

**TOWN OF NORWOOD  
BOARD OF HEALTH  
RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR KEEPING OF ANIMALS**

**Under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 111, Section 31 the Norwood Board of Health sets forth these regulations for the keeping of animals. This regulation shall supersede any previous regulations concerning the keeping of animals in the Town of Norwood.**

**SECTION 1: REQUIREMENT FOR PERMIT**

1. No person shall keep within the limits of the Town of Norwood, in any building, or on any premises of which he is the owner, lessee, tenant, or occupant, any cows, cattle, goats, pig, swine, sheep, poultry, game birds, horses, reptiles, or pigeons, without first obtaining a permit from the Board of Health.
2. Permits for keeping of such animals shall be issued for a stated maximum number of each such animal. Permits shall be neither transferable as to other animals nor assignable for the use of other persons nor as to the use of other premises.

**SECTION 2: APPLICATION**

1. Any person who wishes to apply for a permit shall supply the following information:
  - a) A written application on a form provided by the Board
  - b) Furnish written verification of all abutters and abutters to abutters within three hundred (300) feet of the applicant's property stating that they have been notified of the applicant's intent and informed that they have the right to express concerns, if any, to the Board within seven (7) working days. Such verification may be in the form of a signed letter or a receipt from the U.S. Post Office that a certified letter had been sent to the owner of the (abutting) property.
  - c) A plan drawn to scale which includes the following information: topographical information, size of entire lot with structures present as well as structures planned for the use of intended animals (including fences and potable wells); distance of animal housing and enclosures from all abutters (and abutters to abutters within three hundred feet) of the applicant's property structures and property lines; any other conditions which could influence the safety and health of the community if said animal(s) were kept on the property. d) Fee as specified in Section 4 hereof

Upon receipt of a completed application as defined in 1. above, the Board and/or its Agent shall inspect the property.

2. If a permit is issued it shall be issued to the owner of the property or the tenant of the property with the written permission of the owner.

3. The burden shall be upon the applicant to establish that the granting of such a permit shall not be detrimental in any way to the public welfare and would not endanger the safety or health of the community.

4. The Board shall act on the completed application at the next regular meeting. Notice of the Board's decision shall be mailed to the applicant within three working days of the decision and will include any conditions imposed by the Board.

5. The issuance of such a permit does not in any way relieve the permittee of the necessity to comply with other laws and regulations concerning zoning, construction, etc.

### **SECTION 3: CONSTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION CHANGES**

Any person who proposes to construct or remodel a building or portion thereof for use of an animal as noted in these regulations shall, prior to such construction or remodeling notify the Board of Health in writing.

### **SECTION 4: FEES**

Fees for all permits shall be fifty dollars (\$50.00). Permits shall expire at the end of each calendar year. New permit fees shall not be prorated.

### **SECTION 5: STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **1. CATTLE, COWS, HORSES, GOATS AND SHEEP**

a) Area: A minimum of land area of 12,500 sq. ft. shall be required for one animal and for each additional animal 6,000 sq. ft. shall be required.

b) Capacity: Cows and Horses- If confined each stall shall contain at least 100 square feet for each animal.

Goats and Sheep- If confined each stall shall contain at least 20 square feet for each animal.

c) Cleanliness: Housing and premises thereof shall be kept in a sanitary condition.

d) Water Supply: Housing shall be furnished with an adequate and safe supply for feeding and cleaning purposes.

e) Bedding: Bedding shall consist of straw, hay, or like substances.

f) Manure: Manure shall be removed frequently from the animal area and housing and stored, piled or spread in such a manner as so not to cause a breeding place for flies or offensive odors. In fly breeding seasons, manure storage shall be periodically treated with lime.

g) Floors and Walls: These shall be designed, constructed and maintained as not to cause or contribute to unsanitary conditions in the animal facility.

h) Location: Housing shall be located on land with good drainage and not subject to periodic or seasonal flooding.

i) Rodent Control: Effective measures shall be taken to prevent and control rodents.

j) Safety: Appropriate measures shall be taken to minimize fire hazards.

## **2. BIRDS AND FOWL**

The maximum number of live fowl kept in a henhouse shall be twenty-four (24). Said henhouse shall be not less than twenty-five (25) feet from any dwelling, no less than twenty (20) feet from any public or private way, and no less than fifty (50) feet from an abutter. Live fowl shall be confined at all times and not permitted to run at large. **NO ROOSTER**, if creating a noise nuisance shall be permitted.

## **3. PIGS**

a) The keeping of pigs: Shall be limited; not to exceed three (3) on any particular locus.

b) Pens and other enclosures: 1) Shall not be located within one hundred (100) feet of any public or private way, nor within 150 feet of any abutters dwellings 2) Shall be suitably isolated and maintained in such a manner that no nuisance shall be created.

c) General Maintenance: 1) Manure and refuse in pens shall be cleaned twice weekly and removed from the premises at least weekly and in the meantime must be kept so that it will not constitute a nuisance and so that the animal(s) will not have access to it. If, however, one plans to plow manure, once spread, plowing must take place within forty-eight (48) hours. 2) Wet muck in pens shall be removed and replaced with clean sand. 3) A water supply shall be easily accessible.

## **4. REPTILES AND POISONOUS SNAKES**

No poisonous snake or reptile shall be kept within the town limits.

## **5. PIGEONS**

Shall not create a nuisance and shall be removed with cause.

## **SECTION 6: COMPLAINTS**

Within three working days of the receipt of a complaint, the Board or its Agent, shall investigate the matter and provide a response to both the complainant and licensee.

## **SECTION 7: ENFORCEMENT**

1) After written notification from the Board of Health noting violations of these regulations, the licensee shall have ten (10) working days, or such time as noted in the notification, to correct such violations. Failure to correct such violations shall result in that person being subject to fines and penalties as outlined in these regulations.

2) After written notification from the Board of Health, any person housing or keeping animals without a permit shall within twenty-four hours remove said animal(s) from the premises until such time as a permit is issued.

3) Permits issued may be revoked or suspended by the Board of Health if it is determined that:

a) the presence of the animal(s) on the premises are dangerous to the public safety or health or a public nuisance; or

b) the animals are not properly cared for; or

c) facts contained in the application or as represented by licensee to the Board of Health are inaccurate; or

d) the licensee is keeping animals in addition to those for which the permit was issued.

4) The holder of any permit thus revoked or suspended, shall be notified of such action by certified mail. Any person so aggrieved may petition the Board of Health for a hearing at the next Board of Health meeting and may be permitted to the keeping of said animal(s) pending its finding.

5) The penalty for non-compliance with any of these Rules and Regulations shall be a fine of five dollars (\$5.00) for every day in which the violation exists.

## **SECTION 8: VARIANCES**

The Board of Health may vary the application or any provision of these regulations in any particular case when, in its opinion, the enforcement would manifest an injustice, provided that the decision of the Board shall not conflict with the spirit of the regulations. Any applicant for a variance shall nonetheless present a completed application for permit as required by Section 2 hereof. If the Board receives a complaint from individuals claiming grounds exist for termination of a permit granted under a variance, the Board's agent shall investigate the matter and shall provide a telephone response within forty-eight (48) hours, and discuss the matter at the next regular Board meeting.

## **SECTION 9: THE GRANDFATHER CLAUSE**

1) Notwithstanding anything in these regulations to the contrary, but subject to the provisions of Subsection 2 of this Section 9, any property owner who kept animals on her/his land in Norwood prior to August 1, 1991, may continue to use said land for keeping of such animals whose number shall not exceed those kept prior to August 1, 1991. The rights afforded by Section 9 shall terminate

when the ownership of the land as it existed prior to August 1, 1991, changes or the use thereof for animals is terminated, at which time the use of the land, the keeping of animals thereon and the maximum number of allowable animals must conform to these regulations in all respects. 2) In the event the Board of Health acting pursuant to G.L. c. 111, Sections 155 and these regulations has reason to believe that the number of animals otherwise allowed to be kept by virtue of this Section 9 is creating a public nuisance, an unsanitary condition or is otherwise a danger to the public health, then the Board of Health, after written notice to the owner and a public hearing, may reduce the number of animals otherwise allowed to be kept by this Section 9 so as to cure such public nuisance, unsanitary condition or public health danger.

#### **SECTION 10 SEVERABILITY**

If any provision of these regulations are declared invalid or unenforceable, the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

These regulations are promulgated in accordance with Chapter 111, Section 155 and Chapter 111, Section 31 of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Effective August 1, 1991