



Memorandum



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To: Hon. Barbara J. Jordan, Chairwoman, Metropolitan Services Committee
and Members of the Metropolitan Services Committee, Miami-Dade County

From: Mary T. Cagle, Inspector General 

Date: August 25, 2015

Subject: Proposed Ordinance Pertaining to Animals. . . Item 1G4 of the Metropolitan Services Committee Agenda of August 26, 2015

By way of this memorandum, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) wishes to show our support of Item 1G4 on tomorrow's Metropolitan Services Committee Agenda (August 26, 2015). This item, an ordinance pertaining to animals that amends several provisions of Chapter 5 of the Code of Miami-Dade County (the Code), emanates from several of our past audit recommendations on this subject.

The OIG's audit involved the Animal Services Department (ASD) and its administration and enforcement activities pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 5. Primarily, the audit examined dog licenses and the related issues of rabies vaccinations, the selling of dog tags by veterinarians, and reporting of euthanized dogs. The OIG's audit report was issued in September 2012 and, at the request of the OIG, ASD provided a status report on the subject findings and recommendations in June 2013. According to ASD's status report, the Department implemented those recommendations that it could implement administratively; however, some of the OIG recommendations required legislative changes. The proposed ordinance contains some of our recommended changes.

Foremost, it is the goal of ASD to ensure that dogs are properly vaccinated and licensed in Miami-Dade County. Our audit found that vaccinations and licenses were often not occurring as "linked" transactions at a veterinarian's office. There was no requirement that the veterinarian actually offer the dog license for sale during the same visit when the dog receives its annual vaccination. This disconnect required additional time and effort on all parties to ensure compliance, and it was having an adverse impact on the timely accounting and return of unsold licenses back to the Department. Notably, the OIG had recommended that ASD require that veterinarians offer to sell licenses—not just make them available. We also recommended that ASD strengthen reporting requirements by veterinarian offices, such as the timely reporting of licenses issued and the remittance of license fees collected, and add a new requirement that veterinarians report euthanized dogs to ASD. The proposed amendments to Section 5-7 and 5-11 of the Code positively address our recommendations. As such, we support passage of this item.

cc: Hon. Carlos A. Gimenez, Mayor, Miami-Dade County
Alina Hudak, Deputy Mayor, Miami-Dade County
Alex Muñoz, Director, Animal Services Department
Christopher Agrippa, Director, Clerk of the Board