

WEST DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP

ORDINANCE #2016-07

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST DEPTFORD TO RESTRICT
THE SALE OF DOGS AND CATS FROM PET SHOPS**

WHEREAS, a significant number of puppies and kittens sold at pet shops come from large-scale commercial breeding facilities where the health and welfare of the animals are not adequately provided for ("puppy mills" and "kitten mills," respectively); **and**

WHEREAS, According to The Humane Society of the United States, it is estimated that 10,000 puppy mills produce more than 2,400,000 puppies a year in the United States, and that most pet shops dogs and cats come from puppy mills and kitten mills; and

WHEREAS, the documented abuses endemic to puppy and kitten mills include over-breeding, inbreeding, minimal to non-existent veterinary care, lack of adequate and nutritious food, water and shelter, lack of socialization, lack of adequate space, and lack of adequate exercise; and

WHEREAS, the inhumane conditions in puppy mill and kitten mill facilities lead to health and behavioral issues in the animals bred in those facilities, which many consumers are unaware of when purchasing animals from pet shops, due to both a lack of education on the issue and misleading tactics of pet shops in some cases; and

WHEREAS, these health and behavioral issues, which may not present themselves until sometime after the purchase of the animals, can impose exorbitant financial and emotional costs on consumers; and

WHEREAS, current Federal and State regulations do not adequately address the sale of puppy and kitten mill dogs and cats in pet shops; and

WHEREAS, restricting the retail sale of puppies and kittens to only those that are sourced from shelters or rescue organizations is likely to decrease the demand for puppies and kittens bred in puppy and kitten mills, and is likely to increase demand for animals from animal shelters and rescue organizations; and

WHEREAS, according to the New Jersey Department of Health in its 2014 Animal Intake and Disposition Survey has found that due in large part to pet overpopulation, more than 20,000 dogs and cats are euthanized in New Jersey animal shelters annually, including 2,176 in the County of Gloucester. Restricting the retail sale of puppies and kittens to only those that are sourced from animal shelters and rescue organizations will likely reduce pet overpopulation, and thus the burden on such agencies and financial costs on the local taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, across the country, thousands of independent pet shops, as well as large chains, operate profitably with a business model focused on the sale of pet services and supplies, and not on the sale of dogs and cats. Many of these shops collaborate with local animal shelters and rescue organizations to offer space and support for showcasing adoptable homes pets on their premises; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance will not affect a consumer's ability to obtain a dog or cat of his or her choice directly from a breed-specific rescue organization or a shelter, or from a hobby breeder where the consumer can see directly the conditions in which the dogs or cats are bred,

or can confer directly with the hobby breeder concerning those conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of West Deptford, in the County of Gloucester and State of New Jersey believes it is in the best interest of the Township of West Deptford to adopt reasonable regulations to reduce costs to the Borough and its residents, protect the citizens of the Township of West Deptford who may purchase dogs or cats from a pet shop or other business establishment, help prevent inhumane breeding conditions, promote community awareness or animal welfare, and foster a more humane environment in the Township.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Committee of the Township of West Deptford, County of Gloucester and State of New Jersey that the Township Committee does hereby adopt provisions to restrict the sale of dogs and cats from pet shops as follows:

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS.

Animal care facility means an animal control center or animal shelter, maintained by or under contract with any state, county, or municipality, whose mission and practice is in whole or significant part, the rescue and placement of animals in permanent homes or rescue organizations.

Animal rescue organization means any not-for-profit organization which has tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c)(3) of the United States Revenue Code, whose mission and practice is, in whole or in significant part, the rescue and placement of animals in permanent homes.

Cat means a member of the species of domestic cat, *Felis catus*.

Dog means a member of the species of domestic dog, *Canis familiaris*.

Offer for sale means to sell, offer for sale or adoption, advertise for the sale of, barter, auction, give away or otherwise dispose of a dog or cat.

Pet shop means a retail establishment where dogs and cats are sold, exchanged, bartered or offered for sale as pet animals to the general public at retail. Such definition shall not include an animal care facility or animal rescue organization, as defined.

SECTION 2. RESTRICTIONS ON THE SALE OF ANIMALS.

- (1) A pet shop may offer for sale only those dogs and cats that the pet shop has obtained from or displays in cooperation with:
 - (a) An animal care facility; or
 - (b) An animal rescue organization or
 - (c) A hobby breeder

- (2) A pet shop shall not offer for sale a dog or cat this is younger than eight weeks old.

SECTION 3. SEVERABILITY.

If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance shall be declared invalid for any reason whatsoever, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance which shall continue in full force and effect, and to this end the provisions of the Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that this Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon final passage and publication as required by law.

TOWNSHIP OF WEST DEPTFORD

Denice DiCarlo

 Denice DiCarlo, Mayor

Attest:

Lee Ann Dehart

 LEE ANN DEHART, ACTING MUNICIPAL CLERK

INTRODUCED at a meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of West Deptford, held on April 20, 2016.

ROLL CALL VOTE				
	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Denice DiCarlo	✓			
Jeff Hansen	✓			
James Mehaffey	✓			
Jerry Maher	✓			
Adam Reid	✓			
TALLY:	5			

ADOPTED at a meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of West Deptford, held on May 18, 2016.

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Denice DiCarlo	✓			.
Jeff Hansen				✓
James Mehaffey	✓			
Jerry Maher	✓			
Adam Reid	✓			
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