

AN ORDINANCE

**AMENDING CHARLESTON COUNTY CODE SECTION 3-6
TO REVISE PROVISIONS REGARDING STERILIZATION AND REDEMPTION OF
AT-LARGE PETS**

Section 1.0 Purpose of Amendment, Findings

1. County Council has previously found that pets running at large are in violation of law, and can constitute a public safety and health threat to motorists, pedestrians and other persons. At-large animals also contribute to the problem of strays and animal overpopulation. Therefore, on March 7, 2006 Council amended Section 3-6 of its Code of Ordinances to provide that before an at-large pet may be redeemed from the animal shelter, it must be sterilized, with certain exceptions.
2. Council now finds that certain amendments to these provisions are desirable, to provide that in lieu of sterilization, an owner may pay an additional fee to redeem a pet.

Section 2.0 Text Change

Section 3-6(f) of the Code of Ordinances of the County of Charleston is hereby amended to read as follows:

(f) [Sterilization; intact redemption fee] No impounded pet may be redeemed without a) first having been surgically sterilized and a fee paid therefor, which fee shall not exceed the fee charged by the shelter for the sterilization of animals prior to adoption, or b) paying a redemption fee of two hundred dollars (\$200.00) to redeem the pet intact. If an intact pet comes to be impounded for a second or subsequent time in a calendar year, the intact redemption fee shall be one thousand dollars (\$1000.00). These provisions shall only apply to pets whose owners' residence is within the unincorporated area of Charleston County.

Sterilization under this section may not take place sooner than after the fifth working day following the pet's placement in the custody of the shelter, or when the owner appears at the shelter to reclaim the animal, whichever is sooner.

If the owner declines to pay the intact redemption fee, such owner may arrange for the pet to be sterilized by a veterinarian of the owner's choosing, and the owner must pay all costs of such sterilization. If an owner chooses this method, the shelter shall transport the animal to the veterinarian for sterilization, unless the veterinarian or his/her designee transports the pet to the veterinary facility. The owner may retrieve the pet from the veterinarian's office following sterilization. The owner must provide proof of sterilization to the shelter.

The shelter must give written notice of the policies and options regarding redemption and sterilization set forth herein to owners seeking to redeem their pets.

Section 3.0 -Severability

If, for any reason, any part of this ordinance is invalidated by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining portions of this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 4.0 - Effective Date

This Ordinance becomes effective upon approval following Third Reading.