

Act No. 7  
Public Acts of 1997  
Approved by the Governor  
May 15, 1997  
Filed with the Secretary of State  
May 16, 1997

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
89TH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 1997

**Introduced by Reps. Law, Gire, Gubow, Rocca, Cropsey, Bodem, McManus, Willard, Dobronski, Freeman, London, Brewer, LaForge, Jellema, DeHart, Godchaux, Varga, Jaye, Hanley and Galloway**

# **ENROLLED HOUSE BILL No. 4239**

AN ACT to amend 1969 PA 287, entitled "An act to regulate pet shops, dog pounds and animal shelters," by amending the title and sections 1, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (MCL 287.331, 287.336, 287.337, 287.338, and 287.339), section 1 as amended by 1980 PA 214, and by adding sections 8a, 9a, and 9b.

*The People of the State of Michigan enact:*

## TITLE

An act to regulate pet shops, animal control shelters, and animal protection shelters; to establish uniform procedures and minimum requirements for adoption of dogs, cats, and ferrets; and to prescribe penalties and civil fines and to provide remedies.

Sec. 1. As used in this act:

(a) "Adoption" means a transfer of ownership, with or without remuneration, of a dog, cat, or ferret from an animal control shelter or animal protection shelter to an individual for the purpose of being a companion animal for that individual. As used in this subdivision, a companion animal includes but is not limited to a dog that is used for hunting or as a guard dog.

(b) "Alteration" means a professional sterilization procedure performed by a veterinarian that renders a dog, cat, or ferret incapable of reproducing.

(c) "Altered", in reference to a dog, cat, or ferret, means having undergone alteration.

(d) "Animal" means a mammal except livestock as defined in 1937 PA 284, MCL 287.121 to 287.131, and rodents.

(e) "Animal control shelter" means a facility operated by a municipality for the impoundment and care of animals that are found in the streets or at large, animals that are otherwise held due to the violation of a municipal ordinance or state law, or animals that are surrendered to the animal control shelter.

(f) "Animal protection shelter" means a facility operated by a person, humane society, society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, or any other nonprofit organization for the care of homeless animals.

(g) "Cat" means a domestic cat of any age of the species *felis catus*.

(h) "Department" means the state department of agriculture.

(i) "Director" means the director of the department or his or her authorized representative.

(j) "Dog" means a domestic dog of any age of the species *canis familiaris*.

(k) "Ferret" means an animal of any age of the species *mustela furo*.

(l) "Health certificate" means a certificate in a form prescribed by the department in which a veterinarian attests to the age, sex, breed, and description of an animal, and to the fact that at the time of preparation of the certificate, the veterinarian examined the animal and found the animal free from visual evidence of communicable disease.

(m) "Municipality" means a county, city, village, or township.

(n) "Person" means an individual, partnership, corporation, association, governmental entity, or other legal entity.

(o) "Pet shop" means a place where animals are sold or offered for sale, exchange, or transfer.

(p) "Veterinarian" means a person licensed to practice veterinary medicine under article 15 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.16101 to 333.18838.

Sec. 6. A municipality shall not operate an animal control shelter unless the animal control shelter is registered with the department. A society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, or any other person, shall not operate an animal protection shelter unless the shelter is registered with the department.

Sec. 7. Application for registration of an animal control shelter or animal protection shelter shall be on forms approved by the department.

Sec. 8. The department shall not register an animal control shelter or animal protection shelter unless the department first inspects it to ensure that it complies with this act and the rules promulgated under this act.

Sec. 8a. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, an animal control shelter or animal protection shelter shall not permit a person to adopt a dog, cat, or ferret that has not been altered, unless that person has entered into a contract for the alteration of the dog, cat, or ferret with the animal control shelter or animal protection shelter. The contract shall state that the adopting person agrees to have an alteration performed on the dog, cat, or ferret and shall otherwise comply with this section.

(2) A contract with an animal control shelter or animal protection shelter entered into pursuant to subsection (1) shall require the adopting person to have an alteration performed on the dog, cat, or ferret within 4 weeks after the adoption date if at the time of adoption the dog, cat, or ferret is 6 months of age or older. If the dog, cat, or ferret to be adopted is under 6 months of age at the time of adoption, the contract shall contain the date upon which the dog, cat, or ferret will be 6 months of age, and shall require the person adopting the dog, cat, or ferret to have an alteration performed on the dog, cat, or ferret within 4 weeks after that date. This section does not prevent a veterinarian from performing an alteration on a dog, cat, or ferret that is under 6 months of age.

(3) Upon certification by a veterinarian in writing that a dog, cat, or ferret has a serious, permanent medical or health problem that prevents an alteration, the dog, cat, or ferret adopted is not required to be altered. Upon certification by a veterinarian in writing that an alteration poses a serious, temporary medical or health problem, the alteration may be postponed. The person adopting the dog, cat, or ferret shall have it reevaluated by a veterinarian at intervals not to exceed 14 days and shall have the alteration performed no later than 7 days after a veterinarian determines that the temporary problem is resolved.

(4) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (7), a contract entered into pursuant to subsection (1) shall require the adopting person to leave with the animal control shelter or animal protection shelter, or a designee of the animal control shelter or animal protection shelter, a good faith deposit of at least \$25.00 that indicates the person's intention to have the adopted dog, cat, or ferret altered within the time provided pursuant to subsection (2). If the person fails to comply with the terms of the contract, the deposit is forfeited. The good faith deposit shall be returned to the adopting person if the adopting person submits written certification from a veterinarian of either of the following:

(a) The dog, cat, or ferret died within the time period in which the alteration was required under subsection (2).

(b) The dog, cat, or ferret has a serious, permanent medical or health problem that prevents an alteration.

(5) Money forfeited under subsection (4) shall be used by the animal control shelter or animal protection shelter to finance alterations, for public education regarding the value of having dogs, cats, and ferrets altered, or to otherwise ensure compliance with this section.

(6) If the adopting person complies with the terms of a contract entered into under subsection (1), the good faith deposit of at least \$25.00 shall be refunded by the animal control shelter, animal protection shelter, or a designee of the animal control shelter or animal protection shelter, upon submission by the adopting person of written certification by a veterinarian that the adopted dog, cat, or ferret was altered. The certificate shall include the date of alteration, the name of the owner of the dog, cat, or ferret, the description of the dog, cat, or ferret, and the signature of the veterinarian who performed the alteration.

(7) The good faith deposit under subsection (4) is not required if 1 or more of the following apply:

(a) A dog is transferred to a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency.

(b) A dog is transferred to an organization or trainer that trains guide or leader dogs for blind persons, hearing dogs for deaf or audibly impaired persons, or service dogs for physically limited persons.

(c) A dog, cat, or ferret is transferred to another animal control shelter or animal protection shelter or is transferred to a person who will transfer the animal to another animal control shelter or animal protection shelter. Before the first animal control shelter or animal protection shelter releases the animal, it shall obtain from the person to whom the animal is to be released a written statement by the second animal control shelter or animal protection shelter that it is willing to accept the animal for purposes of adoption or humane euthanasia. Promptly after receipt of the animal by the second animal control shelter or animal protection shelter, the person to whom the animal was released shall provide the first animal control shelter or animal protection shelter with a written statement by the second animal control shelter or animal protection shelter containing a description of the dog, cat, or ferret and acknowledging its receipt on a date specified in the statement.

(8) A contract entered into pursuant to subsection (1) shall include a statement that if the terms of the contract are breached because a person adopting a dog, cat, or ferret fails to have the animal altered as required in the contract, then the person agrees to pay liquidated damages of the greater of \$100.00 or actual reasonable costs incurred by the animal control shelter or animal protection shelter to enforce the contract. Immediately before a person signs the contract, a representative of the animal control shelter or animal protection shelter shall verbally direct the person's attention to the liquidated damages agreement in the contract.

Sec. 9. (1) The licensing and registration requirements of this act do not apply to a person who breeds his or her own animals or to a person subject to 1969 PA 224, MCL 287.381 to 287.395.

(2) Subsection (1) does not create an exemption from vaccination and licensing requirements under the dog law of 1919, 1919 PA 339, MCL 287.261 to 287.290, or from vaccination and handling requirements under 1994 PA 358, MCL 287.891 to 287.901.

(3) This act does not require the alteration of a dog, cat, or ferret being reclaimed from an animal control shelter or animal protection shelter by its owner unless a local governmental ordinance requires the alteration.

Sec. 9a. An animal control shelter or animal protection shelter shall maintain written records on the total number of dogs, cats, and ferrets under 6 months of age, the total number of dogs, cats, and ferrets 6 months of age and older, and all other animals received, returned to owners, adopted to new owners, sold, or transferred with or without remuneration to any person, the number of adopted dogs, cats, and ferrets that were altered, the number of adopted dogs, cats, and ferrets that were not altered, and the number of dogs, cats, and ferrets euthanized annually, and shall annually provide a copy of these statistics to the department, by March 31 of the year following the year for which the statistics were compiled.

Sec. 9b. (1) If a person violates this act or a rule promulgated under this act, the director, after notice and an opportunity for an evidentiary hearing under the administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to 24.328, may do either or both of the following:

(a) Suspend or revoke a license or registration issued to the person under this act.

(b) Impose an administrative fine of not more than \$1,000.00 for each violation. The director shall advise the attorney general of the failure of a person to pay an administrative fine under this section. The attorney general shall bring a civil action to recover the administrative fine and costs and fees. The administrative fine shall be deposited in the general fund of the state treasury.

(2) In addition to any other action authorized by this act, the director may bring an action to do 1 or more of the following:

(a) Obtain a declaratory judgment that a method, act, or practice is in violation of this act.

(b) Obtain an injunction against a person who is engaging, or about to engage, in a method, act, or practice that violates this act.

(3) If a person fails to comply with a contract for the alteration of a dog, cat, or ferret as required under section 8a, a court with appropriate jurisdiction may order transfer of ownership of the adopted animal only to 1 of the following:

(a) The facility from which the animal was adopted.

(b) A veterinarian, animal control shelter, or animal protection shelter willing to accept the animal and either humanely euthanize the animal or adopt the animal to an owner who agrees to have the animal altered.

Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect January 1, 1998.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.



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Clerk of the House of Representatives.



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Secretary of the Senate.

Approved -----

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Governor.