ORDINANCE NO. 25-0010

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 24-0005. REGULATING THE CONTROL OF ANIMALS IN THE CITY OF TRINITY, TEXAS; PROVIDING DEFINITIONS, ANIMAL VACCINATION, IMPOUNDMENTS, LICENSING, FEES AND FINES, INHUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS; SEVERANCE CLAUSE; AND STAKING OF ANIMALS.

SECTION I. DEFINITIONS

A. Animal — Any mammal (order Mammalia), all of which are capable of being infected with and transmitting rabies.
B. Cat — Any domestic feline animal (Felis domesticus).
C. Dog — Any domestic canine animal or hybrid thereof (Canis familiaris).
D. Bit or bitten — Skin has been penetrated by an animal's teeth or saliva has come in contact with an open wound or mucous membrane.
E. Own — To keep, harbor, or have control, charge, or custody of an animal.
F. Owner — Any person who keeps, harbors, or allows an animal to remain on premises for more than three (3) days.
G. Pound — A public facility maintained for impounding or harboring animals.
H. Animal Control Officer — Person(s) authorized to enforce this Ordinance.
I. Vaccination Against Rabies — USDA-approved rabies vaccine administered under supervision of a licensed Texas veterinarian.
J. Vicious Animal — Any animal posing a physical threat to humans or animals.
K. Stray Animal — Any animal with no identified owner.
L. Running At Large — Any animal off premises and not under leash or direct control.
M. Wild Animal — Any animal except domestic species (dog, cat, horse, cow, sheep, goat, pig, ferret).

SECTION II. RABIES VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Initial Vaccination
All dogs and cats 3 months of age or older shall be vaccinated against rabies. Vaccination must occur within 30 days after reaching 3 months of age. Newly acquired or moved-in animals must be vaccinated within 10 days unless proof of current vaccination exists.

B. Revaccination
All dogs and cats shall be revaccinated no more than twelve (12) months after initial vaccination.

SECTION III. DUTIES

A. Veterinarian Duties
Veterinarians shall vaccinate all dogs and cats in accordance with applicable Texas law. Vaccination shall comply with Texas Administrative Code Title 25, Part 1, Chapter 169 (Rabies Control and Eradication), and all provisions of this Ordinance shall be interpreted in harmony with state requirements. The City shall ensure full compliance with State of Texas rabies control standards.

B. Owner Duties
Owners must ensure animals wear rabies tags at all times, maintain proof of vaccination, report ownership changes, and comply with inspection requirements.

C. Proof of Vaccination
Failure or refusal to present vaccination or licensure records upon demand is unlawful.

D. Unvaccinated or Unlicensed Animals
It is unlawful to harbor unvaccinated or unlicensed dogs or cats.

E. Household Limits
No residence shall harbor more than three (3) dogs and three (3) cats over four (4) months of age.

An exception may be granted by the City Council on a case-by-case basis upon good cause, including rescue, rehabilitation, medical necessity, or other circumstances deemed appropriate. Conditions may be imposed to protect public health and safety. No exception is valid unless approved by formal City Council action and recorded in official minutes.

SECTION IV. TRANSIENT DOGS AND CATS

Visiting dogs or cats must carry valid rabies vaccination certificates and present them upon request of authorities.

SECTION V. MANAGEMENT OF ANIMAL BITES

A. Reporting Requirements
All animal bites or suspected rabies cases shall be reported immediately to the Police Department or Animal Control Officer.

B. Vaccinated Dogs and Cats
Vaccinated dogs or cats that bite a human shall be quarantined for ten (10) days and examined by a licensed veterinarian at the owner's expense.

Home quarantine may be permitted if the owner can adequately isolate and securely confine the animal in a manner approved by the Animal Control Officer. Conditions must prevent escape, exposure, or contact with other animals or persons.

The animal shall be examined by a licensed veterinarian prior to quarantine and again at the conclusion of the ten (10) day quarantine period at the owner's expense. All results shall be documented and provided to the Animal Control Officer.

No animal shall be released until final approval is granted by the Police Department or Animal Control Officer.

C. Unvaccinated Dogs and Cats
Unvaccinated dogs and cats that bite a human or are otherwise subject to quarantine shall be quarantined for ten (10) days at a licensed veterinary clinic at the owner's expense.

During quarantine, the animal shall be evaluated by a licensed veterinarian. Prior to release, the dog or cat must receive a rabies vaccination.

No unvaccinated dog or cat shall be released until the full quarantine period and all veterinary requirements are completed.

D. Other Animals
Non-dog and non-cat species shall be handled at the discretion of the Animal Control Officer and may be euthanized for testing.

SECTION VI. DOGS OR CATS EXPOSED TO RABID ANIMALS

A. Vaccinated animals exposed shall be revaccinated within 72 hours and quarantined up to 90 days at the owner's expense.
B. Unvaccinated animals exposed may be euthanized or held in strict isolation up to six (6) months at the owner's expense.
C. Other animals shall be handled at the discretion of the Animal Control Officer.

SECTION VII. IMPOUNDMENT OF DOGS AND CATS

Animals found without rabies tags shall be impounded for a minimum of five (5) days.

Owners may reclaim animals by:

- Providing proof of vaccination
- Paying all fees and fines

Unclaimed animals may be adopted or humanely euthanized.

SECTION VIII. ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE

A. It is unlawful for any animal to run at large.
B. Nuisance animals disturbing peace are prohibited.
C. Females in heat must be securely confined.
D. Injured animals may be impounded at owner expense.
E. Livestock running at large is prohibited.
F. Staking livestock near public areas is prohibited.

SECTION IX. VICIOUS ANIMALS

A. Vicious animals are prohibited and may be seized or destroyed if necessary.
B. Guard dogs must be confined and properly posted with warning signs.

SECTION X. DANGEROUS DOGS

Any dog determined to be a dangerous dog by the Animal Control Officer shall be handled in accordance with Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 822, Subchapter D. All requirements including registration, restraint, confinement, liability insurance, and enforcement shall comply with state law.

All dogs determined to be dangerous under this Ordinance, or otherwise required by the Animal Control Officer, shall be registered in accordance with applicable law. Such dogs may be required to be microchipped for permanent identification and tracking of ownership and compliance history. The microchip shall be implanted by a licensed veterinarian or authorized professional, and records shall be maintained in an approved registry designated by the City or Animal Control Officer.

SECTION XI. ANIMALS PROHIBITED

Prohibited animals include wild, exotic, and venomous species including primates, big cats, bears, wolves, coyotes, foxes, raccoons, and venomous reptiles.

Exceptions:

- Licensed zoos
- Research institutions
- Authorized circuses
- Approved training facilities

SECTION XII. INHUMANE TREATMENT

All acts of cruelty, neglect, torture, abandonment, or other prohibited conduct may be investigated and prosecuted under Texas Penal Code §42.092 (Cruelty to Non-Livestock Animals). This Ordinance does not limit or replace state criminal enforcement.

SECTION XIII. SAFETY PROVISIONS

A. Interference with enforcement is prohibited.
B. Violations are considered misdemeanors and can be punishable by:

- A fine
- Confinement
- Or both

SECTION XIV. SEVERABILITY.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or provision of this ordinance is held invalid, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this ordinance.

SECTION XIV. CITY LICENSES, FEES, AND FINES

A. All dogs and cats over four (4) months must be licensed.
B. Annual or lifetime licenses available.

Licensing Fees:

- Neutered Male: $20.00 annual / $50.00 lifetime
- Intact Male: $30.00 annual / $75.00 lifetime
- Spayed Female: $20.00 annual / $50.00 lifetime
- Intact Female: $30.00 annual / $75.00 lifetime

Fees:

- Impound Fee (estray pickup): $75.00
- Daily boarding fee: $35.00 per day after first day

Violations:

- Running at large: $150.00 first offense
- Failure to show proof: $50.00 per violation (vaccination, ownership, licensure)

RECORDS

The Animal Control Officer shall maintain enforcement records available for inspection during City Hall business hours.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 9th day of July, 2026.

City OF Trinity Mayor - Billy Goodin

ATTEST: City Manager: Tracy Hutto