

**BOARD OF HEALTH
BOROUGH OF NORTH ARLINGTON**

ORDINANCE # 2016-01

“AN ORDINANCE GOVERNING PET SHOPS AND THE SALE OF ANIMALS”

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF HEALTH OF THE BOROUGH OF NORTH ARLINGTON, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the Borough of North Arlington recognizes that 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). According to the Humane Society of the United States, it is estimated that 10,000 puppy mills produce more than 2,400,000 puppies a year in the United States and that most pet shop dogs and cats come from puppy mills and kitten mills; and

WHEREAS, the documented abuses endemic to puppy and kitten mills include overbreeding, 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; and

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 consumers; and

WHEREAS, current Federal and State regulations do not adequately address the sale of puppy and kitten mill dogs and cats in pet shops; and

WHEREAS, restricting the retail sale of puppies and kittens to only those that are sourced from shelters or rescue organizations 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; and

WHEREAS, according to the New Jersey Department of Health 2014 Animal Intake and Disposition Survey, due in large part to pet overpopulation, more than 20,000 dogs and cats are euthanized in New Jersey animals shelters annually, including nearly 1,500 in the County of Camden. 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 animals 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 a shelter, or from a hobby breeder where the consumer can see directly the conditions in which the dogs or cats are bred, or can confer directly with the hobby breeder concerning those conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Health believes it is in the best interests of this Municipality to adopt reasonable regulations 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 Board of Health of the Borough of North Arlington, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, as follows:

Section 1. Pet Shops

A. A permit shall be required. No establishment, shelter or business shall be maintained for the purpose of selling or raising for sale any animals as pets or for other uses in the Borough unless a permit for that purpose has been obtained from the Board of Health, and all animals shall be kept in a suitable shelter, cages, coops, or tanks. Such facilities must be kept thoroughly clean and open to inspection at all times by the Board of health or its agents.

B. Restrictions on the Sale of Animals

1. A pet shop may offer for sale only those dogs and cats that the pet shop has obtained from or displays in cooperation with:

a) An animal care facility or animal control center or animals 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 or rescue organizations; or

b) An animal rescue organization or other type of 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.

2. A pet shop shall not offer for sale a dog or cat that is younger than eight weeks old

Section 2. Effective Date

This ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication as prescribed by law.

APPROVED: _____
George McDermott, President

ATTEST: _____
Elaine Lubowiecki, Secretary

DATED: October 5, 2016