
File ID: 2026-01052

7/21/2026

Ordinance Revisions to Sacramento City Code Section 9.44.370 Relating to Number of Swine, Dogs, and Cats per Dwelling Unit [Two-Thirds Vote Required] [In Lieu of Pass for Publication Ordinance to be Published in its Entirety]

File ID: 2026-01052

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: 1) Pass a **Motion** by two-thirds vote to bypass the Law and Legislation Committee pursuant to Council Rules of Procedure section 13.B.1.b.ii; 2) determining the Ordinance exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3); 3) adopt an **Ordinance** amending various provisions of section 9.44.370 of the Sacramento City Code, relating to number of swine, dogs, and cats allowed per dwelling unit; and 4) in lieu of publishing the ordinance title, publish the ordinance in full in the official newspaper of the City within ten days after adoption by the council, consistent with City Charter section 32(d).

Contact: Ryan Hinderman, Interim Animal Care Services Manager, (916) 808-7911, rhinderman@cityofsacramento.org, Community Development Department

Presenter: None

Attachments:

- 1-Description/Analysis
- 2-Law and Legislation Committee Original Ordinance Amendment (Redline), January 13, 2026
- 3-Sacramento City Code 9.44.370 (Redline)
- 4-Sacramento City Code 9.44.370 (Clean)

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: Sacramento City Code currently allows residents to own up to three dogs. The Animal Wellbeing Commission suggested amending Sacramento City Code 9.44.370 to allow residents to own up to four dogs as part of their 2025 Workplan. The intent of the proposed amendment is to further reduce the number of dogs at the Front Street Animal Shelter, while increasing the number of dogs that are spayed/neutered citywide.

The proposed ordinance amendment was brought to the Law & Legislation Committee (Committee)

on January 13, 2026 (Attachment 2). The Committee passed a motion to bring the ordinance amendment to the Animal Wellbeing Commission for additional input and requested staff to bring the ordinance directly to City Council without returning to the Law & Legislation Committee. The ordinance amendment was reviewed at the April 15, 2026, Commission meeting. A Motion was passed to include revisions suggested by the Animal Wellbeing Commission to the ordinance language that limited the exemptions from the spay/neuter requirement of the households' resident dogs to be eligible for a fourth dog.

Staff agreed with the proposed changes and worked with the City Attorney's Office to send the proposed changes (Attachment 3) to the Draft Ordinance Review Committee (DORC) prior to presenting the item to City Council. This staff report's recommendation requires that Council amend the ordinance by a two-thirds vote because revisions suggested by the Animal Wellbeing Commission were made to the ordinance without returning to the Law & Legislation Committee.

Policy Considerations: The proposed amendment aligns with the City's goals of responsible pet ownership, reducing nuisance complaints, and promoting public health and safety. The revision also brings Code into alignment with current best practices in animal care and modernizes community standards.

Economic Impacts: None.

Environmental Considerations: Per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), approval of the proposed ordinance modifying the existing code that provides regulation for household pets will not result in a significant effect on the environment and is exempt from the CEQA. Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the common-sense exemption, CEQA applies only to actions with potential to significantly affect the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

Sustainability: Not applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: The proposed ordinance amendment was brought to the Law & Legislation Committee (Committee) on January 13, 2026 (Attachment 2). The Committee passed a motion to bring the ordinance amendment to the Animal Wellbeing Commission for additional input and requested staff to bring the ordinance directly to City Council without returning to the Law & Legislation Committee. The ordinance amendment was reviewed at the April 15, 2026, Commission meeting. A Motion was passed to include revisions suggested by the Animal Wellbeing Commission to the ordinance language that limited the exemptions from the spay/neuter requirement of the households' resident dogs to be eligible for a fourth dog.

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proposed changes (Attachment 3) to the Draft Ordinance Review Committee (DORC) prior to presenting the item to City Council. This staff report's recommendation requires that Council amend the ordinance by a two-thirds vote because revisions suggested by the Animal Wellbeing Commission were made to the ordinance without returning to the Law & Legislation Committee.

Rationale for Recommendation: The proposed amendment aligns with the City's goals of responsible pet ownership, reducing nuisance complaints, and promoting public health and safety. The revision also brings Code into alignment with current best practices in animal care and modernizes community standards.

Financial Considerations: Not Applicable.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.

ORDINANCE NO.

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council
Date Adopted

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 9.44.370 OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY CODE, RELATING TO THE NUMBER OF SWINE, DOGS, AND CATS PER DWELLING UNIT

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 1.

Section 9.44.370 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

9.44.370 Number of swine, dogs, and cats per dwelling unit.

A. ~~Swine. It is unlawful for any~~No person or group of persons ~~to shall~~ keep, harbor, or maintain ~~more than three swine permitted by section 9.44.320 in or about any dwelling unit; or adjacent yard. area adjacent thereto, more than three dogs or three swine permitted by Section 9.44.320 of this chapter, or any combination thereof exceeding three animals, each of which is over the age of four months, unless the owner is duly authorized to operate a kennel under the Planning and Development Code.~~

B. Dogs.

1. Except as provided in subsection B.2, no person or group of persons shall keep, harbor, or maintain more than three dogs over the age of four months in or about any dwelling unit or adjacent yard.

2. A person or group of persons may keep, harbor, or maintain in or about any dwelling unit or adjacent yard, a maximum of four dogs over the age of four months if each of the dogs: (i) has been spayed or neutered, (ii) has a valid unaltered license under section 9.44.490.F, (iii) is certified in writing by a licensed veterinarian as not being a suitable subject for sterilizing due to health or age reasons, or (iv) is eligible for a fee exemption under section 9.44.490.G.

~~BC. Cats. It is unlawful for any person or group of persons to~~No person or group of persons shall keep, harbor, or maintain ~~in or about any dwelling unit, or yard area adjacent thereto,~~ more than seven cats, ~~each of which is~~ over the age of eight weeks in or about any dwelling unit or adjacent yard.

~~CD.~~ For the purposes of this section the term "dwelling unit" ~~shall be defined in the same manner as such term is defined~~has the same meaning as in the Planning and Development Code.

ORDINANCE NO.

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council
Date Adopted

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND ADDING SECTIONS TO CHAPTER 9.44.370 OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY CODE RELATING TO THE NUMBER OF SWINE, DOGS, AND CATS PER DWELLING UNIT

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 1.

Section 9.44.370 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

9.44.370 Number of swine, dogs, and cats per dwelling unit.

A. ~~Swine. It is unlawful for any~~No person or group of persons ~~to shall~~ keep, harbor, or maintain ~~more than three swine permitted by section 9.44.320 in or about any dwelling unit; or adjacent yard. area adjacent thereto, more than three dogs or three swine permitted by Section 9.44.320 of this chapter, or any combination thereof exceeding three animals, each of which is over the age of four months, unless the owner is duly authorized to operate a kennel under the Planning and Development Code.~~

B. Dogs.

1. ~~Except as provided in subsection B.2, no person or group of persons shall keep, harbor, or maintain more than three dogs over the age of four months in or about any dwelling unit or adjacent yard.~~

2. ~~A person or group of persons may keep, harbor, or maintain in or about any dwelling unit or adjacent yard, a maximum of four dogs over the age of four months if each of the dogs: (i) has been spayed or neutered, or (ii) has a valid unaltered license under section 9.44.490.F, (iii) (ii) is certified in writing by a licensed veterinarian as not being a suitable subject for sterilizing due to health or age reasons, or (iv) is eligible for a fee exemption under section 9.44.490.G.~~

BC. ~~Cats. It is unlawful for any person or group of persons to~~No person or group of persons shall keep, harbor, or maintain ~~in or about any dwelling unit, or yard area adjacent thereto,~~ more than seven cats, ~~each of which is~~ over the age of eight weeks ~~in or about any dwelling unit or adjacent yard.~~

ED. For the purposes of this section the term "dwelling unit" ~~shall be defined in the same manner as such term is defined~~has the same meaning as in the Planning and Development Code.

ORDINANCE NO.

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council
Date Adopted

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 9.44.370 OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY CODE, RELATING
TO THE NUMBER OF SWINE, DOGS, AND CATS PER DWELLING UNIT**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 1.

Section 9.44.370 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

9.44.370 Number of swine, dogs, and cats per dwelling unit.

A. Swine. No person or group of persons shall keep, harbor, or maintain more than three swine permitted by section 9.44.320 in or about any dwelling unit, or adjacent yard.

B. Dogs.

1. Except as provided in subsection B.2, no person or group of persons shall keep, harbor, or maintain more than three dogs over the age of four months in or about any dwelling unit or adjacent yard.

2. A person or group of persons may keep, harbor, or maintain in or about any dwelling unit or adjacent yard, a maximum of four dogs over the age of four months if each of the dogs (i) has been spayed or neutered, or (ii) is certified in writing by a licensed veterinarian as not being a suitable subject for sterilizing due to health or age reasons.

C. Cats. No person or group of persons shall keep, harbor, or maintain more than seven cats over the age of eight weeks in or about any dwelling unit or adjacent yard.

D. For the purposes of this section the term "dwelling unit" has the same meaning as in the Planning and Development Code.