

## **Report for Animal Advisory Commission Regarding Mandatory Spay/Neuter on First Impound**

### **Existing and Recommended Ordinance:**

Existing language: 3-1-29 – Sterilization. The city manager or the manager of an animal shelter may sterilize an animal if it has been impounded two or more times.

Proposed language: The city manager or manager of an animal shelter may sterilize an animal upon first impoundment.

### **Information about FY 2015 spay/neuter as related to impound of animals**

4,326 cats and 5,086 dogs came into the shelter unsterilized in FY15.

The total intake of animals in FY15 was 17,750.

24 cats and 519 dogs were returned to their owners unsterilized after the first impoundment.

Two cats and 216 dogs that were returned unsterilized after their first impoundment, were impounded a second time.

Of those, two cats and 204 dogs were sterilized before return after the second impoundment.

Waivers for spay/neuter on second impound were granted for four dogs because ordinance does not apply in Travis County, only in the city of Austin. Four dogs were returned because of poor health or old age and one dog was returned unsterilized because it had been stolen.

### **Community Input**

This information was shared with the Executive Directors of Emancipet, Austin Pets Alive! and Austin Humane Society. AHS voiced their support for this change and neither APA! or Emancipet issued an opinion, but requested further information.

### **Fiscal impact**

This will result in approximately 500 additional spay/neuter surgeries per year. These surgeries will need to be done at Emancipet. Currently, the cost is \$30 for impound if you agree to have your pet altered. The cost for spay/neuter surgery at Emancipet ranges from \$30 to \$65.

### **Waivers**

The shelter may grant waivers in any of the following instances:

- The animal is deemed by a veterinarian to be too ill or elderly to be able to be sterilized without posing a risk to the animal.

- The animal resides outside the jurisdiction where the ordinance applies.

Any case in which the chief animal services officer or his/her designee identify an extenuating circumstance or a case in which the best interest of the animal in line with the recommendations of the No Kill Implementation Plan is for that animal to not be sterilized upon impoundment.

## **Results of Six-Month Spay/Neuter on First Impound Survey at Austin Animal Center**

**September 22, 2016**

**Purpose:** To find out how many stray, impounded dogs are reclaimed by owners who decline on the option to have their pet spayed or neutered prior to reclaim. Information gathered included age, sex and breed or type of dog as well as reasons owners declined to have their pet spayed or neutered.

**During the six-month period (March 17 – September 9):**

**Impounded dogs: 3,847**

**Impounded for the first time and not spayed or neutered: 3,002**

**Percentage of first-time impounded dogs unsterilized: 78 percent**

**First-time impounded dogs spayed or neutered and then returned to owners: 407**

**First-time impounded dogs returned to owners not spayed or neutered: 209**

***Of 209 dogs released unsterilized:***

- 94 declined to have their pet spayed or neutered
- 24 were declined due to medical problems by AAC vets
- 16 reclaimed by paying a spay/neuter deposit for later surgery
- 63 were returned with Emancipet vouchers for later sterilization
- The rest were either reclaimed by rescue or had owners who said dog was already spayed

**Of the unsterilized dogs returned to owners intact, seven returned on second impound.**

***Of the 94 owners who declined spay/neuter:***

- 34 percent stated they planned to breed their pet
- 18 percent said they wanted their pet back today
- 15 percent said they believed spay/neuter is unhealthy for their pet
- 14 percent said they believe spay/neuter will change their pet's personality
- 10 percent said they don't believe in sterilization
- 10 percent said their pet is elderly or has a medical condition

**Of the total number of dogs returned unsterilized, approximately 30 percent were identified by their owners as breeds or mixes who would be at risk in the shelter.**

**Estimate of total number of owners declining spay and neuter in a year: approximately 200**

**Estimate of total number of owners who decline and plan to breed: approximately 70**

Survey Date Range :	3/17/2016 thru 9/6/2016
Number of total impounded dogs	3847
Number of stray first time impounded dogs	3002
Number of unsterilized stray dogs at intake (sex of U,M,F)	2830
Number of sterilized stray dogs at intake (sex of S,N)	172
Number of unsterilized stray dogs RTO'd that were spayed and neutered (verified altered or sterilization surgery completed by Vet Services)	407
Number of stray dogs sterilized at or after RTO	17
Number of unsterilized stray dogs RTO'd that were spayed and neutered	209
Number of stray dogs who came back a second time after first RTO and were still unsterilized	7
	0.18%

78.03%

73.56%

4.47%

10.58%

0.44%

5.45%

0.18%

Number of unsterilized stray dogs RTO'd that were spayed and neutered	209
AHS Dog	1
APA Dog	1
APD case (not stray)	1
County	6
Decline forms	94
Medical reasons (per AAC Veterinarian)	24
S/N deposit paid	16
Emancipet vouchers	63
Sex not updated	1
Owner insists spayed	2
	3.13%

3.13%

Decline Reasons	
Does not want to / doesn't believe in sterilization	10
I believe spay/neuter is unhealthy for my pet	15
I believe spay/neuter will change my pet's personality	14
I plan to breed my pet	34
I want my pet back today	18
My pet is elderly or has a medical condition	10
	9.90%
	14.85%
	13.86%
	33.66%
	17.82%
	9.90%

9.90%

14.85%

13.86%

33.66%

17.82%

9.90%