

City of Sacramento
Animal Wellbeing Commission Report
915 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814
www.cityofsacramento.org

File ID: 2026-00508

4/15/2026

Amending Sacramento City Code Section 9.44.370 Relating to Number of Swine, Dogs, and Cats per Dwelling Unit

File ID: 2026-00508

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: Review and pass a **Motion** to forward the amended ordinance to City Council for approval.

Contact: Ryan Hinderman, Communications and Customer Service Manager, (916) 808-7911, rhinderman@cityofsacramento.org, Community Development Department

Presenter: Ryan Hinderman, Communications and Customer Service Manager, (916) 808-7911, rhinderman@cityofsacramento.org, Community Development Department

Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

2-Ordinance Amendment: Sacramento City Code 9.44.370 - Redline Version

3-Ordinance Amendment: Sacramento City Code 9.44.370

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: The Sacramento City Code currently regulates the number of certain animals that may be kept at a dwelling unit. This ordinance updates Section 9.44.370 to clarify and revise the allowable number of swine, dogs, and cats per residence (See attachments 2 and 3). The amendment establishes clear limits:

- A maximum of three permitted swine,
- A maximum of three dogs, unless all dogs are over four months old and spayed/neutered or qualifies for one of three exemptions allowed for in the ordinance amendment, in which case up to four dogs are allowed,
- A maximum of seven cats over eight weeks of age.

These updates ensure consistency with animal welfare practices, neighborhood compatibility, and enforcement clarity.

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: Animal Wellbeing Commission advised of the ordinance change as part of the 2025 Workplan. The proposed ordinance amendment was brought to the Law & Legislation Committee on January 13, 2026. The Committee passed a motion to bring the ordinance amendment to the Animal Wellbeing Commission and then to take the ordinance directly to City Council 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.

The Law and Legislation Committee requested that the Animal Wellbeing Commission review the proposed ordinance prior to sending it to City Council for final approval.

Financial Considerations: Increasing the allowable number of owned animals per dwelling unit is expected to generate additional revenue through the City's licensing fees.

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.

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**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, (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.

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.