



## WICOMICO COUNTY – NEW ANIMAL REGULATIONS

New Animal Regulations will go into effect in Wicomico County on January 19, 2019. The Wicomico County Council approved Legislative Bill No. 2018-09 on October 18, 2018, repealing the current dog laws and replacing them with regulations that strengthen animal welfare in the County. The new law now provides:

- Provisions from the State of Maryland Animal Care and Cruelty Law
- A Trap, Neuter and Return Program (TNR) for community cats
- Tighter regulations on tethering an animal.
- Protection of animals in unsafe weather conditions to include wind chill factor and heat index
- Animals At-Large Prohibited (previously only pertained to dogs)
- Animals must be on a leash no longer than 6 feet while on school grounds or at a public recreation area.
- An Animal Control Officer, upon impounding an animal, must record the breed, color, sex and license-status of the animal. This information shall be posted on the Animal Control Authority's website within 24 hours after impounding the animal.
- If a female dog or cat in heat or an unneutered male dog or cat belonging to the same owner is impounded twice within 12 months, the dog or cat will become the property of the Animal Control Authority unless the owner pays for the spaying or neutering of the dog or cat by the animal control authority within one week after notice.
- New provisions on breeder license.
- New provisions on the Sale of a Puppy or Kitten
- New provisions on Disposal of Dead Animals
- To adopt a dog or cat from the Animal Control Authority, the adopter must pay or reimburse the Animal Control Authority to neuter or spay the animal (If not already done), and other reasonable charges and fees. In addition the adopter must certify in writing under penalty of perjury that he or she has not been convicted of animal cruelty or neglect by a court of law.
- New requirement to obtain a County dog license and tag from the Wicomico County Humane Society if not provided with rabies vaccination.

President John Cannon said "this Bill will further protect the welfare of animals across the County."

A copy of the new Animal Regulations (**Legislative Bill 2018-09**) can be found on the County's website at <http://www.wicomicocounty.org/670/2018-Legislative-Bills>.