

ORDINANCE NO.

FILE OF CITY COUNCIL

BILL NO. 88 - 2022

---

NOVEMBER 2, 2022

---

AN ORDINANCE

Amending the Codified Ordinance, Part Two: General Legislation, Chapter 163: Animals, Article I: Animal Control to include the prohibition of the declawing of cats in the City of Allentown unless the procedure is necessary for a therapeutic purpose.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN:

SECTION ONE: That Chapter 163: Animals, Article I: Animal Control shall be amended as follows:

**Declawing of Cats; Prohibited Procedures and Conduct.**

A. Definitions.

- (1) **Cat.** Any member of the Felidae family (both domestic and nondomestic felines).
- (2) **Declawing.** As used in this section the term “declawing” means any of the following:
  - (a) An onychectomy, dactylectomy, phalangectomy, partial digital amputation, or any other surgical procedure by which a portion of a cat’s paw is amputated to remove the cat’s claw.
  - (b) A tendonectomy or another surgical procedure by which the tendons of a cat’s limbs, paws, or toes are cut or modified so that the cat’s claws cannot be extended.
  - (c) Any other method of permanently or irreversibly preventing the normal functioning of a feline’s claws.
- (3) **Therapeutic purpose.** This term refers to the necessity of addressing the physical medical condition of a cat, such as an existing or recurring illness, infection, disease, injury, or abnormal condition of the cat which compromises the cat’s health. The term does not include a cosmetic or aesthetic reason or reasons of convenience for keeping or handling the cat.

B. *Prohibition.* A person may not perform a declawing by any means on a cat within the City of Allentown unless the procedure is necessary for a therapeutic purpose.

C. Any person who violates this ordinance is subject to civil penalty of up to five hundred dollars (\$500.00), plus costs, for each violation. Each incident in which a cat is declawed or partially declawed in violation of this ordinance constitutes a separate violation.

SECTION TWO: That this Ordinance will take effect ten (10) days after final passage.

SECTION THREE: That all Ordinances inconsistent with the above provisions are repealed to the extent of their inconsistency.

## LEGISLATIVE TEMPLATE

- **What department or bureau is bill originating from? Where did the initiative for the bill originate?**

Mayor's Office

- **Summary and facts of the bill**

Amends the Codified Ordinance, Part Two: General Legislation, Chapter 163: Animals, Article I: Animal Control to include the prohibition of the declawing of cats in the City of Allentown unless the procedure is necessary for a therapeutic purpose.

- **Purpose – Please include the following in your explanation:**

- **What does the bill do – what are the specific goals/tasks the bill seek to accomplish?**

This bill is intended to protect cats from a harmful and unnecessary procedure within the City of Allentown.

- **What are the benefits of doing this/down-side of doing this?**

This bill protects cats from a cruel and unnecessary procedure. There is no clear negative impact, as veterinary clinics have modern methods to handling any issues pertaining to a cat's claws.

- **How does this bill relate to the City's Vision/Mission/Priorities?**

This updates the City's General Legislation to reflect the current necessity for outlawing an outdated procedure and demonstrates a commitment to animal rights.

- **Financial Impact – Please include the following in your explanation:**

- **Cost (Initial and ongoing)**
- **Benefits (initial and ongoing)**

There is no financial impact.

- **Funding Sources – Please include the following in your explanation:**

- **If transferring funds, please make sure bill gives specific accounts, if appropriating funds from a grant list the agency awarding the grant.**

There are no funds associated with this ordinance.

- **Priority status/deadlines, if any:**

As soon as possible.

- **Why should Council unanimously support this bill?**

This bill protects animals with no foreseen repercussions to the City.