

# TOWNSHIP OF MAPLEWOOD



## ORDINANCE

#2973-19

### AN ORDINANCE RESTRICTING THE SALE OF DOGS and CATS

*"Interpretive Statement"*

*This ordinance will ban the sale of dogs and cats by pet shops within the Township of Maplewood.*

**WHEREAS**, a significant number of dogs and cats are sold at pet shops come from large-scale, commercial breeding facilities where the health and welfare of the animals are not adequately provided for.

**WHEREAS**, there are documented abuses including over-breeding; inbreeding; minimal to non-existent veterinary care; lack of adequate and nutritious food, water and shelter; lack of socialization; lack of adequate space; and lack of adequate exercise.

**WHEREAS**, the inhumane conditions in pet shops lead to health and behavioral issues in the animals bred in those facilities, which many consumers are unaware of when purchasing animals from pet shops due to both a lack of education on the issue and misleading tactics of pet shops in some cases. These health and behavioral issues, which may not present themselves until sometime after the purchase of the animals, can impose exorbitant financial and emotional costs on the consumer.

**WHEREAS**, current Federal, State and County regulations do not properly address the sale of dogs and cats in pet shops.

**WHEREAS**, prohibiting the retail sale of dogs and cats is likely to decrease the demand for dogs and cats bred in pet stores, and is likely to increase demand for animals from animal shelters and rescue organizations.

**WHEREAS**, according to the New Jersey Department of Health Animal Intake and Disposition Survey, thousands of dogs and cats are euthanized in New Jersey animal shelters annually. Restricting the retail sale of dogs and cats to only those that are sourced from animal shelters and rescue organizations will likely reduce pet overpopulation and thus the burden on such agencies and financial costs on local taxpayers; and

**WHEREAS**, across the country, thousands of independent pet shops as well as large chains operate profitably with a business model focused on the sale of pet services and supplies and not on the sale of dogs and cats. Many of these shops collaborate with local animal shelters and rescue organizations to offer space and support for showcasing adoptable homeless pets on their premises; and

**WHEREAS**, this Ordinance will not affect a consumer's ability to obtain a dog or cat of his or her choice directly from a breed-specific rescue organization or shelter, or from a hobby breeder where the consumer can see directly the conditions in which the dogs and cats are bred or can confer directly with the hobby breeder concerning those conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, this governing body believes it is in the best interests of this municipality to adopt reasonable regulation to reduce costs to the municipality and its residents, protect the citizens of the municipality who may purchase cats or dogs from a pet shop or other business establishment, help prevent

inhumane breeding conditions, promote community awareness of animal welfare and foster a more humane environment in the municipality.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED**, by the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, County of Essex, State of New Jersey as follows:

**FIRST:**

**Section 1. Definitions:**

*Animal care facility* means an animal control center or animal shelter, maintained by or under contract with any state, county or municipality, whose mission and practice is, in whole, or significant part, the rescue and placement of animals in permanent homes.

*Animal rescue organization* means any not-for-profit organization which has tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code, whose mission and practice is, in whole or in significant part, the rescue and placement of animals in permanent homes.

*Cat* means a member of a species of domestic cat, *Felis catus*.

*Dog* means a member of a species of domestic dog, *Canis familiaris*.

*Offer for Sale* means to sell offer for sale or adoption, advertise for the sale of, barter, auction, give away or otherwise dispose of a dog or cat.

*Pet shop* means a retail establishment where dogs and cats are sold, exchanged, bartered or offered for sale as pet animals to the general public at retail. Such definition shall not include an animal care facility or animal rescue organization, as defined.

**Section 2. Restrictions on the Sale of Animals.**

No pet shop shall sell, deliver, offer for sale, barter, auction, give away or otherwise transfer or dispose of cats or dogs. Nothing in this section shall prohibit stores from collaborating with animal care facilities or animal rescue organizations to offer space for such entities to showcase adoptable dogs and cats.

**SECOND: Severability.**

If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance shall be declared invalid for any reason whatsoever, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance, which shall continue in full force and effect, and to this end, the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable.

**THIRD: Repeal of Prior Ordinances.**

Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance be and the same are hereby repealed to the extent of any such inconsistencies.

**FOURTH: Effective Date.**

This Ordinance shall take effect after final passage, publication and as provided by law.

**PUBLIC NOTICE** is hereby given that the foregoing proposed Ordinance was introduced and read by title at a meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, held on November 6, 2019, and that the Township Committee met again on November 18, 2019, at the Municipal Building, 574 Valley Street, Maplewood, New Jersey, at which time and place the

Township Committee held a hearing and proceeded to consider the said Ordinance on final reading and final passage.

**ELIZABETH J. FRITZEN, R.M.C.**  
Township Clerk