

32-1307. Seizure of animals; access to premises; notice; hearing; costs. (a) Any dangerous regulated animal may be seized by the local animal control authority as provided in this section.

(b) The local animal control authority, upon issuance of a notice of inspection, shall be granted access at reasonable times to premises where the local animal control authority has reason to believe a violation of this act is occurring or has occurred.

(c) If a person who possesses a dangerous regulated animal is not in compliance with the requirements of this act, the local animal control authority shall take possession of the animal for custody and care, following the procedures in this subsection.

(d) Upon request of a person possessing a dangerous regulated animal, the local animal control authority may allow the animal to remain in the physical custody of the owner for 30 days, during which time the owner shall take all necessary actions to come in compliance with this act. During the 30-day period, the local animal control authority may inspect, at any reasonable time, the premises where the animal is kept.

(e) If a person who possesses a dangerous regulated animal is not in compliance with this act following the 30-day period described in subsection (d), the local animal control authority shall seize the animal and place it in a holding facility that is appropriate for the species for up to 10 days. The authority taking custody of an animal under this subsection shall provide a notice of the seizure by delivering or mailing it to the person possessing such dangerous regulated animal, by posting a copy of the notice at the premise where the animal is taken into custody, or by delivering it to a person residing on the premise. The notice shall include:

(1) A description of the animal seized; the authority for and purpose of the seizure; the time, place and circumstances under which the animal was seized; and a contact person and telephone number;

(2) a statement that a person from whom a dangerous regulated animal was seized may post security to prevent disposition of the animal and may request a hearing concerning the seizure and that failure to do so within five business days of the date of the notice will result in disposition of the animal;

(3) a statement that actual costs of the care, keeping and disposal of the dangerous regulated animal are the responsibility of the person from whom the animal was seized, except to the extent that a court or hearing officer finds that the seizure was not substantially justified by law; and

(4) a form that can be used by a person from whom a dangerous regulated animal was seized for requesting a hearing under this subsection.

(f) If a person from whom the dangerous regulated animal was seized makes a request within five business days of the seizure, a hearing must be held within five business days of the request to determine the validity of the seizure and disposition of the animal. The judge or hearing officer may authorize the return of the animal to the person from whom the animal was seized if the judge or hearing officer finds:

(1) That the person can and will provide the care required by law for the dangerous regulated animal; and

(2) the dangerous regulated animal is physically fit.

(g) If a judge or hearing officer orders a permanent disposition of the dangerous regulated animal, the local animal control authority may take steps to find long-term placement for the animal with a wildlife sanctuary, or an appropriate United States department of agriculture licensed facility.

(h) A person from whom a dangerous regulated animal is seized is liable for all actual costs of care, keeping and disposal of the animal, except to the extent that a court or hearing officer finds that the seizure was not substantially justified by law. The costs shall be paid in full or a mutually satisfactory arrangement for payment shall be made between the local animal control authority and the person claiming an interest in the animal before return of the animal to the person.

(i) A person from whom a dangerous regulated animal has been seized under this subsection may prevent disposition of the animal by posting security in the amount sufficient to provide for the actual costs of care and keeping of the animal. The security shall be posted within five business days of the seizure, inclusive of the day of the seizure.

(j) If circumstances exist threatening the life of a person or the life of any animal, any law enforcement agency or the local animal control authority shall seize a dangerous regulated animal without an opportunity for hearing or court order, or destroy the animal.

(k) Upon proper determination by a licensed veterinarian, any dangerous regulated animal taken into custody under this section may be immediately euthanized when the dangerous regulated animal is suffering and is beyond cure through reasonable care and treatment.

(l) The agency or authority taking custody of the dangerous regulated animal may recover all costs incurred under this section.

History: L. 2006, ch. 131, § 7; July 1.