



On the Positive Side: County has new pet licensing and permit requirements

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The Doña Ana County Board of County Commissioners voted on Dec. 10, 2013, to adopt Ordinance No. 266-2013 to be effective Jan. 17, 2014.

In a positive move, the intent of the BOCC is to encourage owner identification and pet licensing, pet sterilization, humane care, rabies vaccination and physical control of pets for public safety and welfare.

The Humane Society of Southern New Mexico strongly supports this effort and encourages every county pet owner to become familiar with and be in compliance with the new requirements.

The following information is provided from the Doña Ana County Sheriff's Office Animal Control Division required permits and pet licenses brochures.

Copies of the brochures are available from their office at 2024 E. Griggs or the complete ordinance is available at donaanacounty.org/animal.

The brochures provide definitions of intact animals, litter permits and multiple animal site permits.

The basic licensing requirement reads: "License requirement — A person owning or having charge, custody, or care over a dog or cat judged to be three months of age or older shall obtain for such animal a Pet License issued by the Animal Services Center of the Mesilla Valley (ASCMV). The application will be made within thirty days of acquiring ownership of the animal, include proof of rabies vaccination, and proof of micro-chip implantation."

The following annual fee schedule has been established by the BOCC:

- Intact animal permit: \$100
- Litter permit: \$50
- Multiple animal permit: \$20
- Outdoor rehabilitation aviary: \$10
- Birds of Prey: \$10
- Certain Snakes: \$15
- Guard dog: \$20
- Hybrid animal: \$100 Pet licensing does provide for a one-time \$10 fee for persons over 65 years of age and no assessment for qualified service dogs.

Customers must come to the ASCMV in person to be issued an initial pet license. Renewals may be purchased by mail. The required vaccines and microchips do not have to be purchased from the ASCMV.

For those permits required by the county, you may mail the completed application to the animal control division office or stop by in person. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The animal control brochure further states: "On a daily basis, unwanted pets are hauled into our local animal shelter, including litters upon litters of puppies and kittens. The ASCMV makes hundreds of animals available for adoption every day of the week, they hold special adoption events every week at multiple sites across town, they have multiple satellite adoption centers across town, and they hold frequent special adoption events throughout the year, but still they cannot find homes for them all."

"The ASCMV transports bus loads of dogs and cats to other shelters and rescue groups in other communities, as far away as Denver, Phoenix, and even San Diego, but still they cannot find homes for them all. As the pets in our community continue to multiply and as more and more are hauled into our shelter, space quickly runs out every day and the tough decisions have to be made as to who lives and who dies.

These permit requirements are one of many ways in which we are helping to stem the tide. Please help us to save lives and address this dire situation in our community."

Frank Bryce is president of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico. Interested guest authors should contact HSSNMat 575-523-8020.