



Chatham County Animal Services Ordinance Changes Effective April 15

EFFECTIVE DATE:

The revised Animal Services Ordinance takes effect on **April 15, 2014**. A grace period with warnings will be given early in the implementation process, except for repeat offenders who have already been warned or cited.

DIVISION NAME CHANGE:

The division will now be called Animal Services rather than Animal Control. The new name better reflects the range of services provided.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Send email to: leighann.garrard@chathamnc.org or call 919-542-7203

Revised or New Definitions

Most definitions were revised and updated. Key changes are:

ABUSE & NEGLECT: Previously included abuse but not neglect.

ADEQUATE SHELTER: Owners must provide outside shelter with three solid sides, a roof and solid floor raised above ground with room for animal to move about freely and lie down comfortably. Must be structurally sound, water and wind resistant and kept in good repair.

A key point is that there must be **shade from direct sunlight** with adequate ventilation and light. This means even doghouses with a roof must have other type of

protection from sun ABOVE the doghouse, such as a tree canopy, tarp or awning. Barrel style enclosures are acceptable if kept in good repair, waterproof and raised floor.

OUTSIDE ENCLOSURE: A pen or fenced area should not allow a pet to escape. It must be at least 3' by 10' for one animal weighing less than 25 pounds. It must be at least 5' by 10' for one animal over 25 pounds. However, Animal Services can require an even larger space for extremely large animals.

ADOPTABLE ANIMAL: This is defined as an

animal that is physically well, exhibits socialization behaviors, is compatible living in human environment, does not pose a risk of injury to others and is considered desirable for companionship.

HOLDING PERIOD: For adoptable animals turned into the shelter, the holding period remains at five days. For animals deemed not adoptable, the holding period is three days.

PUBLIC NUISANCE: This was expanded to include unsanitary conditions that cause offensive odors or are dangerous to the animals or public health.

Animal Cruelty Revisions



This section of the revised ordinance adopts and supplements State Laws (GS 14-360 and GS 14-363.2), but has some of its own requirements.

It shall be unlawful for any person to subject or cause any animal to cruel treatment resulting from:

A. Failure to provide adequate food and water.

B. Failure to provide appropriate shelter and protection from excessive heat, cold, and other weather conditions detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the animal.

C. Failure to provide a humane, clean living environment.

D. Failure to provide necessary medical

attention when the animal is or has been suffering from illness, injury, disease, excessive parasitism or malformed/overgrown hoof.

Item C. above may specially address hoarding situations where large numbers of animals are kept in unsafe or filthy conditions.

READ COMPLETE ORDINANCE ONLINE!

Can be found at:

www.chathamnc.org

[/animalcontrol](http://www.chathamnc.org/animalcontrol)

Humane Restraint & Tethering of Dogs

When dogs are restrained by tethering outside on the owner's property, the revised ordinance requires that this be done humanely.

- No dogs under age 4 months can be tethered.
- The tether must have a swivel on both ends.
- It must be attached to a buckle-type collar or harness on the dog.
- The tether should NEVER be placed directly around the dog's neck or used with training collars, such as choke or pinch style collars.
- The weight of the tether should not exceed 10% of the dog's body weight unless required to prevent breakage that would endanger public safety.
- By design and placement, the tether must allow the dog a reasonable, unobstructed range of motion, so that the dog is not strangled or injured.
- The tethered dog must have adequate access to food, water and shelter from heat, cold and other bad weather.
- Only one dog can be attached to a single tether.
- Pulley systems, running lines or trolley systems must be at least 15 feet long and no more than 7 feet above ground.
- The tether should be attached to an object that keeps the dog at least five feet away from the property line.



To the left, examples of the required swivel required for both ends of tethers. On the right, this setup illustrates the use of a pulley or trolley system for tethers where the line must be at least 15 feet long and no more than 7 feet above ground.

Revised Penalty Fees

The revised ordinance provides the following penalties for violations:

- Civil penalties: \$100 for first offense, \$200 for second offense, \$300 for third offense and \$500 for any subsequent violations.
- Failure to vaccinate for rabies: \$100
- Failure to confine animal for rabies observation: \$100 per day up to 10 days
- Interference with Enforcement: \$250 per violation
- Animal Cruelty: \$500 per violation
- Animal Neglect: \$300 per violation