



Gregory J. Swain, County Attorney

MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members, Anne Arundel County Council

From: Curran Ritter, Assistant County Attorney /s/

Via: Gregory J. Swain, County Attorney /s/

Date: July 19, 2021

Subject: Bill No. 68-21 – Public Safety – Animal Care and Control – Authority to Impound – Tethering of Dogs

Legislative Summary

This summary was prepared by the Anne Arundel County Office of Law for use by members of the Anne Arundel County Council during consideration of Bill No. 68-21, a Bill which modifies Article 12, Title 4 relating to Animal Care & Control.

Background. This Bill amending Article 12, Title 4 of the County Code (the “Title”) is intended to further define the conditions under which a dog may be tethered outdoors, and to amend the circumstances under which an animal may be impounded by Anne Arundel County Animal Care & Control (“ACC”).

Current law does not allow ACC to impound an animal that is kept outdoors without necessary food, water, veterinary care, space, or shelter or if the animal is tethered improperly.

In addition, current law is lacking some clarity with regard to supervision of a dog tethered outside.

Purpose. The purpose of this Bill is to enhance the protections for animals in Anne Arundel County. The Bill protects animals by allowing ACC to impound animals that are being maintained in a manner that is unsafe or unhealthy for the animal.

The Bill also places heightened restrictions on the tethering of dogs, including requiring an adult to be outside with the dog any time the dog is tethered.

Note: This Legislative Summary provides a synopsis of the bill as introduced. It does not address subsequent amendments to the bill.

Section 1.

Subsection 12-4-501 is amended to allow ACC to impound an animal kept outdoors in violation of §§ 12-4-801(a) through (c) or 12-4-802.

Subsection 12-4-801(a) is amended to require that any person tethering a dog outside use a restraint at least ten feet in length and prevent that restraint from wrapping around the neck or limb of the dog. The subsection is also amended to require that an adult be outside on the same property with a direct line of sight to the tethered dog. Finally, the subsection is amended to transfer the responsibility for ensuring proper tethering of the dog from the owner to a “person”.

Section 2. (uncodified) provides that the bill takes effect 45 days after it becomes law.

The Office of Law is available to answer any additional questions regarding this Bill.
Thank you.

cc: Honorable Steuart Pittman, County Executive
Matthew Power, Chief Administrative Officer
Dr. Kai Boggess-de Bruin, Chief of Staff
Peter Baron, Legislative Liaison
Chris Trumbauer, Budget Officer
Robin Catlett, Administrator of Animal Care and Control
Amal Awad, Chief of Police