may contact the purchaser to ascertain the date of the purchase agreement to ensure that the dog or cat was sold prior to the stop-movement order and to determine that he or she did purchase such dog or cat. No additional dogs or cats shall be transferred onto the premises without written approval of the department.

(6) The department shall reinspect the premises to determine compliance within ten business days after the initial inspection that resulted in the stop-movement order. At the time of reinspection pursuant to this subsection, if conditions that pose a significant threat to the health or safety of the dogs or cats harbored or owned by the violator or noncompliant conditions continue to exist, further reinspections shall be at the discretion of the department. The violator may request an immediate hearing with the director pursuant to any findings under this subsection.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 17. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

54-628.02. Violation of act, rule or regulation, or order of director; proceedings authorized.

Whenever the director has reason to believe that any person has violated any provision of the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act, any rule or regulation adopted and promulgated pursuant to the act, or any order of the director, the director may issue a notice of hearing as provided in section 54-632 requiring the person to appear before the director to (1) show cause why an order should not be entered requiring such person to cease and desist from the violation charged, (2) determine whether an administrative fine should be imposed or levied against the person pursuant to subsection (2) of section 54-633, or (3) determine

whether the person fails to qualify for a license pursuant to section 54-630. Proceedings initiated pursuant to this section shall not preclude the department from pursuing other administrative, civil, or criminal actions according to law.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 18. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

54-629. Rules and regulations. The department shall adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act. The rules and regulations may include, but are not limited to, factors to be considered when the department imposes an administrative fine, provisions governing record-keeping and other requirements for persons required to have a license, and any other matter deemed necessary by the department to carry out the act. The department shall use as a guideline for the humane handling, care, treatment, and transportation of dogs and cats the standards of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture as set out in 9 C.F.R. 3.1 to 3.19.

54-630. Application; denial; grounds; appeal. (1) Before the department approves an application for a license, an inspector of the department shall inspect the operation of the applicant to determine whether the applicant qualifies to hold a license pursuant to the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act. Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, an applicant who qualifies shall be issued a license.

(2) The department may deny an application for a license as a commercial dog or cat breeder, a dealer, a boarding kennel, an animal control facility, an animal shelter, an animal rescue, or a pet shop upon a finding that the applicant is unsuited to perform the obligations of a licensee. The applicant shall be determined unsuited to perform the obligations of a licensee if the department finds that the applicant has deliberately misrepresented or concealed any information provided on or with the application or any other information provided to the department under this section or that within the previous five years the applicant:

(a) Has been convicted of any law regarding the disposition or treatment of dogs or cats in any jurisdiction; or

(b) Has operated a breeder facility under a license or permit issued by any jurisdiction that has been revoked, suspended, or otherwise subject to a disciplinary proceeding brought by the licensing authority in that jurisdiction if such proceeding resulted in the applicant having voluntarily surrendered a license or permit to avoid disciplinary sanctions.

(3) In addition to the application, the department may require the applicant to provide additional documentation pertinent to the department's determination of the applicant's suitability to perform the duties of a licensee under the act.

(4) An applicant who is denied a license under this section shall be afforded the opportunity for a hearing before the director or the director's designee to present evidence that the applicant is qualified to hold a license pursuant to the act and the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the department and should be issued a license. All such hearings shall be in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 19. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

54-631. Licensee; duties; disciplinary actions. (1) A licensee under the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act shall comply with the act, the rules and regulations, and any order of the director issued pursuant thereto. The licensee shall not interfere with the department in the performance of its duties.

(2) A licensee may be put on probation requiring such licensee to comply with the conditions set out in an order of probation issued by the director, may be ordered to cease and desist due to a failure to comply, or may be ordered to pay an administrative fine pursuant to section 54-633 after:

(a) The director determines the licensee has not complied with subsection (1) of this section;

(b) The licensee is given written notice to comply and written notice of the right to a hearing to show cause why an order should not be issued; and

(c) The director finds that issuing an order is appropriate based on the hearing record or on the available information if the hearing is waived by the licensee.

(3) A license may be suspended after:

(a) The director determines the licensee has not complied with subsection (1) of this section;

(b) The licensee is given written notice to comply and written notice of the right to a hearing to show cause why the license should not be suspended; and

(c) The director finds that issuing an order suspending the license is appropriate based on the hearing record or on the available information if the hearing is waived by the licensee.

(4) A license may be immediately suspended and the director may order the operation of the licensee closed prior to hearing when:

(a) The director determines that there is a significant threat to the health or safety of the dogs or cats harbored or owned by the licensee; and

(b) The licensee receives written notice to comply and written notice of the right to a hearing to show cause why the suspension should not be sustained. Within fifteen days after the suspension, the licensee may request in writing a date for a hearing, and the director shall consider the interests of the licensee when the director establishes the date and time of the hearing, except that no hearing shall be held sooner than is reasonable under the circumstances. When a licensee does not request a hearing date within the fifteen-day period, the director shall establish a hearing date and notify the licensee of the date and time of such hearing.

(5) A license may be revoked after:

(a) The director determines the licensee has committed serious, repeated, or multiple violations of any of the requirements of subsection (1) of this section;

(b) The licensee is given written notice to comply and written notice of the right to a hearing to show cause why the license should not be revoked; and

(c) The director finds that issuing an order revoking the license is appropriate based on the hearing record or on the available information if the hearing is waived by the licensee.

(6) The operation of any licensee which has been suspended shall close and remain closed until the license is reinstated. Any operation for which the license has been revoked shall close and remain closed until a new license is issued.

(7) The director may terminate proceedings undertaken pursuant to this section at any time if the reasons for such proceedings no longer exist. A license which has been suspended may be reinstated, a person with a revoked license may be issued a new license, or a licensee may no longer be subject to an order of probation if the director determines the conditions which prompted the suspension, revocation, or probation no longer exist.

(8) Proceedings undertaken pursuant to this section shall not preclude the department from seeking other civil or criminal actions.

54-632. Notice or order; service requirements; hearing; appeal. (1) Any notice or order provided for in the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act shall be properly served when it is personally served on the applicant, licensee, or violator or on the person authorized by the applicant or licensee to receive notices and orders of the department or when it is sent by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested, to the last-known address of the applicant, licensee, or violator or the person authorized to receive such notices and orders. A copy of the notice and the order shall be filed in the records of the department.

(2) A notice to comply with the act or the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated pursuant to the act shall set forth the acts or omissions with which the applicant, licensee, or violator is charged.

(3) A notice of the right to a hearing shall set forth the time and place of the hearing except as otherwise provided in subsection (4) of this section and section 54-631. A notice of the right to such hearing shall include notice that such right to a hearing may be waived pursuant to subsection (6) of this section. A notice of the licensee's right to a hearing shall include notice to the licensee that the license may be subject to sanctions as provided in section 54-631.

(4) A request for a hearing under subsection (2) of section 54-628.01 shall request that the director set forth the time and place of the hearing. The director shall consider the interests of the violator in establishing the time and place of the hearing. Within three business days after receipt by the director of the hearing request, the director shall set forth the time and place of the hearing on the stop-movement order. A notice of the violator's right to such hearing shall include notice that such right to a hearing may be waived pursuant to subsection (6) of this section.

(5) The hearings provided for in the act shall be conducted by the director at the time and place he or she designates. The director shall make a final finding based on the complete hearing record and issue an order. If the director has suspended a license pursuant to subsection (4) of section 54-631, the director shall sustain, modify, or rescind the order after the hearing. If the department has issued a stop-movement order under section 54-628.01, the director may sustain, modify, or rescind the order after the hearing. All hearings shall be in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

(6) An applicant, a licensee, or a violator waives the right to a hearing if such applicant, licensee, or violator does not attend the hearing at the time and place set forth in the notice described in subsection (3) or (4) of this section, without requesting that the director, at least two days before the designated time, change the time and place for the hearing, except that before an order of the director becomes final, the director may designate a different time and place for the hearing if the applicant, licensee, or violator shows the director that the applicant, licensee, or violator had a justifiable reason for not attending the hearing and not timely requesting a change of the time and place for such hearing. If the applicant, licensee, or violator waives the right to a hearing, the director shall make a final finding based upon the available information and issue an order. If the director has suspended a license pursuant to subsection (4) of section 54-631, the director may sustain, modify, or rescind the order after the hearing. If the department has issued a stop-movement order under section 54-628.01, the director may sustain, modify, or rescind the order after the hearing.

(7) Any person aggrieved by the finding of the director has ten days after the entry of the director's order to request a new hearing if such person can show that a mistake of fact has been made which affected the director's determination. Any order of the director becomes final upon the expiration of ten days after its entry if no request for a new hearing is made.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 20. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

54-633. Enforcement powers; administrative fine. (1) In order to ensure compliance with the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act, the department may apply for a restraining order, temporary or permanent injunction, or mandatory injunction against any person violating or threatening to violate the act, the rules and regulations, or any order of the director issued pursuant thereto. The district court of the county where the violation is occurring or is about to occur shall have jurisdiction to grant relief upon good cause shown. Relief may be granted notwithstanding the existence of any other remedy at law and shall be granted without bond. The county attorney of the county in which such violations are occurring or about to occur shall, when notified of such violation or threatened violation, cause appropriate proceedings under this section to be instituted and pursued without delay.

(2) The department may impose an administrative fine of not more than five thousand dollars for any violation of the act or the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated under the act. Each violation of the act or such rules and regulations shall constitute a separate offense for purposes of this subsection.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 21. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

54-633.01. Special investigator; powers; referral to another law enforcement officer. If the director has reason to believe that any alleged violation of the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act, any alleged violation of the rules and regulations of the department, any alleged violation of an order of the director, or any other existing condition posing a significant threat to the health or safety of the dogs or cats harbored or owned by an applicant or a licensee constitutes cruel neglect, abandonment, or cruel mistreatment pursuant to section 28-1009, the director may direct a special investigator employed by the department as authorized pursuant to section 81-201 to exercise the authorities of a law enforcement officer pursuant to sections 28-1011 and 28-1012 with respect to the dogs or cats or may request any other law enforcement officer as defined in section 28-1008 to inspect, care for, or impound the dogs or cats pursuant to sections 28-1011 and 28-1012. Any assignment of a special investigator by the director or referral to another law enforcement officer pursuant to this section shall be in cooperation and coordination with appropriate law enforcement agencies, political subdivisions, animal shelters, humane societies, and other appropriate entities, public or private, to provide for the care, shelter, and disposition of animals impounded pursuant to this section.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 22. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

54-634. Violation; penalty. (1) It is unlawful for a person to operate without a valid license or operate while a license is revoked or suspended if a license is required by the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act. A licensee shall not operate in any manner which is not in conformity with the act or the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated pursuant thereto or interfere with the duties of the department or any final order of the director pursuant to the act.

(2) Any person who violates any provision of the act is guilty of a Class I misdemeanor.

54-634.01. Prohibited acts. It shall be a violation of the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act for any person to (1) deny access to any officer, agent, employee, or appointee of the department or offer any resistance to, thwart, or hinder such persons by misrepresentation or concealment, (2) violate a stop-movement order issued under section 54-628.01, (3) fail to disclose all locations housing dogs or cats owned or controlled by such person, or (4) fail to pay any administrative fine levied pursuant to section 54-633.

54-635. Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Program Cash Fund; created; use; investment. The Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Program Cash Fund is created and shall consist of money appropriated by the Legislature, gifts, grants, costs, or charges from any source, including federal, state, public, and private sources. The money shall be used to carry out the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

54-636. Department; enforcement powers. The department may cooperate with the Secretary of Agriculture in carrying out applicable federal law and the regulations issued by the Secretary of Agriculture under such law. The department may enter into contracts with any person to implement any or all of the provisions of the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act.

54-637. Information on spaying and neutering; requirements. (1) Every dealer, commercial dog or cat breeder, animal shelter, animal rescue, animal control facility, or pet shop or any other retailer, who transfers ownership of a dog or cat to an ultimate consumer, shall deliver to the ultimate consumer of each dog or cat at the time of sale, written material, in a form determined by such seller, containing information on the benefits of spaying and neutering. The written material shall include recommendations on establishing a relationship with a veterinarian, information on early-age spaying and neutering, the health benefits associated with spaying and neutering pets, the importance of minimizing the risk of homeless or unwanted animals, and the need to comply with applicable license laws.

(2) The delivering of any model materials prepared by the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council or the Nebraska Humane Society shall satisfy the requirements of subsection (1) of this section.

54-638. Provision for spaying or neutering; when. Provision shall be made for spaying or neutering all dogs and cats released for adoption or purchase from any public or private animal shelter, animal rescue, or animal control facility operated by a humane society, a county, a city, or another political subdivision. Such provision may be made by:

(1) Causing the dog or cat to be spayed or neutered by a licensed veterinarian before releasing the dog or cat for adoption or purchase; or

(2) Entering into a written agreement with the adopter or purchaser of the dog or cat, guaranteeing that spaying or neutering will be performed by a licensed veterinarian in compliance with an agreement which shall contain the following information:

(a) The date of the agreement;

(b) The name, address, and signature of the releasing entity and the adopter or purchaser;

(c) A description of the dog or cat to be adopted or purchased;

(d) A statement, in conspicuous bold print, that spaying or neutering of the dog or cat is required pursuant to this section; and

(e) The date by which the spaying or neutering will be completed, which date shall be (i) in the case of an adult dog or cat, the thirtieth day after the date of adoption or purchase or (ii) in the case of a pup or kitten, either (A) the thirtieth day after a specified date estimated to be the date the pup or kitten will reach six months of age or (B) if the releasing entity has a written policy recommending spaying or neutering of certain pups or kittens at an earlier date, the thirtieth day after such date.

54-639. Adopter or purchaser; agreement; requirements. An adopter or purchaser who signs an agreement under section 54-638 shall cause the adopted or purchased dog or cat to be spayed or neutered on or before the date stated in the agreement. If such date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the date may be extended to the first business day following such date. The releasing entity may extend the date for thirty days upon presentation of a letter or telephone report from a licensed veterinarian, stating that the life or health of the adopted or purchased dog or cat would be jeopardized by spaying or neutering, and such extensions may continue to be granted until such veterinarian determines that spaying or neutering would no longer jeopardize the life or health of the adopted or purchased dog or cat.

54-640. Commercial dog or cat breeder; duties. A commercial dog or cat breeder shall:

(1) Maintain housing facilities and primary enclosures in a sanitary condition;

(2) Enable all dogs and cats to remain dry and clean;

(3) Provide shelter and protection from extreme temperatures and weather conditions that may be uncomfortable or hazardous to the dogs and cats;

(4) Provide sufficient shade to shelter all the dogs and cats housed in the primary enclosure at one time;

(5) Provide dogs and cats with easy and convenient access to adequate amounts of clean food and water;

(6) Provide dogs with adequate socialization. For purposes of this subdivision, adequate socialization means physical contact with other dogs and with human beings, other than being fed;

(7) Assure that a handler's hands are washed before and after handling each infectious or contagious cat;

(8) Maintain a written veterinary care plan developed in conjunction with an attending veterinarian; and

(9) Provide veterinary care without delay when necessary.

54-641. Licensees; primary enclosures; requirements. The primary enclosures of all licensees shall meet the following requirements:

(1) A primary enclosure shall provide adequate space appropriate to the age, size, weight, and breed of each dog or cat. For purposes of this subdivision, adequate space means sufficient room to allow each dog or cat to turn around without touching another animal, to stand, sit, and lie in a comfortable, normal position, and to walk in a normal manner without the head of such animal touching the top of the enclosure, which shall be at least six inches above the head of the tallest animal when the animal is standing;

(2) A primary enclosure shall have solid surface flooring or a flooring material that protects the dogs' and cats' feet and legs from injury and that, if of mesh or slatted construction, do not allow the dogs' and cats' feet to pass through any openings in the floor;

(3) If a primary enclosure has a suspended floor constructed of metal strands, the strands shall either be greater than one-eighth of an inch in diameter (nine gauge) or coated with a material such as plastic or fiberglass; and

(4) The suspended floor of any primary enclosure shall be strong enough so that the floor does not sag or bend between the structural supports.

54-641.01. Commercial dog breeder; dogs; opportunity for exercise. (1) A commercial dog breeder shall provide dogs with the opportunity for exercise as follows:

(a) A primary enclosure shall have an entry that allows each dog unfettered access to an exercise area that is at least three times the size of the requirements for a primary enclosure. The entry may be closed during cleaning, under direction of a licensed veterinarian, or in the case of inclement weather. The exercise area shall have solid surface flooring or a flooring material that if of mesh or slatted construction does not allow the dog's feet to pass through any openings in the floor. Any exercise area suspended floor constructed of metal strands shall be required to have strands that are greater than one-eighth of an inch in diameter (nine gauge) or coated with a material such as plastic or fiberglass. All suspended flooring shall be strong enough so as not to sag or bend between any structural supports and be of a surface that is easily cleaned and disinfected. The exercise area shall have protection available from wind, rain, and snow if access to the primary enclosure is unavailable; and

(b) Any dog not housed in a primary enclosure that meets the exercise area requirements of subdivision (a) of this subsection shall be provided with the opportunity for exercise according to a plan approved by the attending veterinarian, in writing. The opportunity for exercise shall be accomplished by:

(i) Providing access to a run or open area at a frequency and duration prescribed by the attending veterinarian; or

(ii) Removal of the dogs from the primary enclosure at least twice daily to be walked, allowed to move about freely in an open area, or placed in an exercise area that meets the requirements of subdivision (a) of this subsection.

- (2) Subsection (1) of this section shall not apply to:
- (a) Any dog that is less than six months of age;
 - (b) The primary enclosure of a nursing facility that houses any female dog that is due to give birth within the following two weeks or a nursing dog and her puppies;
 - (c) Any dog that is injured or displays any clinical signs of disease. In such case, any injury or clinical signs of disease shall be noted in the dog's health records and the dog shall be returned to exercise upon recovery from such injury or disease; or
 - (d) Any dog that is excluded from the exercise requirements of subsection (1) of this section pursuant to a written directive of a licensed veterinarian.
- (3) Any primary enclosure newly constructed after October 1, 2012, shall comply with subdivision (1)(a) of this section. A primary enclosure in existence on October 1, 2012, shall not be required to comply with subdivision (1)(a) of this section for the life of such facility.

54-641.02. Commercial dog breeder; veterinary care; review of health records; duties of breeder. (1) A commercial dog breeder shall ensure that each dog under his or her care, supervision, or control receives adequate veterinary care. A commercial dog breeder's written veterinary care plan shall provide for, in addition to requirements prescribed by rule and regulation of the department:

(a) The maintenance of individual health records for each dog bought, raised, or otherwise obtained, held, kept, maintained, sold, donated, or otherwise disposed of, including by death or euthanasia, except that litter health records may be kept on litters when litter mates are treated with the same medication or procedure;

(b) Establishment of a program of disease control and prevention, pest and parasite control, before and after procedure care, nutrition, and euthanasia supervised by the attending veterinarian. Such program shall provide for regularly scheduled onsite visits to the facility by the veterinarian and shall be annually reviewed and updated by the veterinarian at the time of an onsite visit that includes the veterinarian's walk-through of the facility and observation by the veterinarian of dogs under the commercial dog breeder's care, supervision, or control; and

(c) A wellness examination by a licensed veterinarian of each breeding dog at least once every three years, to include a basic physical and dental examination and corresponding notations entered into the dog's health records. Such examination shall not require laboratory analysis unless directed by the veterinarian.

(2) During regularly scheduled inspections of a commercial dog breeder's facility conducted by the department, the health records of a random sample of at least five percent of the breeding dogs shall be reviewed to verify that such records correspond to the dog's permanent identification and verify that the health records are properly maintained.

(3) For each dog under the commercial dog breeder's care, supervision, or control, the breeder shall:

(a) Ensure that all breeding dogs receive regular grooming. Coat matting shall not exceed ten percent, and nails shall be trimmed short enough to ensure the comfort of the dog;

(b) Contact a licensed veterinarian without delay after an occurrence of a serious or life-threatening injury or medical condition of such dog. The dog shall be treated as prescribed by the veterinarian;

(c) Ensure that all surgical births or other surgical procedures shall be performed by a licensed veterinarian using anesthesia. Commercial dog breeders may remove dew claws and perform tail docking under sterile conditions within the first seven days of the dog's life. Wounds shall be treated and monitored by the breeder; and

(d) Ensure that, if euthanasia is necessary, it shall be performed by a licensed veterinarian in accordance with recommendations for the humane euthanization of dogs as published by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

54-641.03. Breeding dog; microchip; identification. Each breeding dog shall be identified by the implantation of a microchip, and each dog's health records shall accurately record the appropriate identification. The department may by rule or regulation require identification of any dog by tag, tattoo, or other method if the microchip system is determined to be ineffective. A commercial dog breeder licensed prior to October 1, 2012, who utilizes a method or methods of identification other than microchipping as authorized by rule and regulation of the department prior to October 1, 2012, may continue to utilize such method or methods.

54-642. Department; submit report of costs and revenue. On or before November 1 of each year, the department shall submit electronically a report to the Legislature in sufficient detail to document all costs incurred in the previous fiscal year in carrying out the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act. The report shall identify costs incurred by the department to administer the act and shall detail costs incurred by primary activity. The department shall also provide a breakdown by category of all revenue credited to the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Program Cash Fund in the previous fiscal year. The Agriculture Committee and Appropriations Committee of the Legislature shall review the report to ascertain program activity levels and to determine funding requirements of the program.

54-643. Administrative fines; disposition; lien; collection. (1) All money collected by the department pursuant to section 54-633 shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for distribution in accordance with Article VII, section 5, of the Constitution of Nebraska. (2) Any administrative fine levied pursuant to section 54-633 which remains unpaid for more than sixty days shall constitute a debt to the State of Nebraska which may be collected in the manner of a lien foreclosure or sued for and recovered in a proper form of action in the name of the state in the district court of the county in which the violator resides or owns property.

28-1006. Investigation; arrest; seizure of property; reimbursement of expenses.

(1) It shall be the duty of the sheriff, a police officer, or the Nebraska State Patrol to make prompt investigation of and arrest for any violation of section 28-1005 or 28-1005.01.

(2) Any equipment, device, or other property or things involved in any violation of section 28-1005 or 28-1005.01 shall be subject to seizure, and disposition may be made in accordance with the method of disposition directed for contraband in sections 29-818 and 29-820.

(3) Any animal involved in any violation of section 28-1005 or 28-1005.01 shall be subject to seizure. Distribution or disposition shall be made as provided in section 28-1012.01 and in such manner as the court may direct. The court may give preference to adoption alternatives through humane societies or comparable institutions and to the protection of such animal's welfare. For a humane society or comparable institution to be considered as an adoption alternative under this subsection, it must first be licensed by the Department of Agriculture as having passed the inspection requirements in the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act and paid the fee for inspection under the act. The court may prohibit an adopting or purchasing party from selling such animal for a period not to exceed one year.

(4) In addition to any other sentence given for a violation of section 28-1005 or 28-1005.01, the sentencing court may order the defendant to reimburse a public or private agency for expenses incurred in conjunction with the care, impoundment, or disposal, including adoption, of an animal involved in the violation of section 28-1005 or 28-1005.01. Whenever the court believes that such reimbursement may be a proper sentence or the prosecuting attorney requests, the court shall order that the presentence investigation report include documentation regarding the nature and amount of the expenses incurred. The court may order that reimbursement be made immediately, in specified installments, or within a specified period of time, not to exceed five years after the date of judgment.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 1. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

28-1008. Terms, defined. For purposes of sections 28-1008 to 28-1017, 28-1019, and 28-1020:

(1) Abandon means to leave any animal in one's care, whether as owner or custodian, for any length of time without making effective provision for its food, water, or other care as is reasonably necessary for the animal's health;

(2) Animal means any vertebrate member of the animal kingdom. Animal does not include an uncaptured wild creature or a livestock animal as defined in section 54-902;

(3) Cruelly mistreat means to knowingly and intentionally kill, maim, disfigure, torture, beat, mutilate, burn, scald, or otherwise inflict harm upon any animal;

(4) Cruelly neglect means to fail to provide any animal in one's care, whether as owner or custodian, with food, water, or other care as is reasonably necessary for the animal's health;

(5) Humane killing means the destruction of an animal by a method which causes the animal a minimum of pain and suffering;

(6) Law enforcement officer means any member of the Nebraska State Patrol, any county or deputy sheriff, any member of the police force of any city or village, or any other public official authorized by a city or village to enforce state or local animal control laws, rules, regulations, or ordinances. Law enforcement officer also includes a special investigator appointed as a deputy state sheriff as authorized pursuant to section 81-201 while acting within the authority of the Director of Agriculture under the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act;

(7) Mutilation means intentionally causing permanent injury, disfigurement, degradation of function, incapacitation, or imperfection to an animal. Mutilation does not include conduct performed by a veterinarian licensed to practice veterinary medicine and surgery in this state or conduct that conforms to accepted veterinary practices;

(8) Owner or custodian means any person owning, keeping, possessing, harboring, or knowingly permitting an animal to remain on or about any premises owned or occupied by such person;

(9) Police animal means a horse or dog owned or controlled by the State of Nebraska or any county, city, or village for the purpose of assisting a law enforcement officer in the performance of his or her official enforcement duties;

(10) Repeated beating means intentional successive strikes to an animal by a person resulting in serious bodily injury or death to the animal;

(11) Serious injury or illness includes any injury or illness to any animal which creates a substantial risk of death or which causes broken bones, prolonged impairment of health, or prolonged loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ; and

(12) Torture means intentionally subjecting an animal to extreme pain, suffering, or agony. Torture does not include conduct performed by a veterinarian licensed to practice veterinary medicine and surgery in this state or conduct that conforms to accepted veterinary practices.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 2. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

28-1011. Violations; liability for expenses. (1) In addition to any other sentence given for a violation of section 28-1009 or 28-1010, the sentencing court may order the defendant to reimburse a public or private agency for any unreimbursed expenses incurred in conjunction with the care, impoundment, seizure, or disposal of an animal involved in the violation of such section. Whenever the court believes that such reimbursement may be a proper sentence or the prosecuting attorney requests, the court shall order that the presentence investigation report include documentation regarding the nature and amount of the expenses incurred. The court may order that reimbursement be made immediately, in specified installments, or within a specified period of time, not to exceed five years after the date of judgment.

(2) Even if reimbursement for expenses is not ordered under subsection (1) of this section, the defendant shall be liable for all unreimbursed expenses incurred by a public or private agency in conjunction with the care, impoundment, seizure, or disposal of an animal. The expenses shall be a lien upon the animal.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 3. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

28-1012. Law enforcement officer; powers; immunity; seizure; court powers. (1) A law enforcement officer who has reason to believe that an animal has been abandoned or is being cruelly neglected or cruelly mistreated may seek a warrant authorizing entry upon private property to inspect, care for, or impound the animal.

(2) A law enforcement officer who has reason to believe that an animal has been abandoned or is being cruelly neglected or cruelly mistreated may issue a citation to the owner or custodian as prescribed in sections 29-422 to 29-429.

(3) Any equipment, device, or other property or things involved in a violation of section 28-1009 or 28-1010 shall be subject to seizure, and distribution or disposition may be made in such manner as the court may direct. Any animal involved in a violation of section 28-1009 or 28-1010 shall be subject to seizure. Distribution or disposition shall be made under section 28-1012.01 as the court may direct.

(4) Any law enforcement officer acting under this section shall not be liable for damage to property if such damage is not the result of the officer's negligence.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 4. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

28-1012.01. Animal seized; court powers; county attorney; duties; hearing; notice; animal abandoned or cruelly neglected or mistreated; bond or other security; appeal; section, how construed. (1) Any animal seized under a search warrant or validly seized without a warrant may be kept on the property of the owner or custodian by the law enforcement officer seizing the animal. When a criminal complaint has been filed in connection with a seized animal, the court in which such complaint was filed shall have exclusive jurisdiction for disposition of the animal and to determine any rights therein, including questions respecting the title, possession, control, and disposition thereof as provided in this section.

(2) Within seven days after the date an animal has been seized pursuant to section 28-1006 or 28-1012, the county attorney of the county where the animal was seized shall file an application with the court having appropriate jurisdiction for a hearing to determine the disposition and the cost for the care of the animal. Notice of such hearing shall be given to the owner or custodian from whom such animal was seized and to any holder of a lien or security interest of record in such animal specifying the date, time, and place of such hearing. Such notice shall be served by personal or residential service or by certified mail. If such notice cannot be served by such methods, service may be made by publication in the county where such animal was seized. Such publication shall be made after application and order of the court. The hearing shall be held as soon as practicable and not more than ten business days after the date of application for the hearing unless otherwise determined and ordered by the court.

(3) If the court finds that probable cause exists that an animal has been abandoned or cruelly neglected or mistreated, the court may:

(a) Order immediate forfeiture of the animal to the agency that took custody of the animal and authorize appropriate disposition of the animal including adoption, donation to a suitable shelter, humane destruction, or any other manner of disposition approved by the court. The court may consider adoption alternatives through humane societies or comparable institutions and the protection of such animal's welfare. For a humane society or comparable institution to be considered as an adoption alternative under this subsection, it must first be licensed by the Department of Agriculture as having passed the inspection requirements in the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act and paid the fee for inspection under the act. The court may prohibit an adopting or purchasing party from selling such animal for a period not to exceed one year;

(b) Issue an order to the owner or custodian setting forth the conditions under which custody of the animal shall be returned to the owner or custodian from whom the animal was seized or to any other person claiming an interest in the animal. Such order may include any management actions deemed necessary and prudent by the court, including reducing the number of animals harbored or owned by the owner or custodian by humane destruction or forfeiture and securing necessary care, including veterinary care, sufficient for the maintenance of any remaining animals; or

(c) Order the owner or custodian from whom the animal was seized to post a bond or other security or to otherwise order payment in an amount that is sufficient to reimburse all reasonable expenses, as determined by the court, for the care of the animal including veterinary care incurred by the agency from the date of seizure and necessitated by the possession of the animal. Payments shall be for a succeeding thirty-day period with the first payment due on or before the tenth day following the hearing. Payments for each subsequent thirty-day period, if any, shall be due on or before the tenth day of such period. The bond or security shall be placed with, or payments ordered under this subdivision shall be paid to, the agency that took custody of the animal. The agency shall provide an accounting of expenses to the court when the animal is no longer in the custody of the agency or upon request by the court. The county attorney of the county where the animal was seized may apply to the court for a subsequent hearing under this section at any time. The hearing shall be held as soon as practicable and not more than ten business days after the date of application for the hearing unless otherwise determined and ordered by the court. When all expenses covered by the bond or security are exhausted and subsequent bond or security has not been posted, or if a person becomes delinquent in his or her payments for the expenses of the animal, the animal shall be forfeited to the agency.

(4) If custody of an animal is returned to the owner or custodian prior to seizure, any proceeds of a bond or security or any payment or portion of payment ordered under this section not used for the care of the animal during the time the animal was held by the agency shall be returned to the owner or custodian.

(5) Nothing in this section shall prevent the humane destruction of a seized animal at any time as determined necessary by a licensed veterinarian or as authorized by court order.

(6) An appeal may be filed within ten days after a hearing held under this section. Any person filing an appeal shall post a bond or security sufficient to pay reasonable costs of care of the animal for thirty days. Such bond or surety shall be required for each succeeding thirty-day period until the appeal is final.

(7) If the owner or custodian from whom the animal was seized is found not guilty in an associated criminal proceeding, all funds paid for the expenses of the animal remaining after the actual expenses incurred by the agency have been paid shall be returned to the owner or custodian.

(8) This section shall not preempt any ordinance of a city of the metropolitan or primary class.

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 5. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

29-820. Seized property; disposition. (1) Unless other disposition is specifically provided by law, when property seized or held is no longer required as evidence, it shall be disposed of by the law enforcement agency on such showing as the law enforcement agency may deem adequate, as follows:

(a) Property stolen, embezzled, obtained by false pretenses, or otherwise obtained unlawfully from the rightful owner thereof shall be restored to the owner;

(b) Money shall be restored to the owner unless it was used in unlawful gambling or lotteries or it was used or intended to be used to facilitate a violation of Chapter 28, article 4, in which case the money shall be forfeited and disposed of as required by Article VII, section 7, of the Constitution of Nebraska;

(c) Property which is unclaimed or the ownership of which is unknown shall be sold at a public auction held by the officer having custody thereof and the net proceeds disposed of as provided in subdivision (b) of this subsection, as shall any money which is unclaimed or the ownership of which is unknown;

(d) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, articles of contraband shall be destroyed;

(e) Firearms, ammunition, explosives, bombs, and like devices which have been used in the commission of crime shall be destroyed; and

(f) Firearms which have come into the law enforcement agency's possession through a seizure or otherwise and (i) have not been used in the commission of crime, (ii) have not been defaced or altered in any manner that violates any state or federal law, (iii) may have a lawful use and be lawfully possessed, and (iv) are not subject to section 29-440 shall be restored to the owner.

(2) When the following property is seized or held and is no longer required as evidence, such property shall be disposed of on order of the court as the court may deem adequate: Goods which are declared to be contraband but may reasonably be returned to a condition or state in which such goods may be lawfully used, possessed, or distributed by the public.

(3) When any animal as defined by section 28-1008 is seized or held and is no longer required as evidence, such animal may be disposed of in such manner as the court may direct. The court may consider adoption alternatives through humane societies or comparable institutions and the protection of such animal's welfare. For a humane society or comparable institution to be considered as an adoption alternative under this subsection, it must first be licensed by the Department of Agriculture as having passed the inspection requirements in the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Act and paid the fee for inspection under the act. The court may prohibit an adopting or purchasing party from selling such animal for a period not to exceed one year.

(4) Unless otherwise provided by law, all other property shall be disposed of in such manner as the court in its sound discretion shall direct.

54-603. Dogs; license tax; amount; service animal; license; county, city, or village; collect fee; disposition. (1) Any county, city, or village shall have authority by ordinance or resolution to impose a license tax, in an amount which shall be determined by the appropriate governing body, on the owner or harbinger of any dog or dogs, to be paid under such regulations as shall be provided by such ordinance or resolutions.

(2) Every service animal shall be licensed as required by local ordinances or resolutions, but no license tax shall be charged. Upon the retirement or discontinuance of the animal as a service animal, the owner of the animal shall be liable for the payment of a license tax as prescribed by local ordinances or resolutions.

(3) Any county, city, or village that imposes a license tax on the owner or harbinger of any cat or cats or any dog or dogs under this section shall, in addition to the license tax imposed by the licensing jurisdiction, collect from the licensee a fee of one dollar and twenty-five cents. The person designated by the licensing jurisdiction to collect and administer the license tax shall act as agent for the State of Nebraska in the collection of the fee. From each fee of one

dollar and twenty-five cents collected, such person shall retain three cents and remit the balance to the State Treasurer for credit to the Commercial Dog and Cat Operator Inspection Program Cash Fund. If the person collecting the fee is the licensing jurisdiction, the three cents shall be credited to the licensing jurisdiction's general fund. If the person collecting the fee is a private contractor, the three cents shall be credited to an account of the private contractor. The remittance to the State Treasurer shall be made at least annually at the conclusion of the licensing jurisdiction's fiscal year, except that any licensing jurisdiction or private contractor that collects fifty dollars or less of such fees during the fiscal year may remit the fees

Source: Laws 2015, LB360, § 12. Operative Date: December 1, 2015

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