



§2364. Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission

A. Definition. For purposes of this Section, "animal" shall mean dogs and cats.

B. Creation and membership. (1) The Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission is hereby created within the office of the governor for the purpose of assisting the governor's office of community programs to ensure and promote the proper treatment and well-being of animals. The commission shall receive no direct funding from the state, but may receive incidental services from state agencies in order to carry out its purpose.

(2) Members of the commission shall serve four-year terms and shall not receive any compensation or reimbursement of expenses. Each member of the commission shall hold office until the appointment and qualification of his successor. Whenever a vacancy occurs in an appointed position, the vacancy shall be filled in the same manner and under the same terms and conditions as required for the original appointment. The commission shall meet at the call of the chairman at least quarterly and more often if necessary.

(3) The executive director of the governor's office of community programs or his designee shall be a member of the commission. Other members of the commission shall be appointed by the governor in accordance with the following provisions:

- (a) One representative of the Department of Health and Hospitals.
- (b) One small animal veterinarian, appointed at large.
- (c) One member who is a director of a public animal control agency.
- (d) One commercial breeder of dogs.
- (e) Three representatives from separately operating humane societies or private animal shelters.
- (f) One representative from the Louisiana State Police.
- (g) One member of the public, appointed at large.
- (h) Two representatives appointed from a list of five nominations submitted by the Louisiana

Veterinary Medical Association.

- (i) One representative of the Louisiana Quarterhorse Association.
- (j) One representative of the Louisiana Thoroughbred Breeders Association.

(4) The governor shall appoint the initial chairman and initial vice chairman of the commission from members appointed by the governor. Thereafter, the members shall elect the chairman and vice chairman every odd-numbered year.

(5) The domicile of the commission shall be in East Baton Rouge Parish.

C. Transaction of business. A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of official business. All official actions of the commission shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the commission.

D. Duties and functions. The commission shall have powers and duties necessary to carry out its purpose, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) To support local and municipal animal control enforcement efforts.
- (2) To support law enforcement in the investigation and prosecution of animal cruelty cases.
- (3) To make recommendations concerning the care and keeping of animals.
- (4) To coordinate a statewide voluntary pet database that will assist animal owners in recovering lost animals.
- (5) To provide a centralized public animal information, education, and communication service.
- (6) To formulate and implement proposals to deal with pet overpopulation.
- (7) To make recommendations for rules and regulations, which may be adopted by parish and local authorities for the proper care and treatment of animals.
- (8) To gather information from public records pertaining to the animals within the purview of the commission. The government custodians of such records shall make them accessible to the commission upon request under the provisions of R.S. 44:1 et seq.
- (9) To inspect any animal impoundment facility for the purpose of making recommendations to the appropriate governing authority for improvements to those facilities and their operations wherever such facilities are operated by a government animal control agency or designated by municipal or parish governments to be used for the purpose of impoundment of animals. The governing authority shall provide to the commission reasonable access to the facility, its records, and personnel within seven days of receipt of a written request.

(10) To request, in the form of a letter to the appropriate governing authority, an animal control agency to produce public records pertaining to animal intake, adoption, and euthanasia.

(11) To establish and maintain the Louisiana Animal Shelter Registry.

E. Louisiana Animal Welfare Fund. (1) The commission may accept and solicit advice, services, and donations. Donations shall be remitted immediately to the state treasury. After compliance with the requirements of Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana relative to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund, the monies shall be deposited in the Louisiana Animal Welfare Fund, hereinafter referred to as the "fund", which is hereby created within the state treasury and shall be used solely to carry out the functions and duties of the Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission.

(2) The commission shall maintain a checking account in a Louisiana licensed banking establishment for holding and distributing money that may be transferred from the fund to be used by the commission in

fulfillment of its purposes. The checking account shall be entitled "Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission". It shall be held jointly in the names of the current chairman and treasurer of the commission. All checks shall require joint signatures.

(3) The treasurer of the state of Louisiana shall transfer monies from the fund upon receiving a written order signed by the chairman and treasurer of the commission. If the funds are insufficient to meet the full amount of the order, the treasurer of the state of Louisiana may transfer the remaining balance in the fund. The transfer of monies in the fund to the commission's checking account shall be made within five business days of receiving the written order.

(4) The financial records of the commission shall be maintained by the treasurer of the commission. A copy of the records, jointly certified by the treasurer and the chairman, shall be provided by the chairman to the legislative auditor for inspection within twenty business days of the close of the state's fiscal year. The legislative auditor shall report the findings of the inspection to the governor and the chairman of the commission within ninety days of receiving the certified copy of the records.

Acts 2001, No. 656, §1; Acts 2004, No. 74, §1; Acts 2004, No. 189, §1; Acts 2005, No. 248, §1, eff. June 29, 2005; Acts 2008, No. 796, §1; Acts 2016, No. 381, §1.

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P.O. Box 94062 (900 North Third Street) Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9062