

RESOLUTION NO. 20230608-046

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is committed to promoting successful pet ownership and ensuring the welfare of animals within its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, national no-kill organizations like Best Friends Animal Society state that “it is the responsibility of every owner to ensure that their pet is microchipped” in order to facilitate quick and accurate return of lost animals to their owners; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the pressing issue of overcrowding in the City's animal shelter, leading to increased strain on resources, limited capacity to care for animals, and a higher risk of euthanasia for adoptable pets; and

WHEREAS, microchipping pets can significantly reduce the number of animals entering shelters, thereby reducing the burden on the animal shelter system and allowing for more efficient use of limited resources; and

WHEREAS, Texas state law currently requires spay/neuter for all adopted animals to control the population of unaltered pets; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to complement the spay/neuter state program by implementing a comprehensive approach that includes the goal of microchipping all local pets, thereby enhancing successful pet ownership, reducing shelter intake, and improving the likelihood of reuniting lost pets with their owners; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to promote community education and awareness regarding the benefits and importance of microchipping, as well as

the resources available to assist residents in complying with this requirement;
and

WHEREAS, the City intends to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to implement an effective and efficient system for microchipping pets, ensuring accessibility, affordability, and compliance; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Council directs the City Manager to initiate a code amendment which emphasizes the responsibility of owners to microchip all pet animals within the boundaries of the City of Austin with a non-criminal and non-compensatory enforcement mechanism which prioritizes compliance through education and services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to evaluate the City's current free microchip measures and adjust those measures such that any resident whose pet has not yet been microchipped may freely access such services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to ensure that all Animal Protection Officers and vehicles, all Austin Police Stations, all Austin Fire Stations, all Austin Recreation Centers, and all Austin Public Libraries are outfitted with microchip scanners; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to train an appropriate number of employees at all microchip locations to scan microchips as needed for the public; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to develop and implement a public education program which educates citizens on the microchip requirement, its enforcement mechanisms, and the availability of free microchip services throughout the City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to coordinate with the Animal Services Office to inspect Austin Animal Center policies, processes, and general staff practices, and to eliminate all such processes, policies, and general staff practices which would limit the application of the microchipping program or any other standard no-kill sheltering support practice which complies with national sheltering and no-kill standards in line with the goals of the City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to coordinate with the Animal Services Office to inspect the administrative policies, processes, and administrative staff practices, and to eliminate all such policies, processes, and administrative staff practices which limit administrative staff from complying with the microchipping program and any other standard no-kill administrative practice which complies with national sheltering and no-kill standards in line with the goals of the City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to coordinate with the Animal Services Office to inspect the veterinary policies, processes, and veterinary staff practices, and to eliminate all such policies, processes, and veterinary staff practices which limit veterinarians from complying with the microchipping

program and any other standard no-kill veterinary practice which complies with national veterinary and no-kill standards in line with the goals of the City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to coordinate with the Animal Services Office to inspect the volunteer/foster staff policies, processes, and volunteer/foster staff practices, and to eliminate all such policies, processes, and volunteer/foster staff practices which limit volunteer/foster staff from complying with the microchipping program and any other standard no-kill volunteer/foster staff practice which complies with national volunteer/foster and no-kill standards in line with the goals of the City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to return to the City Council with an update at Work Session by November 28, 2023. The update should contain the following: a draft ordinance for Council consideration; a status report on the implementation of microchipping services; and a summary of planned and completed process and policy evaluations with any related proposed changes.

ADOPTED: June 8, 2023

ATTEST:



Myrna Rios
City Clerk