

# LEON COUNTY

## DIVISION OF ANIMAL CONTROL



### **Leon County Ordinance** **Sec. 4-37. - *Humane Care Required.***

- (a) No owner shall fail to provide his or her animal with sufficient and wholesome food, proper shelter and protection from the weather at all times, veterinary care when needed to prevent suffering, sufficient exercise space, and humane care and treatment, including clean, sanitary, safe, humane conditions. The owner of an animal shall provide clean water for the animal in a sufficient quantity to maintain the animal in a healthy condition. Water shall be provided at all times in a stable container which is sized appropriately for the animal's species and breed. Animals kept outdoors shall be in a secure enclosure to include a fenced yard, kennel or run and the animal shall be provided with proper shelter within such enclosed area. The enclosure shall be large enough for each animal to achieve a running stride. It shall include a shaded area, either by natural or artificial means that is large enough to shade all animals in the enclosure without crowding throughout the day.
- (b) No person shall overload, overwork, torture, or torment, deprive of necessary sustenance, beat, mutilate or inhumanely kill, or otherwise abuse any animal or cause or permit the same to be done.
- (c) No person shall abandon any animal by forsaking the animal entirely or by neglecting or refusing to provide or perform the legal obligations for care and support of the animal.
- (d) Any person who, as the operator of a motor vehicle, strikes a domesticated animal, should immediately report such incident to any law enforcement agency or to the division of animal control.
- (e) Tethering. No person shall tether an animal to a stationary or inanimate object as a means of confinement or restraint unless such person is outside with the animal and the animal is at all times visible to such person. No person shall under any circumstances tether or otherwise confine any animal in a manner that is injurious to the animal's health, safety and well-being. Proper and humane tethering includes, but is not limited to the following:

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- (1) Collars used to attach an animal should be comfortable and properly fitted. The use of choker collar or chain is prohibited.
  - (2) The tether shall not extend over an object or edge in such a manner that could result in strangulation of or injury to the animal. The length of the tether must be a minimum of six feet, or at least three times the length of the animal measured from the animal's nose to the base of its tail, whichever is greater, unless the tether is being used to secure the animal to the bed of an open vehicle or pick-up truck. The tether must have a swivel at both ends to prevent entanglement. Restraints should allow the animal to move about and lie down comfortably. Pulley, running line, or trolley systems must be at least 15 feet in length and less than seven feet above the ground.
  - (3) Tethering of an animal is prohibited during severe weather events and natural disasters such as flood, fires, tornadoes, hurricanes or blizzard.
  - (4) No animal shall be confined to a vacant or abandoned structure or vacant property.
  - (5) The weight or gauge of any tether or chain shall not be more than one-eighth of the animal's weight. Logging chains and vehicle tow chains are prohibited. No person shall add any weight to an animal collar, harness, chain or tether.
  - (6) The animal tethered must be at least six months of age. Puppies and kittens shall not be tethered.
  - (7) The animal tethered must not be sick or injured.
- (f) Exceptions: Attended tethering is required except under the following circumstances:
- (1) When actively engaging in conduct that is directly related to the business of shepherding or herding cattle or livestock or related to the business of cultivating agricultural products, as long as the restraint is reasonably necessary for the safety of the dog/animal.
  - (2) When participating in lawful activities such as hunting with a valid license issued by this state, or sporting events, field obedience training, field or water training, law enforcement training, veterinary treatment and or the pursuit of working or completing in these legal endeavors.

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- (3) When the animal is restrained in compliance with the requirements of a camping or recreational area.
  - (4) When the animal is restrained temporarily at a training facility, grooming facility, commercial boarding facility, animal shelter or veterinary facility.
  - (5) When using the dog at a dog training or performance event, including but not limited to, field trials and obedience trials where tethering does not occur for a period exceeding seven (7) consecutive days.
  - (6) When being cared for as part of a rescue operation during a natural or man-made disaster or during a state of emergency.
  - (7) After taking possession of a stray and having notified Animal Control.
  - (8) When being transported in a vehicle.
- (g) Any person who commits any of the following acts shall be in violation of this section:
- (1) Baiting, breeding, training, transporting, selling, owning, possessing, or using any wild or domestic animal for the purpose of animal fighting or baiting;
  - (2) Betting or wagering any money or other valuable consideration on the fighting or baiting of animals;
  - (3) Attending the fighting or baiting of animals;
  - (4) Owning, possessing, or selling equipment for the purpose of animal fighting or baiting;
  - (5) Providing or allowing property for use in the housing, training, transport, fighting or baiting of animals.