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**HOUSE BILL NO. 281****AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE**

(Proposed by the House Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources  
on January 27, 2010)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Albo)

*A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 3.2-6503, 3.2-6574, and 18.2-403.3 of the Code of Virginia, relating to animal cruelty; penalty.*

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 3.2-6503, 3.2-6574, and 18.2-403.3 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 3.2-6503. Care of companion animals by owner; penalty.

A. Each owner shall provide for each of his companion animals:

1. Adequate feed;

2. Adequate water;

3. Adequate shelter that is properly cleaned;

4. Adequate space in the primary enclosure for the particular type of animal depending upon its age, size, species, and weight;

5. Adequate exercise;

6. Adequate care, treatment, and transportation; and

7. Veterinary care when needed or to prevent suffering or disease transmission.

The provisions of this section shall also apply to every pound, animal shelter, or other releasing agency, and every foster care provider, dealer, pet shop, exhibitor, kennel, groomer, and boarding establishment. This section shall not require that animals used as food for other animals be euthanized.

B. Violation of this section is a Class 4 2 misdemeanor.

§ 3.2-6574. Sterilization of adopted dogs and cats; enforcement; civil penalty.

A. Every new owner of a dog or cat adopted from a releasing agency shall cause to be sterilized the dog or cat pursuant to the agreement required by subdivision 2 of subsection B of this article.

B. A dog or cat shall not be released for adoption from a releasing agency unless:

1. The animal has already been sterilized; or

2. The individual adopting the animal signs an agreement to have the animal sterilized by a licensed veterinarian: (i) within 30 days of the adoption, if the animal is sexually mature; or (ii) within 30 days after the animal reaches six months of age, if the animal is not sexually mature at the time of adoption.

C. A releasing agency may extend for 30 days the date by which a dog or cat must be sterilized on presentation of a written report from a veterinarian stating that the life or health of the adopted animal may be jeopardized by sterilization. In cases involving extenuating circumstances, the veterinarian and the releasing agency may negotiate the terms of an extension of the date by which the animal must be sterilized.

D. Nothing in this section shall preclude the sterilization of a sexually immature dog or cat upon the written agreement of the veterinarian, the releasing agency, and the new owner.

E. Upon the petition of an animal control officer, humane investigator, the State Veterinarian or a State Veterinarian's representative to the district court of the county or city where a violation of this article occurs, the court may order the new owner to take any steps necessary to comply with the requirements of this article. This remedy shall be exclusive of and in addition to any civil penalty that may be imposed under this article.

F. Any person who violates subsection A or B of this section shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$50 \$250.

§ 18.2-403.3. Offenses involving animals - Class 4 misdemeanors.

The following unlawful acts and offenses against animals shall constitute and be punished as a Class 4 misdemeanor:

1. Violation of § 3.2-6566 pertaining to interference of agents charged with preventing cruelty to animals.

2. Violation of § 3.2-6573 pertaining to shooting pigeons.

3. Violation of § 3.2-6554 pertaining to disposing of the body of a dead companion animal.

4. Violation of ordinances passed pursuant to §§ 3.2-6522 and 3.2-6525 pertaining to rabid dogs and preventing the spread of rabies and the running at large of vicious dogs.

5. Violation of an ordinance passed pursuant to § 3.2-6539 requiring dogs to be on a leash.

6. Failure by any person to secure and exhibit the permits required by § 29.1-422 pertaining to field trails, night trails and foxhounds.

7. Diseased dogs. - For the owner of any dog with a contagious or infectious disease to permit such

- 60 dog to stray from his premises if such disease is known to the owner.
- 61 8. License application. - For any person to make a false statement in order to secure a dog or cat
- 62 license to which he is not entitled.
- 63 9. License tax. - For any dog or cat owner to fail to pay any license tax required by § 3.2-6530
- 64 before February 1 for the year in which it is due. In addition, the court may order confiscation and the
- 65 proper disposition of the dog or cat.
- 66 10. Concealing a dog or cat. - For any person to conceal or harbor any dog or cat on which any
- 67 required license tax has not been paid.
- 68 11. Removing collar and tag. - For any person, except the owner or custodian, to remove a legally
- 69 acquired license tag from a dog or cat without the permission of the owner or custodian.
- 70 ~~12. Violation of § 3.2-6503 pertaining to care of animals by owner.~~