

1                                   **ANIMAL SHELTER PET STERILIZATION**

2   **ACT**

3   1998 GENERAL SESSION

4   STATE OF UTAH

5   **Sponsor: Robert C. Steiner**

6 AN ACT RELATING TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ANIMAL WELFARE; PROVIDING  
7 THAT ANIMAL SHELTERS AND ORGANIZATIONS SHALL ALTER CATS AND DOGS  
8 BEFORE PLACEMENT; REQUIRING THAT IF A CAT OR DOG IS NOT STERILIZED  
9 WHEN PLACED, THE PERSON RECEIVING THE ANIMAL MUST PROVIDE A  
10 STERILIZATION DEPOSIT THAT IS SUBJECT TO FORFEITURE FOR  
11 NONCOMPLIANCE; PROVIDING THAT ANIMAL SHELTERS SHALL APPLY  
12 FORFEITED DEPOSITS TO REDUCING PET OVERPOPULATION; PROVIDING A CIVIL  
13 PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE OR MISREPRESENTATION; AND PROVIDING AN  
14 EFFECTIVE DATE.

15 This act affects sections of Utah Code Annotated 1953 as follows:

16 AMENDS:

17                   **77-24-1.5**, as last amended by Chapter 104, Laws of Utah 1995

18 ENACTS:

19                   **10-17-101**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

20                   **10-17-102**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

21                   **10-17-103**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

22                   **10-17-104**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

23                   **10-17-105**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

24                   **10-17-106**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

25                   **10-17-107**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

26                   **10-17-108**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

27                   **17-42-101**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

- 1        **17-42-102**, Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 2        **17-42-103**, Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 3        **17-42-104**, Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 4        **17-42-105**, Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 5        **17-42-106**, Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 6        **17-42-107**, Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 7        **17-42-108**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

8    *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

9        Section 1. Section **10-17-101** is enacted to read:

10        **CHAPTER 17. MUNICIPAL ANIMAL SHELTER PET STERILIZATION ACT**

11        **10-17-101. Title.**

12        This chapter is known as the "Municipal Animal Shelter Pet Sterilization Act."

13        Section 2. Section **10-17-102** is enacted to read:

14        **10-17-102. Definitions.**

15        As used in this chapter:

16        (1) "Animal" means a cat or dog.

17        (2) "Animal shelter" means a facility or program:

18        (a) providing services for stray, lost, or unwanted animals, including holding and placing  
19 the animals for adoption; and

20        (b) operated by a county or municipality, or by a county and municipality jointly, or by  
21 a private humane society or private animal welfare organization.

22        (3) "Person" means an individual, an entity, or a representative of an entity.

23        (4) "Proof of sterilization" means a written document signed by a veterinarian licensed  
24 under Title 58, Chapter 28, Veterinary Practice Act, stating:

25        (a) a specified animal has been sterilized;

26        (b) the date on which the sterilization was performed; and

27        (c) the location where the sterilization was performed.

28        (5) "Recipient" means the person to whom an animal shelter transfers an animal for  
29 adoption.

30        (6) "Sterilization deposit" means the portion of a fee charged by an animal shelter to a  
31 recipient or claimant of an unsterilized animal to ensure the animal is timely sterilized in

1 accordance with an agreement between the recipient or the claimant and the animal shelter.

2 (7) "Sterilized" means that an animal has been surgically altered, either by the spaying of  
3 a female animal or by the neutering of a male animal, so it is unable to reproduce.

4 (8) "Transfer" means that an animal shelter sells, gives away, places for adoption, or  
5 transfers an animal to a recipient.

6 Section 3. Section **10-17-103** is enacted to read:

7 **10-17-103. Animal shelters shall transfer only sterilized animals, or shall require**  
8 **sterilization deposit.**

9 (1) An animal shelter may not transfer an animal that has not been sterilized, except as  
10 provided in Subsection (2).

11 (2) An animal shelter may transfer an animal that has not been sterilized only if the animal  
12 shelter:

13 (a) establishes a written agreement, executed by the recipient, stating the animal is not  
14 sterilized and the recipient agrees in writing to be responsible for ensuring the animal is sterilized:

15 (i) within 30 days after the agreement is signed, if the animal is six months of age or older;  
16 or

17 (ii) if the animal is younger than six months of age, within 30 days after the animal  
18 becomes six months of age; and

19 (b) receives from the recipient a sterilization deposit as provided under Section 10-17-104,  
20 the terms of which are part of the written agreement executed by the recipient under this section.

21 Section 4. Section **10-17-104** is enacted to read:

22 **10-17-104. Sterilization deposit.**

23 (1) A sterilization deposit may be:

24 (a) a portion of the adoption fee or purchase price of the pet, which will enable the adopter  
25 to take the pet for sterilization to a veterinarian with whom the animal shelter has an agreement  
26 that the veterinarian will bill the animal shelter directly for the sterilization;

27 (b) a deposit that is:

28 (i) refundable to the recipient if proof of sterilization of the animal within the appropriate  
29 time limits under Section 10-17-103 is presented to the animal shelter not more than three months  
30 after the date the animal is sterilized; and

31 (ii) forfeited to the animal shelter if proof of sterilization is not presented to the animal

1 shelter in compliance with Subsection (1)(b)(i); or

2 (c) a deposit under Section 10-17-106 required to claim an unsterilized animal impounded  
3 at the animal shelter.

4 (2) Sterilization deposits under Subsection (1) shall reflect the average reduced cost of a  
5 sterilization of an animal, based on the gender and weight of the animal, that is reasonably  
6 available in the area where the animal shelter is located, but the deposit may not be less than \$25.

7 (3) If a female dog or cat and her litter are transferred to one person, a sterilization deposit  
8 is required only for the female dog or cat.

9 (4) All sterilization deposits forfeited or unclaimed under this section shall be retained by  
10 the animal shelter and shall be used by the animal shelter only for:

11 (a) a program to sterilize animals, which may include a sliding scale fee program;

12 (b) a public education program to reduce and prevent overpopulation of animals and the  
13 related costs to local governments;

14 (c) a follow-up program to assure that animals transferred by the animal shelter are  
15 sterilized in accordance with the agreement executed under Section 10-17-103; and

16 (d) any additional costs incurred by the animal shelter in the administration of the  
17 requirements of this chapter.

18 Section 5. Section **10-17-105** is enacted to read:

19 **10-17-105. Failure to comply with sterilization agreement.**

20 If a recipient fails to comply with the sterilization agreement under Section 10-17-103:

21 (1) the failure is ground for seizure and impoundment of the animal by the animal shelter  
22 from whom the recipient obtained the animal;

23 (2) the recipient relinquishes all ownership rights regarding the animal and any claim to  
24 expenses incurred in maintenance and care of the animal; and

25 (3) the recipient forfeits the sterilization deposit.

26 Section 6. Section **10-17-106** is enacted to read:

27 **10-17-106. Sterilization deposit for redemption of impounded animal.**

28 (1) An animal shelter may release an impounded animal to its owner only upon payment  
29 of all impound fees required by the shelter and:

30 (a) receipt of proof the animal has been sterilized; or

31 (b) a sterilization deposit.

1           (2) The sterilization deposit shall be refunded to the owner only if the owner provides  
2 proof of sterilization to the animal shelter within 30 days of release of the animal to the owner.

3           Section 7. Section **10-17-107** is enacted to read:

4           **10-17-107. Penalties.**

5           (1) (a) A person who knowingly commits any of the violations in Subsection (2) is subject  
6 to a civil penalty of not less than \$250 on a first violation of Subsection (2), and a civil penalty of  
7 not less than \$500 on any second or subsequent violation of Subsection (2).

8           (b) The administrator of the animal shelter imposes the civil penalties under this section.

9           (2) A person is subject to the civil penalties under Subsection (1) who:

10          (a) falsifies any proof of sterilization submitted for the purpose of compliance with this  
11 chapter;

12          (b) provides to an animal shelter or a licensed veterinarian inaccurate information  
13 regarding ownership of any animal required to be submitted for sterilization under this chapter;

14          (c) submits to an animal shelter false information regarding sterilization fees or fee  
15 schedules; or

16          (d) issues a check for insufficient funds for any sterilization deposit required of the person  
17 under this chapter.

18          (3) A person who contests a civil penalty imposed against him under this section is entitled  
19 to an administrative hearing that provides for the person's rights of due process.

20          (4) All penalties collected under this section shall be retained by the animal shelter  
21 imposing the penalties, to be used solely for the purposes under Subsection 10-17-104(4).

22           Section 8. Section **10-17-108** is enacted to read:

23           **10-17-108. Local ordinances may be no less restrictive.**

24           Local ordinances or the adoption or placement procedures of any animal shelter shall be  
25 at least as restrictive as the provisions of this chapter.

26           Section 9. Section **17-42-101** is enacted to read:

27           **CHAPTER 42. COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER PET STERILIZATION ACT**

28           **17-42-101. Title.**

29           This chapter is known as the "County Animal Shelter Pet Sterilization Act."

30           Section 10. Section **17-42-102** is enacted to read:

31           **17-42-102. Definitions.**

1 As used in this chapter:

2 (1) "Animal" means a cat or dog.

3 (2) "Animal shelter" means a facility or program:

4 (a) providing services for stray, lost, or unwanted animals, including holding and placing  
5 the animals for adoption; and

6 (b) operated by a county or municipality, or by a county and municipality jointly, or by  
7 a private humane society or private animal welfare organization.

8 (3) "Person" means an individual, an entity, or a representative of an entity.

9 (4) "Proof of sterilization" means a written document signed by a veterinarian licensed  
10 under Title 58, Chapter 28, Veterinary Practice Act, stating:

11 (a) a specified animal has been sterilized;

12 (b) the date on which the sterilization was performed; and

13 (c) the location where the sterilization was performed.

14 (5) "Recipient" means the person to whom an animal shelter transfers an animal for  
15 adoption.

16 (6) "Sterilization deposit" means the portion of a fee charged by an animal shelter to a  
17 recipient or claimant of an unsterilized animal to ensure the animal is timely sterilized in  
18 accordance with an agreement between the recipient or the claimant and the animal shelter.

19 (7) "Sterilized" means that an animal has been surgically altered either by the spaying of  
20 a female animal or by the neutering of a male animal, so it is unable to reproduce.

21 (8) "Transfer" means that an animal shelter sells, gives away, places for adoption, or  
22 transfers an animal to a recipient.

23 Section 11. Section **17-42-103** is enacted to read:

24 **17-42-103. Animal shelters shall transfer only sterilized animals, or shall require**  
25 **sterilization deposit.**

26 (1) An animal shelter may not transfer an animal that has not been sterilized, except as  
27 provided in Subsection (2).

28 (2) An animal shelter may transfer an animal that has not been sterilized only if the animal  
29 shelter:

30 (a) establishes a written agreement, executed by the recipient, stating the animal is not  
31 sterilized and the recipient agrees in writing to be responsible for ensuring the animal is sterilized:

1 (i) within 30 days after the agreement is signed, if the animal is six months of age or older;

2 or

3 (ii) if the animal is younger than six months of age, within 30 days after the animal  
4 becomes six months of age; and

5 (b) receives from the recipient a sterilization deposit as provided under Section 17-42-104,  
6 the terms of which are part of the written agreement executed by the recipient under this section.

7 Section 12. Section **17-42-104** is enacted to read:

8 **17-42-104. Sterilization deposit.**

9 (1) A sterilization deposit may be:

10 (a) a portion of the adoption fee or purchase price of the pet, which will enable the adopter  
11 to take the pet for sterilization to a veterinarian with whom the animal shelter has an agreement  
12 that the veterinarian will bill the animal shelter directly for the sterilization;

13 (b) a deposit that is:

14 (i) refundable to the recipient if proof of sterilization of the animal within the appropriate  
15 time limits under Section 17-42-103 is presented to the animal shelter not more than three months  
16 after the date the animal is sterilized; and

17 (ii) forfeited to the animal shelter if proof of sterilization is not presented to the animal  
18 shelter in compliance with Subsection (1)(b)(i); or

19 (c) a deposit under Section 17-42-106 required to claim an unsterilized animal impounded  
20 at the animal shelter.

21 (2) Sterilization deposits under Subsection (1) shall reflect the average reduced cost of a  
22 sterilization of an animal, based on the gender and weight of the animal, that is reasonably  
23 available in the area where the animal shelter is located, but the deposit may not be less than \$25.

24 (3) If a female dog or cat and her litter are transferred to one person, a sterilization deposit  
25 is required only for the female dog or cat.

26 (4) All sterilization deposits forfeited or unclaimed under this section shall be retained by  
27 the animal shelter and shall be used by the animal shelter only for:

28 (a) a program to sterilize animals, which may include a sliding scale fee program;

29 (b) a public education program to reduce and prevent overpopulation of animals and the  
30 related costs to local governments;

31 (c) a follow-up program to assure that animals transferred by the animal shelter are

1 sterilized in accordance with the agreement executed under Section 17-42-103; and

2 (d) any additional costs incurred by the animal shelter in the administration of the  
3 requirements of this chapter.

4 Section 13. Section **17-42-105** is enacted to read:

5 **17-42-105. Failure to comply with sterilization agreement.**

6 If a recipient fails to comply with the sterilization agreement under Section 17-42-103:

7 (1) the failure is ground for seizure and impoundment of the animal by the animal shelter  
8 from whom the recipient obtained the animal;

9 (2) the recipient relinquishes all ownership rights regarding the animal and any claim to  
10 expenses incurred in maintenance and care of the animal; and

11 (3) the recipient forfeits the sterilization deposit.

12 Section 14. Section **17-42-106** is enacted to read:

13 **17-42-106. Sterilization deposit for redemption of impounded animal.**

14 (1) An animal shelter may release an impounded animal to its owner only upon payment  
15 of all impound fees required by the shelter and:

16 (a) receipt of proof the animal has been sterilized; or

17 (b) a sterilization deposit.

18 (2) The sterilization deposit shall be refunded to the owner only if the owner provides  
19 proof of sterilization to the animal shelter within 30 days of release of the animal to the owner.

20 Section 15. Section **17-42-107** is enacted to read:

21 **17-42-107. Penalties.**

22 (1) (a) A person who knowingly commits any of the violations in Subsection (2) is subject  
23 to a civil penalty of not less than \$250 on a first violation of Subsection (2), and a civil penalty of  
24 not less than \$500 on any second or subsequent violation of Subsection (2).

25 (b) The administrator of the animal shelter imposes the civil penalties under this section.

26 (2) A person is subject to the civil penalties under Subsection (1) who:

27 (a) falsifies any proof of sterilization submitted for the purpose of compliance with this  
28 chapter;

29 (b) provides to an animal shelter or a licensed veterinarian inaccurate information  
30 regarding ownership of any animal required to be submitted for sterilization under this chapter;

31 (c) submits to an animal shelter false information regarding sterilization fees or fee

1 schedules; or

2 (d) issues a check for insufficient funds for any sterilization deposit required of the person  
3 under this chapter.

4 (3) A person who contests a civil penalty imposed against him under this section is entitled  
5 to an administrative hearing that provides for the person's rights of due process.

6 (4) All penalties collected under this section shall be retained by the animal shelter  
7 imposing the penalties, to be used solely for the purposes under Subsection 17-42-104(4).

8 Section 16. Section **17-42-108** is enacted to read:

9 **17-42-108. Local ordinances may be no less restrictive.**

10 Local ordinances or the adoption or placement procedures of any animal shelter shall be  
11 at least as restrictive as the provisions of this chapter.

12 Section 17. Section **77-24-1.5** is amended to read:

13 **77-24-1.5. Safekeeping by officer pending disposition -- Records required -- Stray**  
14 **animals.**

15 (1) Each peace officer shall:

16 (a) hold custodial property in safe custody:

17 (i) until it is received into evidence; or

18 (ii) if it is not used as evidence, until it can be disposed of as provided in this chapter; and

19 (b) maintain a proper record of the custodial property that identifies:

20 (i) the owner of the custodial property, if known; and

21 (ii) the case for which it was taken or received and is being held.

22 (2) (a) Each municipal or county animal control officer shall hold any unidentified or  
23 unclaimed stray dog or stray cat in safe and humane custody for a minimum of three working days  
24 after the time of impound prior to making any final disposition of the animal, including:

25 (i) placement in an adoptive home or other transfer of the animal, which shall be in  
26 compliance with Title 10, Chapter 17, Municipal Animal Shelter Pet Sterilization Act, or Title 17,  
27 Chapter 42, County Animal Shelter Pet Sterilization Act; or

28 (ii) euthanasia.

29 (b) An unidentified or unclaimed stray dog or stray cat may be euthanized prior to the  
30 completion of the three working day minimum holding period to prevent unnecessary suffering  
31 due to serious injury or disease, if the euthanasia is in compliance with written established agency

1 or department policies and procedures, and with any local ordinances allowing the destruction.

2 (c) An unidentified or unclaimed stray dog or stray cat shall be returned to its owner upon;

3 (i) proof of ownership [~~and upon~~];

4 (ii) compliance with requirements of local animal control ordinances; and

5 (iii) compliance with Title 10, Chapter 17, Municipal Animal Shelter Pet Sterilization Act,

6 or Title 17, Chapter 42, County Animal Shelter Pet Sterilization Act.

7 Section 18. **Effective date.**

8 If approved by two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, this act takes effect

9 upon approval by the governor, or the day following the constitutional time limit of Utah

10 Constitution Article VII, Section 8, without the governor's signature, or in the case of a veto, the

11 date of veto override.

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**Legislative Review Note**

**as of 11-18-97 1:29 PM**

A limited legal review of this bill raises no obvious constitutional or statutory concerns.

**Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel**