

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF MONTEREY, STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
AMENDING CHAPTERS 8.04 AND 8.08 OF THE MONTEREY COUNTY CODE
CONCERNING MANDATORY SPAY/NEUTER OF CATS AND DOGS**

County Counsel Summary

This ordinance amends Chapters 8.04 and 8.08 of the Monterey County Code to require that all dogs and cats over the age of six months be spayed or neutered. The ordinance aims to promote responsible pet ownership in the unincorporated Monterey County and address the issue of pet overpopulation in our community by mandating spaying and neutering of dogs and cats, while allowing certain exemptions.

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Monterey ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. Findings.

A. Pursuant to Article XI, section 7 of the California Constitution, the County of Monterey may adopt and enforce ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws to protect and promote the public health, safety, and welfare of its citizens.

B. The Board of Supervisors finds and declares that a program for mandatory spaying and neutering of dogs and cats kept within the unincorporated areas of Monterey County is a reasonable and effective means of reducing the populations of homeless or stray dogs and cats, reducing the need to humanely euthanize healthy dogs and cats, and providing for the health, safety and welfare of the public.

SECTION 2. Section 8.04.010 is hereby amended to insert the following sentences:

“Neutered” refers to the procedure performed by a licensed veterinarian on male animals, under anesthesia, to remove testicles to prevent breeding.

“Spayed” refers to the procedure performed by a licensed veterinarian on female animals, under anesthesia, to remove the ovaries and uterus to prevent breeding.

SECTION 3. Chapter 8.08 entitled “Vaccination, Vaccination Certificate, and License” is hereby amended to change its title as follows:

Chapter 8.08 - Vaccination, Vaccination Certificate, License, and Mandatory Spaying and Neutering.

SECTION 4. Section 8.08.060 is hereby added to the Monterey County Code to read as follows:

8.08.060 – Mandatory Spaying and Neutering.

A. No person shall own, harbor or keep within the unincorporated area of Monterey County, a dog or cat over the age of six months, which has not been spayed or neutered unless such person qualifies for an exemption as described in subsection (C) of this Section.

B. Dogs that have been deemed Potentially Dangerous or Vicious, or dogs and cats that are repeat offenders of other Title 8 sections of this Code do not qualify for an exemption as described in subsection (C) of this Section.

C. Exemptions: The following animals are exempt from the provisions of this Section and owners may be required to show appropriate supportive documentation to the Animal Control Officer if requested:

1. Dogs or cats documented as having been appropriately trained and currently being used by public law enforcement agencies for law enforcement activities, search and rescue, or service agencies that assist disabled persons.

2. Dogs and cats certified by a licensed veterinarian as having a health reason for not being spayed/neutered.

3. Dogs and cats residing in a kennel, boarding or pet shop holding a valid permit issued pursuant to Chapter 8.12.

4. Dogs or cats which are owned or kept and in the custody and control of a nonresident of the unincorporated area of the County, and who are temporarily visiting or traveling through the unincorporated area of Monterey County for a period of less than 30 consecutive days.

SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY. If any subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance, which shall remain in full force and effect. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance, and each subsection, sentence, clause and phrase thereof not declared invalid or unconstitutional, without regard to whether any portion of the article would be subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional. The courts are hereby authorized to reform the provisions of this Section to preserve the maximum permissible effect of each subsection herein.

SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall take effect on the thirtieth day following its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____ 2026, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

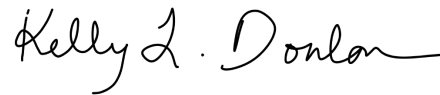
Wendy Root-Askew
Chair, Monterey County Board of Supervisors

A T T E S T:

VALERIE RALPH
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: _____
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM



Kelly L. Donlon
Chief Assistant County Counsel