

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-005

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF AMES, TEXAS, REGULATING DOGS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY; PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES AND VIOLATIONS; PROVIDING FOR A SEVERANCE CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the Texas Local Government Code empowers the City of Ames to enact codes and regulations and provide for their administration, enforcement, and amendment;

WHEREAS, the City of Ames seeks to establish regulations for the responsible ownership and control of dogs on private property within its jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, it is imperative to ensure the safety and well-being of residents and domestic animals while promoting a harmonious living environment;

WHEREAS, leash requirements, control of dogs at large, and the identification of dogs contribute to the responsible ownership and management of pets; and

WHEREAS, certain dogs may pose a higher risk of causing harm, necessitating special regulations for the management of vicious dogs

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AMES, TEXAS, THAT:

SECTION 1: Title. This ordinance shall be known as the "City of Ames Dog Regulation Ordinance."

SECTION 2: Leash Requirements.

(a) Definition: For the purposes of this ordinance, a "leash" shall be defined as a physical restraint device made of material of sufficient strength and length to control the movement of a dog.

(b) General Requirement: All dogs on private property within the City of Ames shall be restrained by a leash when not confined to the owner's or custodian's premise (*i.e.*, when the dog has access to a sidewalk or street).

(c) Permissible Leash Types: Leashes utilized for restraint under this ordinance may include but are not limited to standard handheld leashes, retractable leashes, and other similar devices that effectively control the dog.

(d) Exceptions: The leash requirement may be exempted in designated off-leash areas as determined by the City of Ames.

(e) Enforcement and Penalties: Violations of the leash requirements set forth in this ordinance shall be subject to enforcement measures as outlined in Section 6 of this ordinance, which may include fines and other appropriate penalties.

SECTION 3: Control of Dogs at Large.

(a) Definition: For the purposes of this ordinance, a dog shall be considered "at large" when it is off the owner's or person in charge's premises and not under direct physical control.

(b) Prohibition of Dogs at Large: No owner or person in charge of a dog shall allow the dog to be at large without having direct physical control over the dog.

(c) Exception for Property without Access to Sidewalk or Street: Notwithstanding subsection (b), an owner or person having in their possession a dog may allow the dog to be at large on property that does not provide the animal with access to a sidewalk or street.

(d) Enforcement and Penalties: Violations of this section shall be subject to enforcement measures as outlined in Section 6 of this ordinance, including but not limited to fines and other appropriate penalties.

SECTION 4: Dog Identification Tags.

(a) Requirement: Every dog within the City of Ames shall be required to wear a visible identification tag that includes the owner's name and contact information. This tag shall be securely affixed to the dog's collar or harness.

(b) Enforcement and Penalties: Violations of the dog identification tag requirement set forth in this ordinance shall be subject to enforcement measures as outlined in Section 6 of this ordinance, which may include fines and other appropriate penalties.

SECTION 5: Regulation of Vicious Dogs.

(a) Definition: For the purposes of this ordinance, a "vicious dog" shall be defined as any dog that, when unprovoked, inflicts serious bodily injury or death on a human being or domestic animal.

(b) Registration and Identification: Owners of vicious dogs within the City of Ames shall register their dogs with the appropriate municipal authority. Vicious dogs must wear a special identification tag at all times, indicating their classification.

(c) Confinement and Restraint: Vicious dogs must be securely confined on the owner's premises or restrained by a leash and muzzled when off the owner's property.

(d) Liability Insurance: Owners of vicious dogs shall maintain liability insurance coverage, providing for injuries inflicted by the dog. Proof of insurance must be provided upon request by municipal authorities.

(e) Reporting Requirements: Any change in ownership or residence of a vicious dog must be promptly reported to the municipal authority.

(f) Enforcement and Penalties: Violations of the regulations pertaining to vicious dogs shall be subject to enforcement measures as outlined in Section 6 of this ordinance, including fines, impoundment, or other appropriate penalties.

SECTION 6: Enforcement and Penalties.

(a) Violation of Leash Requirements and Control of Dogs at Large: Any person found in violation of the leash requirements (Section 2) or control of dogs at large (Section 3) shall be subject to enforcement measures, including fines and other appropriate penalties, as determined by municipal authorities.

(b) Violation of Dog Identification Tags Requirement: Owners of dogs found without the required identification tags (Section 4) shall be subject to enforcement measures, including fines and other appropriate penalties, as determined by municipal authorities.


(c) Violation of Vicious Dog Regulations: Owners of vicious dogs found in violation of the regulations pertaining to vicious dogs (Section 5) shall be subject to enforcement measures, including fines, impoundment, or other appropriate penalties, as determined by municipal authorities.

SECTION 7: Severability.

If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application.

SECTION 8: Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately and enforceable when published as required by law.

PASSED, APPROVED, & ADOPTED this, the 12TH day of February 2024.



Barbara Domain, Mayor

ATTEST:



Wellona Godfrey, City Secretary