

The Citrus County Board of County Commissioners recently adopted a new County Ordinance which impacts all pet owners in Citrus County.

The 3 major changes to the ordinance are as follows:

- All cats, over the age of 4 months, within the county are required to be sterilized (spayed or neutered) regardless if they are indoor or outdoor cats. (*see ordinance for exemptions)
- The amount of time a pet is held as a stray for its owner to reclaim has been adjusted to meet industry standards.
 - Cats, Kittens and puppies (under 6 months of age) will not have a hold time, unless they have identification such as a collar and tag with owner information or a registered microchip. If such identification exists, these pets will be held for 5 days.
 - Dogs, 6 months and older will have a 3 day hold time, unless they have identification such as a collar and tag with owner information or a registered microchip. If such identification exists, these dogs will be held for 5 days.
- Any pet impounded to the shelter shall be sterilized before being released to their new owner. This applies to animals which are adopted, being transferred to rescue or being reclaimed by its owner. (*see ordinance for the full list of exemptions)

Q. If I own an indoor only cat, do I have to have it spayed or neutered?

A. Yes, the new ordinance requires all cats to be spayed or neutered regardless if they are kept inside or not.

Q. What forms of identification should my pet have in order to be held for 5 days if it comes to the shelter?

A. A microchip, which is registered with your current contact information, is the best form of identification to ensure your pet is returned to you if lost. All pets are also required to have and display a current Citrus County Pet License. Simply having a collar or a tag with no owner information does not constitute identification and the pet will not be held for 5 days.

Q. If my pet is picked up by Animal Control do I have to have it Spayed or Neutered?

*A. Yes, the new ordinance requires all animals which come to the shelter to be sterilized. There are some exceptions. (*see ordinance for the full list of exemptions)*

Q. If I am a registered breeder, do I have to have my pets sterilized if they come into the shelter.

A. The ordinance does have some exceptions to the mandatory spay or neuter requirement. For the full list of exemption, please review the ordinance by selecting the link above.