COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
COUNTY OF WARREN

WARREN FISCAL COURT ORDINANCE NUMBER 26-22WC

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AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING AN ANIMAL CONTROL POLICY IN WARREN COUNTY

WHEREAS, the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Warren County may be affected by animals running at large, nuisance behavior, or the presence of vicious or diseased animals;

WHEREAS, proper care, restraint, and humane treatment of animals is essential to prevent cruelty, neglect, and suffering;

WHEREAS, KRS Chapter 258 and KRS 67.077 authorize the County to adopt ordinances and policies for the regulation and control of animals within its jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, the County desires to promote responsible pet ownership, including spaying, neutering, microchipping, and population management programs for companion and community animals;

WHEREAS, the adoption of this policy is in the best interest of the citizens of Warren County;

WHEREAS, the County recognizes that agriculture operations are vital to the economy and heritage of Warren County, and it is not the intent of this Ordinance to regulate or restrict customary agricultural activities in agriculture zoned areas or federally approved livestock facilities in accordance with applicable state and federal law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE FISCAL COURT OF THE COUNTY OF WARREN, COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY, AS FOLLOWS:

This Ordinance is adopted pursuant to KRS 67.077 in that it was published in summary form on the 27 day of September, 2026, and was introduced and read on the 24 day of September, 2026, and given final reading on the 15 day of October, 2026, and said Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon signature, recordation and publication in summary form pursuant to KRS Chapter 424 and KRS 67.077 Subsection 3.

589-A

APPROVED this the 15 day of October, 2026.

DOUG GORMAN
Warren County Judge Executive

ATTESTED:

CRYSTAL CUMMINGS
Warren County Fiscal Court Clerk

Passed by a Vote of 7 to 0.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY BY:

AMY HALE CHANDLER
Warren County Attorney

589-A-1

WARREN COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL POLICY

EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 15, 2026

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS.

For the purpose of this ordinance, the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

ANIMAL. Any live vertebrate creature, except humans.

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER. Any person designated by the County, as required by KRS 258.195, to enforce this subchapter and state laws regarding animal control.

CAT. Any age feline of the domesticated type.

COMMUNITY CAT. Any cat that is feral, homeless, stray, or at large, is not owned, kept, or harbored by a human, or is otherwise free-roaming.

DOG. Any age canine of the domestic type.

DOMESTIC ANIMAL shall include dogs, cats, fowl, ducks, geese, turkeys, confined domestic hares and rabbits, pheasants and other birds and animals raised and/or maintained in confinement.

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.

HUMANE SOCIETY. An organization that promotes the welfare and rights of animals through various actions, such as stopping cruelty, providing shelter and care for animals in need, and educating the public, such as the Bowling Green-Warren County Humane Society (BGWCHS).

MINIMUM CARE. All domestic animals shall be provided "minimum care." This means care sufficient to preserve the health and well-being of an animal and includes, but is not limited to, the following requirements:

(A) Food of sufficient quantity and quality to allow for average growth or maintenance of body weight.

(B) Open or adequate access to potable water of a drinkable temperature in sufficient quantity to satisfy the animal's needs.

(C) Access to a barn, house, or other enclosed structure sufficient to protect the animal from wind, rain, snow, or sun and adequate bedding to protect against cold and dampness.

(D) Veterinary care deemed necessary by a reasonably prudent person to relieve distress from injury, neglect, or disease.

(E) Continuous access to an area:

1. With adequate space for exercise is necessary for the health of the animal. Indications of inadequate space include evidence of debility, stress, or abnormal behavior patterns.
2. With air temperature suitable for the health of the animal.
3. With adequate ventilation.
4. With regular diurnal lighting cycles of either natural or artificial light.
5. Kept reasonably clean and free from excess waste or other contaminants that could create a substantial risk of the animal becoming diseased or affected with life-threatening parasites.

NON-DOMESTICATED ANIMAL. Species that have not been selectedly bred for life alongside humans, living independently in natural habitats.

OWNER. Any person, partnership, or corporation owning, keeping, or harboring one or more animals. For purposes of enforcing this subchapter, an animal shall be deemed harbored if it is fed or sheltered for three or more consecutive days.

PET. Any animal kept for pleasure rather than utility.

PROPERTY. Property located in Warren County, excluding the City of Bowling Green and property zoned as agriculture, as designated by the City-County Planning Commission of Warren County.

WOLF-HYBRID. Any domesticated dog that has in its known genetic history and/or formal pedigree crossbreeding with the wolf species to include but not be limited to animals referred to as wolf-hybrids or wolf-mix breeds or the breed known as Tundra Shepherd.

SECTION 2. POULTRY

It shall be unlawful for the owners of or those having control of poultry, excluding Property zoned as agriculture, to allow such poultry to run at large or off the premises of those owning or controlling same or fail to confine the poultry as defined hereinabove.

No roosters or crowing poultry or peal fowl are allowed, excluding on Property zoned as agriculture.

SECTION 3. NUISANCE

No person shall own, keep, or harbor any animal that unreasonably annoys humans, endangers the life or health of persons or other animals, or substantially interferes with the rights of citizens, other than their owner's, to enjoyment of life or property, or is otherwise a nuisance under this ordinance.

A nuisance is defined as the following:

(A) Repeatedly allowing dogs to chase, jump at or on, bark at, or otherwise annoy or threaten passing pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, or operators of motorized vehicles, other

than those owned or operated by the same person or his or her immediate family, guest(s), or invitee(s), who keeps, owns, or harbors the animal;

(B) While off the owner's (or person charged with caring or controlling the animal) property, attacks, threatens, injures, or kills domestic animals, or livestock or runs at, jumps upon, chases, bites at, or in any other way frightens, molests, or scares any child or adult other than the one who owns, keeps, or harbors the animal and the members of his or her immediate family;

(C) Trespasses by going upon any property or premises not owned or occupied by the person who keeps, harbors, or owns the animal, including school grounds;

(D) Damages private or public property including but not limited to, turns over, gets into, or otherwise damages or disturbs garbage cans, or any items or personal property located on any premises other than those owned or occupied by the person who owns, keeps, or harbors the animal or goes upon public cemeteries, trails, parks, and playgrounds, except at designated parks or under restraint;

(E) Allows unclean or unsanitary conditions on property where animals are kept or causes fouling of the air by noxious or offensive odors resulting from the accumulation of animal excrement and thereby creates unreasonable annoyance or discomfort to neighbors or others in close proximity to the premises where the animal is kept or harbored because of the failure to keep the animal's pen, yard, lot, or other enclosures in a sanitary condition and free from preventable odors;

(F) Is a dog, cat, or ferret or other animal over four months of age that is capable of carrying the rabies virus and recommended to be vaccinated by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, which animal is maintained, kept, or harbored and does not have a current rabies vaccination;

(G) Is offensive or dangerous to the public health, safety, or welfare by virtue of the number of animals maintained at a single property, or the inadequacy of the facilities, or the inability to provide proper care for those animals.

(H) Allowing dogs to threaten, harass, injure, or kill domestic animals or livestock of the owner's (or one charged with the care and control of the dog) property;

(I) Keeping any hybrid, exotic, non-domesticated animal, or any wildlife which has attacked a human or which is apprehended or observed unrestrained in violation of Section 9.

(J) Barking, howling, whining or other continuous utterances, or excessive noise from any animal that causes unreasonable annoyance, disturbance or discomfort to neighbors or others in close proximity to the premises where the animal is kept or harbored.

SECTION 4. BITING PROHIBITED.

(A) No person shall allow any dog or cat they own, harbor or keep to bite any person on any premises owned or occupied by another person. 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 ordinance and the animal may be immediately subject to impoundment and/or quarantine.

(B) It shall be the duty of any person who owns, keeps or harbors any animal within the County to immediately report to the health department the name and address of all humans known to have been bitten in a manner that breaks the skin or results in treatment by a licensed medical professional and they shall further report to the health department such information as may be helpful in rabies control.

(C) It shall be the duty of every physician or advanced practice registered nurse practicing medicine within the County to immediately report to the health department all names and addresses of all persons treated by him for all bites inflicted by animals, and they shall report all such other information as may be helpful in rabies control.

SECTION 5. FOR-PROFIT ANIMAL OPERATIONS

(A) Any property or premises which for profit keeps, breeds, harbors, boards, grooms or kennels more than a total of six (6) cats and/or dogs at any one time shall remain compliant with the following minimum standards:

1. This Section shall not apply to any licensed veterinary practice in performance of their normal operations.
2. All dogs, cats and ferrets owned, boarded, harbored or kept at the property shall have current rabies vaccinations.
3. All animals shall be provided with facilities that provide the requirements of adequate shelter as defined hereinabove, and animals kept or boarded for a period of one (1) day or longer shall be provided with housing facilities as defined hereinabove.
4. Females in heat (estrus) may not be housed in the same primary enclosure with sexually mature males, except for breeding purposes;
5. Any dog or cat exhibiting or known to have a vicious or overly aggressive disposition must be housed separately;
6. Litters may not be housed in the same primary enclosure with dogs or cats, other than their dams or foster dams, except when permanently maintained in breeding colonies;
7. Excreta and food waste must be removed from primary enclosures daily and from underneath primary enclosures as often as necessary to prevent an accumulation of feces and food waste, to prevent soiling of the animals contained in the primary enclosures and to reduce disease hazards, insects, pests and odors.
8. For-profit animal operations shall maintain immediate access to veterinary care for all animals in order to maintain good health and general welfare and required care of animals as defined hereinabove.

(B) All applicable zoning regulations of the City-County Planning Commission and other state or federal regulations regarding the operation and location of premises shall apply.

(C) All premises shall allow inspection by the Animal Control Officer to ensure compliance with all regulations of this Section, and requirements of this Chapter. Failure to allow inspection during reasonable hours and with adequate notice shall result in a violation of

this ordinance. This inspection authority shall include all interior areas of all improvements where animals are housed, as permitted by law.

SECTION 6. IMPOUNDMENT, DISPOSITION, AND ADOPTION OF ANIMALS.

(A) Any animal which is in violation of any of the provisions of this ordinance, or has committed any one (1) or more of the objectionable acts listed hereinabove may be seized and impounded at any time by any person authorized to enforce this Chapter.

(B) It shall be the duty of the BGWCHS, or such other persons or organizations as may be designated by the County to receive or to cause to be received impounded animals. Unless a written hold is placed on an animal by the Animal Control Officer for violations of this ordinance, impounded animals may be released to the owner, provided the owner provides proof of vaccination against rabies, pays all applicable license fees, and pays required BGWCHS fees including, but not limited to:

1. Twenty ($20.00) dollars for each impoundment of spayed or neutered animals, or fifty ($50.00) dollars for each impoundment of unspayed or unneutered animals. The additional impoundment fee for unspayed or unneutered animals may be waived or reduced for the first offense at the discretion of the BGWCHS if the owner agrees to spay or neuter the animal and pays this cost. Spaying or neutering the animal shall be mandatory prior to release of the animal for the second or subsequent impoundment(s).
2. A ten ($10.00) dollar per-day fee for each twenty-four (24) hour period the animal is impounded or the actual cost of keeping the impounded animal, whichever is greater.

(C) Animals deemed vicious or dangerous as defined herein or by the Kentucky Revised Statutes or in violation of this ordinance shall not be released by the BGWCHS until authorized by the Animal Control Officer.

(D) The BGWCHS, or such other persons or organizations as may be designated by the County, shall cause any animal not reclaimed after being impounded for five (5) days or more to be disposed of in a humane manner or allowed to be adopted; provided however, that no animal shall be disposed of until a reasonable effort is made to contact its owner.

SECTION 7. RESTRAINT

Owners shall restrain all domestic animals on their Property except cats.

(A) Running at large. No owner or person in charge of any animal shall permit such animal to run at large unless such animal (except cats) is under the physical control, i.e. leash or lead, of the owner or his or her agent.

(B) Confinement. Owners shall confine all domestic female dogs or cats in heat in a building or secure enclosure in such a manner that such animal cannot come into contact with another animal except for planned breeding.

SECTION 8. KEEPING OF NON-DOMESTICATED ANIMALS

Except as provided herein, no person shall keep or permit to be kept on his or her premises any non-domesticated animal.

(A) Residential Acreage Limitation. Non-domesticated animals shall not be kept on residentially zoned property of less than two (2) acres. On property of two (2) acres or greater, non-domesticated animals may be kept only if lawfully permitted under applicable state and federal law; and maintained in compliance with all enclosure, safety, and animal welfare standards required by law.

(B) Indoor Exception for Small Non-Domestic Animals. Small non-domesticated animals customarily kept indoors and posing no inherent danger to public health or safety may be kept on residential property of less than two (2) acres, provided they are maintained exclusively indoors.

(C) Exceptions. This section shall not be construed to apply to the following:

1. Licensed circuses, rodeos, and theatrical exhibits;
2. Authorized wildlife rehabilitators with any required state-issued or federally-issued permit, subject to the restrictions below;
3. Licensed veterinary hospitals for the purpose of treating injured animals;
4. Federally-licensed research institutions;
5. Zoological parks; or
6. Museum of Science and History.

(D) Authorized wildlife rehabilitators. Those parties legally possessing non-domestic animals under a state-issued or federally-issued permit, which would have been legal before the effective date of this subchapter, may continue to possess such animals until the expiration date of the original permit. Permits when renewed will subject the owner to the prohibitions of this ordinance.

(E) Compliance. Any person keeping non-domestic animals permitted by this subchapter shall comply with the standards set forth in the Commonwealth Department of Fish and Wildlife regulations (301 KAR), KRS 150, and applicable federal statutes and regulations.

(F) Wolves and wolf-hybrids are considered inherently dangerous, vicious, non-domesticated animals, and ownership thereof is prohibited. Breeding of wolf-hybrids is prohibited. Animal Control Officer or law enforcement may seize and impound such animals.

SECTION 9. STERILIZATION

(A) No animal shall be released for adoption from BGWCHS unless the new owner agrees to subject the animal to the spay-neuter program and the payment of any and all applicable fees required.

(B) BGWCHS may refuse to release any animal for adoption.

(C) Any 501(c)(3) organization or other similar organization may release an animal for adoption in the county only if the organization spays or neuters the animal before adoption and complies with the terms of this subchapter regarding kennel licenses.

SECTION 10. MICROCHIPPING OF DOGS AND CATS

BGWCHS shall not release any eligible animal for adoption unless the new owner participates in the microchip program and pays any and all applicable fees.

SECTION 11. VICIOUS OR DANGEROUS DOGS

It shall be unlawful for any person to keep, own or harbor, or allow to be kept on his/her property, any vicious or dangerous animal, as defined and regulated by KRS Chapter 258.

SECTION 12. CONFINEMENT WITHIN MOTOR VEHICLES

(A) No person shall confine any animal in an unattended motor vehicle in such a manner that places it in a life or health threatening situation by exposure to extreme heat or cold, and without proper ventilation or other protection from such heat or cold. Factors considered in determining a life of health threatening situation include, but are not limited to, estimated time the animal has been unattended in the vehicle, ambient temperature inside the vehicle, and physical condition of the animal.

(B) An Animal Control Officer, Firefighter, or Peace Officer shall have authority to enter such unattended motor vehicles to remove an animal by any reasonable means under the circumstances if there is cause to believe the animal is in imminent danger of physical injury or death, after making a reasonable effort to locate the owner or other person responsible.

SECTION 13. COMMUNITY CAT PROGRAM

(A) It shall be the duty of the BGWCHS, or such other persons or organizations as may be designated by the Fiscal Court, to administer a Community Cat Program within the county, providing services of trapping, evaluating, vaccinating, spaying or neutering, and returning community cats as defined in Section 1.

(B) The Community Cat Program shall be administered at no cost to the County, and will be tasked with educating the public, working with property owners and managers, and developing partnerships with community members to effectively control the community cat population as hereinabove defined, and manage nuisance behavior thereof.

(C) Community cats shall not be considered in violation of Section 3 when effectively managed under the standing policies and procedures of the Community Cat Program.

SECTION 14. ENFORCEMENT

(A) This Ordinance is enforceable by any City, State or County Police Officer, Sheriff, Deputy Sheriff, and City or County Animal Control Officer, and by any other duly designated code official of the County.

(B) It shall be a violation of this subchapter to interfere with a code enforcement officer, law enforcement officer, or Animal Control Officer in carrying out and enforcing this subchapter.

(C) This ordinance shall apply to the provisions of KRS Chapter 258 and all subsequent amendments from the date of their enactment into law unless specifically limited or qualified by amendment.

(D) Any officer enforcing this chapter may remove any animal observed to be in immediate danger.

(E) Enforcement proceedings for those provisions of this Chapter designated as civil violations shall be initiated by the issuance of a notice of violation or a citation by the Animal Control Officer or code official.

(F) Nothing in this Chapter shall prohibit the County from correcting the violation through self-help or taking immediate action to remedy a violation of this Chapter by impoundment or other means.

(G) The County may file liens on any real property owned by the violator to recover the County's costs of labor, materials, civil fines, administrative expenses, and reasonable attorney's fees incurred in enforcing this Chapter, pursuant to KRS 65.8808. Liens filed under this subsection shall be enforced in the same manner as other code enforcement liens under KRS 65.8801 to 65.8830.

SECTION 15. SEVERABILITY.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

SECTION 16. PENALTIES.

(A) Any violation of the provisions of this ordinance shall be classified as a nuisance and any person violating any of the provisions of this ordinance shall be subject to civil fines as set out below. These civil penalties shall be in addition to all license and impoundment fees charged under this ordinance, except for those Sections specifically punishable under the Kentucky Revised Statutes.

(B) A citation shall be issued in accordance with KRS 65.8801 et seq., and shall specify the offense, date, location, and corrective action required.

(C) If a citation for a violation of this ordinance is not contested by the person charged with the violation, the penalties below shall apply.

(D) A first offense is any violation committed by a person who has not been issued a citation for any violation of this ordinance or any substantially similar animal-control ordinance in any Kentucky jurisdiction within the preceding five (5) years.

(E) A second offense is an offense that occurs within five (5) years of a prior offense for which a citation is issued against the same property owner at the same property.

(F) A third or greater offense are those that occur within five (5) years of two (2) or more prior offenses for which a citation is issued against the same property owner at the same property.

(G) If the owner of the animal divests themselves of the property, the civil penalties may be waived.

(H) The following fines shall be assessed as follows:

Violation	***1st Offense***	***2nd Offense***	***3rd or greater Offense***
Animal Sales Violation	$100.00	$200.00	$300.00
Poultry Restrictions	$100.00	$200.00	$300.00
Animal Nuisances	$100.00	$200.00	$300.00
Confinement	$100.00	$200.00	$300.00
Non-Domestic, Exotic, Wolf-Hybrid or Wild Animals	$100.00	$200.00	$300.00
Care of Animals	$100.00	$200.00	$300.00
Vicious or Dangerous Animals	$100.00	$200.00	$300.00
Restraint Violation	$100.00	$200.00	$300.00
Any other violation of this code	$100.00	$200.00	$300.00