

162.20 Sterilization.

1. A pound or animal shelter shall not transfer ownership of a dog or cat by sale or adoption, unless the dog or cat is subject to sterilization. The sterilization shall involve a procedure which permanently destroys the capacity of a dog or cat to reproduce, either by the surgical removal or alteration of its reproductive organs, or by the injection or ingestion of a serum. The pound or animal shelter shall not relinquish custody until it provides for one of the following:

a. Sterilization performed by a veterinarian licensed pursuant to [chapter 169](#).

b. The execution of an agreement with a person intended to be the permanent custodian of the dog or cat. The agreement must provide that the custodian shall have the dog or cat sterilized by a veterinarian licensed pursuant to [chapter 169](#).

2. The pound or animal shelter maintaining custody of the dog or cat may require that a person being transferred ownership of the dog or cat reimburse the pound or animal shelter for the amount in expenses incurred by the pound or animal shelter in sterilizing the dog or cat, if the dog or cat is sterilized prior to the transfer of ownership of the dog or cat to the person.

3. a. The sterilization agreement may be on a form which shall be prescribed by the department. The agreement shall contain the signature and address of the person receiving custody of the dog or cat, and the signature of the representative of the pound or animal shelter.

b. The sterilization shall be completed as soon as practicable, but prior to the transfer of the ownership of the dog or cat by the pound or animal shelter. The pound or animal shelter may grant an extension of the period required for the completion of the sterilization if the extension is based on a reasonable determination by a licensed veterinarian.

c. A pound or animal shelter shall transfer ownership of a dog or cat, conditioned upon the confirmation that the sterilization has been completed by a licensed veterinarian who performed the procedure. The confirmation shall be a receipt furnished by the office of the attending veterinarian.

d. A person who fails to satisfy the terms of the sterilization agreement shall return the dog or cat within twenty-four hours following receipt of a demand letter which shall be delivered to the person by the pound or animal shelter personally or by certified mail.

4. a. A person who does not comply with the provisions of a sterilization agreement is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

b. A person who fails to return a dog or cat upon receipt of a demand letter is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

c. A pound or animal shelter which knowingly fails to provide for the sterilization of a dog or cat is subject to a civil penalty of up to two hundred dollars. The department may enforce and collect civil penalties according to rules which shall be adopted by the department. Each violation shall constitute a separate offense. Moneys collected from civil penalties shall be deposited into the general fund of the state and are appropriated on July 1 of each year in equal amounts to each track licensed to race dogs to support the racing dog adoption program as provided in [section 99D.27](#). Upon the third offense, the department may suspend or revoke a certificate of registration issued to the pound or animal shelter pursuant to [this chapter](#). The department may bring an action in district court to enjoin a pound or animal shelter from transferring animals in violation of [this section](#). In bringing the action, the department shall not be required to allege facts necessary to show, or tending to show, a lack of adequate remedy at law, that irreparable damage or loss will result if the action is brought at law, or that unique or special circumstances exist.

5. [This section](#) shall not apply to the following:

a. The return of a dog or cat to its owner by a pound or animal shelter.

b. The transfer of a dog or cat by a pound or animal shelter which has obtained an enforcement waiver issued by the department. The pound or shelter may apply for an annual waiver each year as provided by rules adopted by the department. The department shall grant a waiver, if it determines that the pound or animal shelter is subject to an ordinance by a city or county which includes stricter requirements than provided in [this section](#). The

department shall not charge more than ten dollars as a waiver application fee. The fees collected by the department shall be deposited in the general fund of the state.

c. The transfer of a dog or cat to a research facility as defined in [section 162.2](#) or a person licensed by the United States department of agriculture as a class B dealer pursuant to [9 C.F.R. ch. 1, subch. A, pt. 2](#). However, a class B dealer who receives an unsterilized dog or cat from a pound or animal shelter shall either sterilize the dog or cat or transfer the unsterilized dog or cat to a research facility provided in this paragraph. The class B dealer shall not transfer a dog to a research facility if the dog is a greyhound registered with the national greyhound association and the dog raced at a track associated with pari-mutuel racing unless the class B dealer receives written approval of the transfer from a person who owned an interest in the dog while the dog was racing.

[93 Acts, ch 134, §1](#); [2008 Acts, ch 1058, §16](#); [2010 Acts, ch 1061, §180](#); [2012 Acts, ch 1023, §27](#)