

## **CAN A TOWN REQUIRE THAT CATS BE LICENSED?**

Yes, a municipality may require, via ordinance, registration and licensing of cats in the same manner as domestic dogs and wolf hybrids are required to be licensed under state law pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 3581. The enabling authority to do this is found in 20 V.S.A. § 3549. This section of law cites the general power for a legislative body to adopt an ordinance to regulate the keeping of domestic pets or wolf-hybrids. A domestic pet includes domestic dogs, domestic cats and ferrets. 20 V.S.A. § 3541 (3).

Any ordinance adopted by a town must be reasonably related to a governmental interest, such as the public's health, safety and welfare. Knowing that all felines in your town are vaccinated against rabies could be justification for such an ordinance. Colchester and South Burlington are examples of two towns that require cats to be registered.

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