



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
NOVEMBER 17, 2025

County Executive Announces Bill to Enhance Animal Welfare and Public Safety

Proposal Updates Animal Control Definitions and Pet Licensing

FREDERICK, Md. – Today, Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater announced legislation that would update the animal control chapters in the County Code to improve animal welfare and enhance public safety. To improve accessibility of responsible pet ownership for people in Frederick County, this bill also establishes a new license fee schedule, including senior discounts and the creation of a lifetime dog or cat license for animals that have been spayed or neutered.

“Pet ownership is a joy to so many of us. But it is also a big responsibility. This legislation is an important step forward in promoting responsible pet ownership and safeguarding our community,” said County Executive Jessica Fitzwater. “By updating our animal control policies, we aim to create a safer environment for both people and pets in Frederick County.”

The proposed legislation would:

- Establish a new pet license fee schedule.
- Revise the definition of “dangerous dog” and “potentially dangerous dog” to better align with broadly accepted standards.
- Clarify leash requirements.
- Update the “proper enclosure” definition.
- Require owners of dangerous or potentially dangerous dogs to update their address.

These changes help minimize the risk of animal-related injury or abuse in our community and align with Livable Frederick’s goals of injury prevention, violence prevention, and ending abuse.

The new license fee schedule provides a discount for seniors and encourages people to spay and neuter their cats and dogs. Increased pet licensing helps reduce the number of stray animals and supports public health by ensuring pets are vaccinated.

This bill will be presented to the County Council for a workshop at the November 25 meeting. The bill and staff report will be linked in the meeting agenda, which will be available at www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Council.

###

CONTACT: [Hope Morris](#)
Communications Manager
Office of Communications and Public Engagement
301-600-2590

Frederick County, Maryland does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, familial status, gender identity, sexual orientation, or source of income.