

Laguna Woods Approves Mandatory Spay-Neuter

City in Orange County, Calif., votes in favor of proposal for sterilization of dogs, cats.

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Mandatory spay-neuter regulations have been approved by the city of Laguna Woods in Orange County, Calif.

The first reading of the ordinance approved by the city council on April 15 applies to the sterilization of cats and dogs 6 months and older. The proposal establishes the following: Local laws prevent dogs from running loose in the city; the proposed ordinance would make it illegal for cats to run loose in the community unless they are spayed or neutered. Citation penalties are \$100 to \$500, depending on frequency of violation. Such fines would be in addition to any fine levied for the primary violation. Any unaltered animal impounded by Animal Services would need to be spayed or neutered before it could be released, according to a city report. The owner or custodian of a cat or dog who is unable to be spayed or neutered without a high chance of suffering serious bodily harm or death because of age or health risks must get written confirmation of that fact from a California licensed veterinarian, the ordinance states.

In addition, dog owners may obtain an unaltered dog license, issued by Animal Services if the manager determines that certain conditions are met. For example, if the dog participates in competitions, is used by a law enforcement agency, or is a qualified assistance dog.

Owners of unaltered cats older than 6 months must have the animal spayed or neutered, or provide a certificate of sterility, or show that the cat is a competition cat.

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