

ORDINANCE NO. _____, 2ND SERIES

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF HIBBING, MINNESOTA, AMENDING HIBBING CITY CODE CHAPTER 10 ENTITLED "PUBLIC PROTECTION, CRIMES AND OFFENSES", BY REVISING SECTION 10.22 'CAT REGULATION'; AND, BY ADOPTING BY REFERENCE, HIBBING CITY CODE CHAPTER 1 AND SECTION 10.99 WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, CONTAIN PENALTY PROVISIONS.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF HIBBING, MINNESOTA ORDAINS:

Section 1. Hibbing City Code, Section 10.22 entitled "Cat Regulation" is hereby amended by adding a subdivision paragraph 5 entitled "Regulation of Free Roaming Cats" reading as follows:

"Subd. 5. Regulation of Free Roaming Cats.

WHEREAS, the City of Hibbing recognizes the presence of free-roaming (stray) cats in the community;

WHEREAS, the City seeks to reduce unnecessary shelter intake of healthy cats and prioritize animal control resources;

WHEREAS, the City supports community-based compassion and responsible care for animals without requiring removal or impoundment.

Section 1. Purpose. The subdivision of the ordinance provides guidance for the City's response to stray cats. Its goals are to:

- Reduce unnecessary impoundment of healthy free-roaming cats.
- Promote non-punitive, community-based responses.
- Clarify the role of Animal Control regarding free-roaming cats.

Section 2. Definitions.

- **Free-Roaming Cat:** Any domestic cat observed outdoors and not under the direct control of a person.
- **Impoundment:** the act of taking a cat into the custody of a shelter or Animal Control facility.
- **Animal Control:** The City or County official(s) designated to enforce animal laws within the jurisdiction of Hibbing.

Section 3. Animal Control Policy on Stray Cats.

A. Non-Mandatory Impoundment

Animal Control shall not be required to pick up or impound a free-roaming cat solely because it is at large or appears unowned.

B. Authorized Grounds for Impoundment

A free-roaming cat may be impounded only if:

1. It is visibly injured or ill and requires medical care.
2. It poses an immediate risk to public health or safety (e.g., suspected of rabies).
3. It has displayed aggressive behavior toward people or domestic animals.
4. It is part of a court-ordered animal welfare investigation or legal complaint.

C. Friendly Cats

Animal Control may pick up and impound friendly, approachable stray cats when:

1. The cat can be safely handled by officers.
2. The cat appears to be lost, abandoned, or in need of shelter.
3. A resident requests pickup and the animal is safely contained.

D. Feral or Unsocialized Cats

Animal Control is **not required** to pick up feral (unsocialized) cats unless:

1. The cat is visibly injured or suffering.
2. The cat presents a danger to public health or safety.
3. There is an active complaint involving threats, attacks, or serious nuisance behavior.

E. Use of Live Traps

1. Animal Control **may use live traps**, when necessary, but **will not routinely trap feral cats** for the sole reason of being unowned or at large.
2. Live trapping may be used if:
 - The cat is injured or sick.
 - The cat is the subject of a verified nuisance or public safety complaint.

- A resident has received permission from Animal Control to use a city-approved trap in coordination with Animal Control services.

Section 4. Public Nuisance and Complaint Process.

A. Free-roaming cats shall not be considered a public nuisance unless:

- They are causing damage to property.
- Creating unsanitary conditions.
- Repeatedly engaging in aggressive or dangerous behavior.

B. If a nuisance complaint is filed, Animal Control may investigate and take appropriate action as authorized by this and other applicable ordinances.

Section 5. Education and Public Information. The City may publish or make available educational materials to assist residents in peacefully coexisting with free-roaming cats and avoiding conflicts."

Section 2. Penalties. Hibbing City Code Chapter 1 entitled "General Provisions and Definitions Applicable to the Entire City Code Including Penalty for Violation" and Section 10.99 entitled "Violations a Misdemeanor" are hereby adopted in their entirety, by reference, as though repeated verbatim herein.

Section 3. After adoption, signing and attestation, this ordinance shall be published once in the official newspaper of the City and shall be in effect on and after the date following such publication.

Adopted by the City Council of Hibbing, Minnesota, this _____ day of December, 2025.

FOR ADOPTION:

AGAINST ADOPTION:

ABSENT:

CITY OF HIBBING

Pete Hyduke, Mayor

ATTEST:

Candie Seppala, Clerk

The foregoing Ordinance reviewed and approved as to form.

Andy Borland, City Attorney

(Published in the Hibbing Tribune on _____, 2025. Affidavit
of Publication attached.)