

**CITY OF SPRINGFIELD  
ORDINANCE # 2025-016**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD IN WASHINGTON COUNTY,  
KENTUCKY TO REGULATE ANIMALS**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council finds that the health, safety and welfare of its citizens require the regulation of animals; and

**WHEREAS**, KRS 65.8840 authorizes municipalities to adopt an ordinance for the abatement of nuisances, owner liability and enforcement procedures;

**WHEREAS**, through the Establishment of a Code Enforcement Board through Ordinance 2025-012 in conjunction with this ordinance, Ordinance 2014-003 should be repealed in its entirety.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Springfield as follows:

**SECTION 1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this ordinance is to promote public health, safety, and welfare by regulating animals within the City.

**SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS**

- A. **Animal** – Any domesticated or wild creature, excluding humans.
- B. **Animal Control Officer**- all persons designated by the City as the primary enforcement officers of ordinances regulating animals and owners of animals, and for the enforcement of Sections of the Kentucky Revised Statutes.
- C. **Attack**- an unprovoked attack in an aggressive manner on a human.
- D. **Code Enforcement Board**- An administrative body created and acting under the authority of the Local Government Code Enforcement Act, KRS 65.8801 to 65.8839.
- E. **Exotic or wild animal**- any animal identified by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, or Kentucky Revised Statutes as exotic, or inherently dangerous to human health and safety.
- F. **Fowl**- Any bird, domesticated or wild, customarily raised, kept, or used for the production of food, eggs, feathers, or for sport or exhibition purposes, which includes but is not limited to chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, guineas, pheasants, pigeons, quail, and similar avian species.
- G. **Keeping or Harboring**- any person who shall allow any animal to habitually remain, lodge or be fed within his/her home, business, yard, enclosure or premises.
- H. **Livestock**- any domesticated or semi-domesticated animal typically kept for agricultural, breeding, dairy, meat, fiber purposes, including but not limited to cattle, horses, mules, donkeys, goats, sheep, swine, llamas, alpacas, and any poultry such as chickens, roosters, ducks, turkeys, or geese. The term does not include household pets such as dogs, cats, rabbits kept indoors, or similar companion animals.

- I. **Owner** – Any person who owns, keeps, possesses, controls, or harbors an animal or has it in his/her care, or permits it to remain on or about premises owned or occupied by him/her.
- J. **Property Owner**- A person, association, corporation, partnership or other legal entity having a legal or equitable title in real property.
- K. **Registered Vicious Dog**-A vicious dog for which registration certificate has been issued by the Springfield Police Department after there has been delivered to the Springfield Police Department a registration application for that dog, on a form designed by the City, which shall be signed by the owner(s) of the dog which is the subject thereof, under the penalties of perjury, and which shall include:
  - 1. The name, address, age and social security number and telephone number of each possessor and owner of the vicious dog that is the subject thereof; and
  - 2. The address of the property where the vicious dog that is the subject thereof is harbored; and
  - 3. A complete identification of the vicious dog that is the subject of the registration, including, without limitation, genus and species, name, gender, color, breed and any distinguishing physical characteristics thereof, along with two (2) color photographs of the vicious dog.
  - 4. Documentary evidence of: (i) all vaccinations required by law; (ii) the removal of reproductive organs by spaying, neutering or otherwise.
  - 5. A certificate of insurance from an insurance company authorized to conduct business in Kentucky, that the owner of the registered vicious dog is insured thereby against liability for all injuries and damages caused by the registered vicious dog, with single occurrence limits of no less than \$100,000.00, which will continue until the City is notified of the termination or expiration thereof.
- L. **Restrained Vicious Dog**- A vicious dog which is always either:
  - (a) Securely confined and restricted to private property in which either the owner or custodian thereof has some legal ownership or occupancy interest, by either:
    - i. A building inhabited by either the owner or custodian of the vicious dog; or:
    - ii. A visible fence which conforms to all of the other requirements of all other City ordinances, and which is constructed of materials of sufficient height and strength to prevent the vicious dog from penetrating or going over or under the fence, and in which each entrance and exit is controlled by a gate that automatically closes, latches and locks; or
    - iii. A vicious dog cage; or
  - (b) Muzzled to prevent biting, and leashed to an adult with a chain of no more than three (3) feet in length, and a minimum tensile strength of 300 pounds.
- M. **Vicious or dangerous animal**- any animal that attacks or attempts to attack, bites or attempts to bite or physically injures human beings, domestic animals or livestock without provocation or that has a known propensity, tendency or disposition of unprovoked attacks on human beings or domestic animals, causes injury or endangers the safety of human beings or domestic animals or has been trained to engaged in any dog fighting. Any animal that without provocation has attacked a human being or other animal shall be presumed vicious or dangerous for purposes of this Chapter.

This definition shall not apply to dogs used by law enforcement officers in the performance of their duties.

### **SECTION 3. PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

- A. No owner shall allow any animal to run at large within the City pursuant to KRS 258.295.
- B. Animals shall not be allowed to create excessive noise, odor, or disturbances that interfere with the peace and comfort of neighbors.
- C. No owner shall permit their animals to destroy or damage public or private property.
- D. No owner shall crop a dog's ears, except a licensed veterinarian.
- E. No owner shall permit an unleashed animal anywhere in the City other than on a lot or parcel of real estate:
  - a. In which the owner or custodian of the unleashed animal has an ownership or possessory interest; or
  - b. Upon which the unleashed animal has been authorized by someone who has an ownership or possessory interest in that lot or parcel of real estate.
- F. No owner shall be permitted to have:
  - a. Any ownership, possession or control in the City by anybody of any vicious dog that isn't always both a registered vicious dog and a restrained vicious dog with a financially responsible owner.
  - b. The keeping or harboring of any animal or fowl which by frequent or habitual howling, yelping, barking, crowing or making of other noises shall greatly annoy or disturb a neighborhood.
  - c. Any animal for which an owner is unable to exercise proper care and control of as to prevent the following action by the animal: excessive, continuous, or untimely barking or howling; molesting passersby through any means, including growling, chasing, jumping upon or barking; chasing vehicles; attacking other domestic animals; trespassing on school grounds; trespassing on private property; or damaging property of any nature.
  - d. Any unimmunized dog for rabies.
  - e. Any animal they own, harbor or keep who has bit any person on any premises owned or occupied by another person.
    - i. If any animal should bite any other person besides the person who keeps, harbors or owns the animal, the owner, keeper or harborer shall be deemed to have violated this Section and the animal may be immediately subject to impoundment and/or quarantine.
    - ii. It shall be the duty of any person who owns, keeps or harbors any animal within the city limits to immediately report to the Washington County Health Department the name and address of all humans known to have been bitten in any way by any animal owned, kept or harbored by them, and they shall further report such information as required by the Washington County Health Department as may be helpful in rabies control.
  - f. Any Exotic animal.

- g. Any wild animal.
- h. Any Fowl, with the exclusion of chickens, which shall only be allowed under the following conditions:
  - i. A maximum of four (4) chickens per household may be kept outdoors only, so long as the Owner satisfies the following conditions:
    - 1. The chickens are housed in a humane and aesthetically pleasing coup with a covering that will not allow for the chicken to fly away or escape;
    - 2. The chickens are maintained in a sanitary condition that does not cause odors for adjoining property owners;
    - 3. Chickens must always remain on the Owner's property;
    - 4. Chickens may not be kept on any parcel that is a duplex, multi-family or apartment residences and may not be kept on property where there are commercial or industrial uses; and
    - 5. Roosters are not allowed under this exception.
  - i. Any Livestock
    - i. Nothing herein shall prohibit the keeping of fowl or livestock for a legitimate agricultural purpose on a tract of land containing at least (5) five acres.
    - ii. Registration and Documentation of the agricultural exemption: To claim agricultural exemption, the property owner must:
      - 1. Register the property with the City Clerk as an agricultural operation within thirty (30) days of commencing agricultural activities or within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this ordinance, whichever is later;
      - 2. Provide evidence of commercial agricultural activity, which may include:
        - a. Agricultural exemption for property tax purposes (Section 170) from the Washington County Property Valuation Administrator;
        - b. Sales receipts or invoices from livestock sales, egg sales, or other agricultural products;
        - c. Documentation of participation in USDA farm programs;
        - d. Federal income tax returns (Schedule F) showing farm income or loss, if requested by the Code Enforcement Officer;
        - e. Other documentation satisfactory to the City Clerk demonstrating bona fide commercial agricultural operations.
      - 3. Renew registration annually by January 31st of each year at no charge.

#### **SECTION 4. CARE AND TREATMENT**

- A. Animals must be provided with adequate food, shelter, and water.
- B. No person shall keep an animal in conditions that constitute cruelty or neglect.
- C. No person shall place any poisonous substance which may be harmful to any animal as described in this chapter in any location where it may be readily found and eaten by an animal.

#### **SECTION 5. CIVIL OFFENSE**

A violation of any provision of this Ordinance shall constitute a civil offense. Each day that a violation continues shall be considered a separate civil offense. Enforcement and penalties shall be administered in accordance with KRS 65.8801–65.8839 and any other applicable provisions of Kentucky law.

**SECTION 6. ENFORCEMENT**

Enforcement of this ordinance shall be the responsibility of the City of Springfield Code Enforcement Board and the City of Springfield Code Enforcement Officer.

**SECTION 7. SEVERABILITY**

The provisions of this ordinance are severable. The invalidity of any provision shall not affect the validity of any other provision.

**SECTION 8. REPEAL OF PRIOR ORDINANCES**

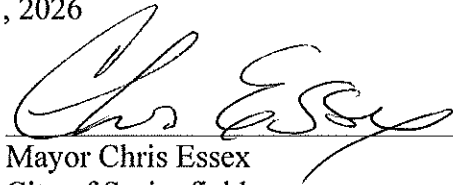
City Ordinance 2014-003, along with all other ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith, is hereby repealed.

**SECTION 9. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This ordinance shall become effective upon its second reading, passage, and publication as required by law.

	YES	NO	
Daniel Bishop	<u>✓</u>	_____	
Joann Ellery	<u>✓</u>	_____	
Michael Hale	<u>✓</u>	_____	
Carolyn Hardin	_____	_____	Absent
John Pettus	<u>✓</u>	_____	
Lance Smith	<u>✓</u>	_____	

First Reading: December 8, 2025  
Second Reading: January 13, 2026  
Published in the Springfield Sun: January 21, 2026

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Chris Essex  
City of Springfield

ATTEST:

  
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Jessica Hart, City Admin./ Clerk