

Office of the County Auditor
Auditor's Analysis - REVISED

Council Resolution No. 11-2021

Introduced: January 4, 2021

Auditor: Maya Cameron

Fiscal Impact:

The fiscal impact of this legislation is an increase in fee revenues of \$800 annually beginning the second year of enactment. This is based upon the Administration's intent to waive fees for the first year, as well as the collection of \$100 annually for license and application fees from eight private animal shelters in subsequent years.

According to the Administration, regulating private animal shelters could result in the County avoiding costs in excess of \$250,000 for impounds. This is based on the historical costs of impounds from nonregulated shelters. Costs would include expenses for processing animals into a facility, medical care, and daily care and does not include staffing and overtime expenses.

NOTE: The Auditor's office was not provided documentation of this historical cost and cannot validate the savings.

Companion legislation Council Bill 1-2021 indicates that the license application process shall be completed annually (page 9, lines 7 and 8) and that the fees collected are the application fee and license fee (page 8, lines 3 through 11). This is inconsistent with the Administration's testimony, in which it indicated it would waive the first year of fees and that only the license fee would be collected in subsequent years.

We have asked for clarification from the Office of Law regarding whether the non-refundable application fee and/or license fee can be waived in the first year without making that notation in the bill or resolution.

The Administration assumes full compliance and therefore does not project collection of the civil penalties proposed in CB1-2021. (Refer to **Exhibit 1** for a list of the private animal shelters.)

Inspection fees will be included in the licensing fee at no additional charge. Inspections will be completed using current existing personnel and resources.

Purpose:

The purpose of this legislation is to establish an annual non-refundable application fee of \$50 and an annual \$50 license fee for the operation of a private animal shelter in accordance with County Code changes proposed in Council Bill 1-2021.

Other Comments:

This is a companion legislation to CB1-2021 (which establishes the civil penalties for operating a private shelter without a license and non-compliance with the standards of care).

Any revenues generated from the license application, annual renewals, and resubmission of denied applications will be deposited into the General Fund.

Exhibit 1 – Howard County Private Animal Shelters

There are approximately 10 private shelters in Howard County. Per the Administration, this legislation would not apply to two private shelters based on legislative definitions:

<u>Rescue Shelters</u>	<u>Sanctuaries</u>	<u>Not Applicable to Legislation</u>
Small Miracles	Burleigh Manor	Frisky's Wildlife Sanctuary
Animal Welfare Society	Bentle Friends	Days End Horse Farm Rescue
Lions Den		
K9 Humane		
Kitties & Pitties		
Darby's Cat Rescue		