

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-O-21

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS, AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2025-O-229, CHAPTER 6, ARTICLE II, SEC. 6-22 OF THE CITY OF LAREDO CODE OF ORDINANCES RELATING TO RABIES CONTROL, REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS, AND VACCINATION PROCEDURES TO ALIGN WITH CURRENT STATE LAW; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of Laredo adopted Ordinance No. 2025-O-229 to revise and modernize regulations related to animal control, vaccinations, registration, and associated enforcement measures; and

WHEREAS, upon continued review and public input, the City has identified the need to clarify the obligations of veterinarians and animal owners regarding rabies vaccinations and registration requirements, particularly to ensure compliance with Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 229 and 826 and rules adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services; and

WHEREAS, the City of Laredo seeks to ensure consistency with state-authorized vaccination intervals, acceptable documentation, tag issuance responsibilities, and voluntary participation in City programs by veterinarians; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it in the best interest of the public health, safety, and welfare of residents, visitors, and animals within the City to amend Sec. 6-22 of Ordinance No. 2025-O-229 to provide clarity, improve compliance, and align procedural standards with state law and contemporary veterinary practice;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Amendment

Ordinance No. 2025-O-229 is hereby amended by replacing Sec. 6-22 in its entirety with the language below. All remaining sections, including subsection (c), remain unchanged unless expressly amended:

Sec. 6-22. – Vaccination Certificate Required; Display Upon Request.

~~[(a) **Registration:** Every owner of a dog or cat three (3) months or more of age shall cause such dog or cat to be registered with, and shall pay a registration fee to, City of Laredo Animal Services. Upon payment of the required registration fee and compliance with the rabies inoculation requirement set forth in subsection B of this section, a registration tag shall be issued and will be valid for one year. Every dog or cat shall be registered annually, unless a licensed veterinarian has issued a certificate indicating that a three (3) year rabies vaccine has been administered to the dog or cat, in which case, registration shall be once every three (3) years. This requirement of~~

registration may be satisfied through the inoculation and tag purchase described in subsection B of this section.}]

(a) Registration: *Every owner of a dog or cat three (3) months of age or older shall register the animal with the City of Laredo Animal Services Department. Registration shall be renewed annually unless the owner provides proof of a valid three-year rabies vaccination issued by a United States-licensed veterinarian, in which case registration shall be renewed once every three (3) years. Upon completion of registration payment of the required registration fee and verification of rabies vaccination under subsection (b), the City shall issue a City registration tag valid for the applicable registration period.*

[(b) Inoculation: Every owner of a dog or cat three (3) months or more of age shall cause such dog or cat to be inoculated against rabies by a U.S. licensed veterinarian. Every dog or cat shall have a second rabies vaccination within one year of the first vaccination and every year thereafter. However, if the vaccine used is one recognized by the State of Texas for a three (3) year period of immunity, and the dog or cat is over twelve (12) months of age at the time of inoculation, the interval between inoculations may be extended to three (3) years. Evidence of such rabies inoculation shall be entered on a certificate, the form of which shall be approved by Laredo Animal Services and which shall contain the microchip number, description of the animal, the name and address of the owner, serial tag number and which shall be signed by the licensed veterinarian administering the vaccine. Veterinarians who inoculate a dog or cat must procure from Laredo Animal Services serially numbered tags, one to be issued with each inoculation certificate. Only one dog or cat shall be included on each certificate. The veterinarian immunizing and microchipping an animal in the City of Laredo must provide the City of Laredo with a certificate of immunization and microchip number, and a tag must be issued, at a fee established by the City of Laredo Council for each dog or cat inoculated against rabies. Such tags shall also serve as the registration tag for purposes of this chapter. Tags shall be worn on the collar or harness of the animal for which the tag and rabies inoculation certificate was issued, except when the animal is confined. All fees collected must be sent to Laredo Animal Services within sixty (60) days of acquirement. If a tag is not issued at the time a dog or cat is inoculated against rabies (for example, if the owner refuses to obtain the tag from the veterinarian or if the veterinarian is located outside the City of Laredo), the owner must register the dog or cat with Animal Services within thirty (30) days of inoculation. In which case, the owner must present an inoculation certificate issued by the I.S. licensed veterinarian that administered such inoculation. Laredo Animal Services will then furnish the owner with a tag, upon payment of the registration fee.}]

(b) Inoculation: *Every dog or cat three (3) months of age or older shall be vaccinated against rabies by a United States-licensed veterinarian in accordance with Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 826 and rules adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services.*

If a vaccine recognized by the State of Texas provides a three-year immunity period, and the animal is at least twelve (12) months of age at the time of vaccination, the vaccination interval may be extended up to three (3) years consistent with state law.

The owner shall provide proof of vaccination in a form required by state law and acceptable to the City, which shall include the animal description, vaccination date, vaccine expiration date,

vaccine manufacturer's name and serial number, veterinarian information, and any microchip number if applicable.

If a tag is not issued at the time a dog or cat is inoculated against rabies (for example, if the owner refuses to obtain the tag from the veterinarian or if the veterinarian is located outside the City of Laredo), the owner must register the dog or cat with Animal Services within thirty (30) days of inoculation. In such case, the owner must present an inoculation certificate issued by the U.S.-licensed veterinarian that administered the vaccine. Laredo Animal Services will then furnish the owner with a tag, upon payment of the registration fee.

(c) Registration Fee: The fee for a registration tag shall be assessed at a rate set forth by City of Laredo Animal Services and approved by the City Council and shall include a minimum ten dollars (\$10. 00) differential in the fee for dogs or cats that have not been spayed or neutered.

~~**[(d) Sale and Distribution of Vaccine:** Rabies vaccines for use on animals shall be sold or distributed only by licensed veterinarians. Such rabies vaccine shall be licensed by the United States department of agriculture and approved by the State of Texas.]~~

(d) Sale and Distribution of Vaccine: Rabies vaccines for use on animals shall be sold or distributed only by licensed veterinarians. Such rabies vaccine shall be licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture and approved by the State of Texas. It shall be the duty of each veterinarian who vaccinates any dog or cat for rabies to furnish the rabies certificate, within sixty (60) days following the administration of the vaccination, a copy of the veterinarian's rabies certification with the information set forth in section (b) to Laredo Animal Services. Licensed veterinarians operating within the City may, at their discretion and without obligation, participate in voluntary rabies-tag or microchip programs offered by the City.

(e) Exemptions: If a licensed veterinarian determines in writing that a rabies inoculation would compromise an animal health, then the animal shall be exempt from the rabies shot requirement, but the owner must register the dog or cat as medically exempt within (30) days after such determination.

(f) Change of ownership: If the ownership of a pet changes, the following apply:

- i. Pets shall be registered anew within thirty (30) days of a change in ownership.
- ii. No additional fee shall be charged to a new owner for the registration of a dog or a cat, which has been previously registered with the City of Laredo during the course of the same calendar year.
- iii. Change of ownership may be proven by a bill of sale, evidence of the previous registration and/or letter from the previous owner relinquishing ownership of the pet.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall be cumulative of all provisions of ordinances of the City of Laredo Texas, except where the provisions of this ordinance are in direct conflict with the

provisions of such ordinances, in which event the conflicting provisions of such ordinances are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City Council that the phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of this ordinance are severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of this ordinance, since the same would have been enacted by the City Council without the incorporation in this ordinance of any such unconstitutional phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section.

SECTION 4. The City Secretary of the City of Laredo is hereby directed to publish the proposed Ordinance as required by Section 2.09 of the Charter of the City of Laredo.

SECTION 5. That after its passage by City Council, this Ordinance shall be published one (1) time and become effective not less than sixty (60) days from the date of the public hearing on this Ordinance, in accordance with the City Charter.

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND APPROVED BY THE MAYOR ON THIS
_____ **DAY OF** _____, **2025.**

DR. VICTOR D. TREVIÑO
MAYOR

ATTESTED:

MARIO MALDONADO
CITY SECRETARY

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

DOANH “ZONE” T. NGUYEN
CITY ATTORNEY