



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

December 22, 2011

2011-R-0498

FERAL CATS

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You asked if there are any state laws prohibiting the feeding of feral cats.

There is no state law that prohibits the feeding of feral cats. The law allows towns to adopt an ordinance requiring individuals who keep feral cats in residential or commercial areas to register with the town's animal control officer within one year of the ordinance's adoption. The officer must give them information on the proper care and management of feral cats. The ordinance must require feral cat keepers to sterilize and vaccinate the cat against rabies. The law specifies that if a feral cat is adopted from a town pound, its keeper is eligible for cat sterilization financial assistance under the existing animal population control program. The law allows the Department of Agriculture commissioner to specifically solicit funds for sterilizing feral cats under this program which subsidizes the sterilization of cats and dogs from pounds ([CGS § 22-339d](#)).

The law defines a feral cat as a free-roaming cat which is not owned. A keeper is a person who, or organization that harbors, regularly feeds, possesses, or forbids an animal control officer from impounding a feral cat.

The law does not specify the penalty for violating this ordinance. But, it allows towns to issue citations for violating local ordinances and regulations ([CGS § 7-148 \(c\)\(10\)\(A\)](#)). The town must designate the ordinances and regulations it wants to enforce by citation and specify the officials who can issue them. Citations may be issued for fines up to \$250, unless the statutes specify otherwise.

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