

# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES

## PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE MANDATORY SPAY & NEUTER



# Overview – Mandatory Spay & Neuter

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# Spay & Neuter Requirements in Contra Costa County

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- **CA Food & Agriculture Code 30503**
  - Dogs sold or given away to new owners by animal shelters or rescue groups must be spayed/neutered. Certain medical exemptions apply.
- **CA Food & Agriculture Code 31751.3**
  - Cats sold or given away to new owners by animal shelters or rescue groups must be spayed/neutered. Certain medical exemptions apply.
- **Contra Costa County Animal Ordinance 416-8.018**
  - Any unlicensed, unaltered dog impounded under section 416-8.002 must be spayed or neutered prior to its release from the animal services department unless the dog is exempted from the license requirements under subsection (a) of Section 416-6.004 or has a medical exemption under subsection (d) of this section.
  - Licensed dogs impounded once within a three-year period may be released unaltered.
  - Licensed dogs impounded twice within a three-year period must be altered.



# California Local Government Examples

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- **Santa Cruz County, CA**

- Requires all residents of unincorporated areas in Santa Cruz County to have their dogs and cats older than six months of age spayed or neutered.
- Allows for medical exemptions and exemptions for service animals, law enforcement animals, and competition animals.



- **Los Angeles County, CA**

- Requires all residents of unincorporated areas in Los Angeles County to have their dogs and cats older than four months of age spayed or neutered.
- Allows for medical exemptions and exemptions for service animals, law enforcement animals, and competition animals.



# Pros & Cons of Mandatory Spay & Neuter Laws

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## Pros

- Potential to increase number of spayed/neutered animals in Contra Costa and reduce pet overpopulation.
- Potential to improve overall pet health and behavior.
- Potential to provide additional revenue to the Animal Services Department budget.

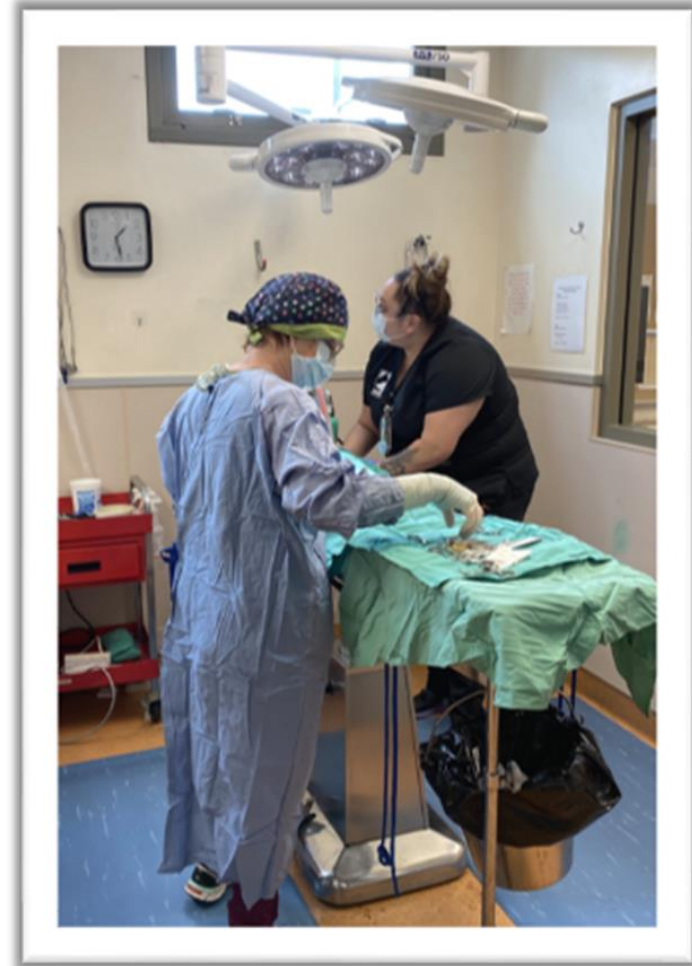
## Cons

- Potential to be viewed as an unfair or inequitable policy due to high-cost and low-availability of spay/neuter appointments in the Bay Area region.
- Strong potential to face fierce opposition from well-established animal welfare organizations (ASPCA, American Kennel Club, American Veterinary Assn., NAIA, etc.)
- Potential to increase the Department's license vendor costs.

# Options for Consideration

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- **Develop a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance similar to Los Angeles County and Santa Cruz County**
  - Would establish a permit process, rules, and fee structure regarding spay and neuter of dogs and cats.
  - Registration and enforcement could be conducted through the Department's licensing program by adapting the current process.
- **Develop a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance unique to Contra Costa County's Needs**
  - Develop a policy that is more suited to the circumstances of today, adopting different process and requirements than those included in the Santa Cruz and Los Angeles models which were enacted many years ago.
- **Make no change**
  - Continue to work within the current state laws and County animal ordinance.



# Other Considerations

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- **Enforcement**

- Would likely require additional funding to create, staff, and enforce the program.
- Would likely increase vendor costs for licensing.

- **Application**

- Would the ordinance be applicable countywide or only in unincorporated Contra Costa County?
- If countywide, would Antioch be covered?

- **Unintended Consequences**

- Could create an environment where compliance is limited only to those who can afford the high costs of spay/neuter.





Thank you!

Questions?