

**RESOLUTION NO. 20230608-042**

**WHEREAS**, throughout human history, animals have provided us with companionship, labor, protection, care, and support; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association's 2017-2018 Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook, 58.2 percent of Texas households own at least one pet; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin likely has even higher levels of pet ownership, with a 2019 study from the University of Denver estimating that as many as 83 percent of Austin residents currently own a pet; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2021, a deadly fire at a pet boarding facility in Georgetown, Texas, killed at least 75 animals, a devastating loss to 59 families; and

**WHEREAS**, despite the presence of animals in the facility 24 hours a day, the pet boarding facility did not have smoke detectors, heat detectors, or a fire suppression system, and no one was present when the fire started; and

**WHEREAS**, at the time of the fire, no Central Texas city had safety requirements relating to fire detection, suppression, and staffing specifically for facilities housing or holding animals, nor does state law address any such requirements; and

**WHEREAS**, having learned the lessons from that fire, multiple Central Texas jurisdictions have updated their respective Fire Codes to provide minimum fire safety standards for facilities housing or holding animals on a 24-hour basis, including Georgetown, Liberty Hill, Round Rock, and Williamson County Fire District #4, and others are in the process of making changes; and

**WHEREAS**, the adopted Fire Code updates all include provisions requiring fire detection and fire suppression systems in facilities housing or holding animals 24 hours a day or onsite staffing; and

**WHEREAS**, Austinites have consistently voiced their support for the safety and welfare of their animal companions, such as policies against the cruel or dangerous restraint of animals and that increase their quality of life; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

City Council initiates amendments to City Code Title 25 (Land Development Code) to provide minimum fire safety standards for facilities housing or holding animals on a 24-hour basis.

**ADOPTED:** June 8, 2023

**ATTEST:**



Myrna Rios  
City Clerk