

**CITY OF SOUTH AMBOY
COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX**

ORDINANCE NO 20-2019

**AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING SALES OF DOGS AND CATS
FROM “PUPPY MILLS”**

WHEREAS, a significant number of puppies and kittens sold at pet shops come from large-scale, commercial breeding facilities where the health and welfare of the animals are not adequately provided for (“puppy mills” and “kitten mills,” respectively).

WHEREAS, the documented abuses endemic to puppy and kitten mills include 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 puppy and kitten mill facilities 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 puppy and kitten mill dogs and cats in pet shops.

WHEREAS, prohibiting the retail sale of puppies and kittens is likely to decrease the demand for puppies and kittens bred in puppy and kitten mills, 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 puppies and kittens 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,

BE, AND IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED by the Council of the City of South Amboy, Middlesex County, New Jersey, that Chapter 112 of the City of South Amboy Code [currently “reserved” previously titled “Plumbers”] is amended and supplemented as follows:

Chapter 112

SALE OF DOGS AND CATS BY PET STORES PROHIBITED

Section 112-1. 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 store 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 112-2. Restrictions on the Sale of Animals.

No pet store 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.

Section 112-3. 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.

Section 112-4. Effective Date.

This ordinance shall become effective 90 days after passage.

Deborah Brooks
Municipal Clerk

Introduced on First Reading: September 18, 2019

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Approved on Final Reading: October 16, 2019

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