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H.218

Introduced by Representatives Bartholomew of Hartland and Viens of  
Newport City

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Crimes; animal cruelty; adequate shelter; dogs and cats

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to amend the  
requirements for the humane shelter of dogs and cats.

An act relating to the adequate shelter of dogs and cats

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. § 351 is amended to read:

§ 351. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) “Animal” means all living sentient creatures, not human beings.

\* \* \*

(11) “Livestock” means cattle, bison, horses, sheep, goats, swine,  
cervidae, ratites, and camelids.

\* \* \*



1           (17) “Adequate water” means ~~fresh, potable water provided at suitable~~  
2 ~~intervals for the species, and which, in no event, shall exceed 24 hours at any~~  
3 ~~interval. The animal must have access to the water~~ potable water that is either  
4 accessible to the animal at all times or is provided at suitable intervals for the  
5 species and in sufficient quantity for the health of the animal. In no event shall  
6 the interval when water is not provided exceed 24 hours. Snow or ice is not an  
7 adequate water source unless provided in accordance with livestock and  
8 poultry husbandry practices.

9           (18) “Adequate shelter” means shelter which protects the animal from  
10 injury and environmental hazards.

11           (19) “Enclosure” means any structure, fence, device, or other barrier  
12 used to restrict an animal or animals to a limited amount of space.

13           (20) “Livestock guardian dog” means a purpose-bred dog that is:

14           (A) specifically trained to live with livestock without causing them  
15 harm while repelling predators;

16           (B) being used to live with and guard livestock; and

17           (C) acclimated to local weather conditions.

1 Sec. 2. 13 V.S.A. § 365 is amended to read:

2 § 365. SHELTER OF ANIMALS

3 (a) Adequate shelter. All livestock and animals ~~which~~ that are to be  
4 predominantly maintained ~~out-of-doors must~~ in an outdoor area shall be  
5 provided with adequate shelter to prevent direct exposure to the elements.

6 (b) Shelter for livestock.

7 (1) Adequate natural shelter, or a three-sided, roofed building with  
8 exposure out of the prevailing wind and of sufficient size to adequately  
9 accommodate all livestock maintained ~~out-of-doors~~ in an outdoor area shall be  
10 provided. The building opening size and height ~~must~~ shall, at a minimum,  
11 extend one foot above the withers of the largest animal housed and ~~must~~ shall  
12 be maintained at that level even with manure and litter build-up. Nothing in  
13 this section shall control dairy herd housing facilities, either loose housing,  
14 comfort stall, or stanchion ties, or other housing under control of the  
15 ~~department of agriculture, food and markets~~ Agency of Agriculture, Food and  
16 Markets. This section shall not apply to any accepted housing or grazing  
17 practices for any livestock industry.

18 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection,  
19 livestock may be temporarily confined in a space sufficient for them to stand  
20 and turn about freely, provided that they are exercised in accordance with

1 livestock and poultry husbandry practices, and are provided sufficient food,  
2 water, shelter, and proper ventilation.

3 (c) Minimum size of living space; dogs and cats.

4 (1) A dog, ~~whether chained or penned,~~ shall be provided an adequate  
5 living space no less than three feet by four feet for 25 pound and smaller dogs,  
6 four feet by four feet for 26-35 pound dogs, four feet by five feet for 36-50  
7 pound dogs, five feet by five feet for 51-99 pound dogs, and six feet by five  
8 feet for 100 pound and larger dogs that is large enough to allow the dog, in a  
9 normal manner, to turn about freely, stand, sit, and lie down. A dog shall be  
10 presumed to have adequate living space if provided with floor space in the  
11 greater amount of the following:

12 (A) If the dog is:

13 (i) less than 15 kilograms, floor space of at least eight square feet;

14 (ii) 15 or more kilograms up to and including 30 kilograms, floor  
15 space of at least 12 square feet; and

16 (iii) more than 30 kilograms, floor space of at least 24 square feet.

17 (B) Floor space in square footage calculated according to the  
18 following formula: floor space in square feet = (length of dog in inches + 6)  
19 × (length of dog in inches + 6) ÷ 144. The length of the dog in inches shall be  
20 measured from the tip of the nose of the dog to the base of its tail.

1           (2) The specifications required by subdivision (c)(1) of this section shall  
2 ~~apply to be required for~~ each dog, regardless of whether the dog is housed  
3 individually or with other animals.

4           (3)(A) A cat over the age of two months shall be provided adequate  
5 living space that is large enough to allow the cat, in a normal manner, to turn  
6 about freely, stand, sit, and lie down. A cat shall be presumed to have  
7 adequate living space if provided with:

8                   (i) floor space, including raised resting platforms, of at least eight  
9 square feet; and

10                   (ii) a primary structure of at least 24 inches in height.

11           (B) The requirements of this subdivision (c)(3) shall apply to each cat  
12 regardless of whether the cat is housed individually or with other animals.

13           (4)(A) Each female dog with nursing puppies shall be provided the  
14 living space required under subdivision (1) of this subsection (c) plus sufficient  
15 additional floor space to allow for a whelping box and the litter, based on the  
16 size or the age of the puppies. When the puppies discontinue nursing, the  
17 living space requirements of subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection shall  
18 apply for all dogs housed in the same living space.

19           (B) Each female cat with nursing kittens shall be provided the living  
20 space required under subdivision (3) of this subsection (c) plus sufficient  
21 additional floor space to allow for a queening box and the litter, based on the

1 size or the age of the kittens. When the kittens discontinue nursing, the living  
2 space requirements of subdivision (3) of this subsection shall apply for all cats  
3 housed in the same living space.

4 (5) Dogs or cats that are housed in the same primary living space or  
5 enclosure shall be compatible, as determined by observation, provided that:

6 (A) Females in heat (estrus) shall not be housed in the same primary  
7 living space or enclosure with males, except for breeding purposes.

8 (B) A dog or cat exhibiting a vicious or overly aggressive disposition  
9 shall be housed separately from other dogs or cats.

10 (6) All dogs or cats shall have access to adequate water and adequate  
11 food.

12 (d) Daily exercise; dogs or cats. A dog or cat confined in a living space  
13 shall be permitted outside the ~~eage, crate, or structure~~ living space for an  
14 opportunity of at least one hour of daily exercise, unless otherwise modified or  
15 restricted by a licensed veterinarian. Separate space for exercise is not  
16 required if an animal's living space is at least three times larger than the  
17 minimum requirements set forth in subdivision (c)(1) of this section.

18 (e) Shelter for dogs maintained outdoors in enclosures.

19 (1) A Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, a dog or  
20 dogs maintained ~~out of doors must~~ outdoors in an enclosure shall be provided  
21 with suitable housing that assures that the dog is protected from wind and

1 ~~draft, and from excessive sun, rain and other environmental hazards throughout~~  
2 ~~the year~~ one or more shelter structures. A shelter structure shall:

3 (A) Provide each dog housed in the structure sufficient space to, in a  
4 normal manner, turn about freely, stand, sit, and lie down.

5 (B) Be structurally sound and constructed of suitable, durable  
6 material.

7 (C) Have four sides, a roof, and a ground or floor surface that enables  
8 the dog to stay clean and dry.

9 (D) Have an entrance or portal large enough to allow each dog  
10 housed in the shelter unimpeded access to the structure, and the entrance or  
11 portal shall be constructed with a windbreak or rainbreak.

12 (E) Provide adequate protection from cold and heat, including  
13 protection from the direct rays of the sun and the direct effect of wind, rain, or  
14 snow. Shivering due to cold is evidence of inadequate shelter for any dog.

15 (F) Contain clean, dry bedding material if the ambient temperature is  
16 below 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

17 (2) A shelter structure is not required for a healthy livestock guardian  
18 dog that is maintained outdoors in an enclosure.

19 (3) If multiple dogs are maintained outdoors in an enclosure at one time:



1           (A) Each dog will be provided with an individual structure, or the  
2           structure or structures provided shall be cumulatively large enough to contain  
3           all of the dogs at one time.

4           (B) A shelter structure shall be accessible to each dog in the  
5           enclosure.

6           (4) The following categories of dogs shall not be maintained outdoors in  
7           an enclosure when the ambient temperature is below 50 degrees Fahrenheit:

8           (A) dogs that are not acclimated to the temperatures prevalent in the  
9           area or region where they are maintained;

10          (B) dogs that cannot tolerate the prevalent temperatures of the area  
11          without stress or discomfort; and

12          (C) sick or infirm dogs or dogs that cannot regulate their own body  
13          temperature.

14          (5) Metal barrels, cars, refrigerators, freezers, and similar objects shall  
15          not be used as a shelter structure for a dog maintained in an outdoor enclosure.

16          (6) In addition to the shelter structure, one or more separate outdoor  
17          areas of shade shall be provided, large enough to contain all the animals and  
18          protect them from the direct rays of the sun.

19          (f) Tethering of dog.

20          (1) A Except as provided under subdivision (2) of this subsection, a dog  
21          ~~chained to a shelter must~~ maintained outdoors on a tether shall be on a tether

1 ~~chain~~ at least four times the length of the dog as measured from the tip of its  
2 nose to the base of its tail, and shall allow the dog access to the shelter.

3 (2) A dog regularly used in training or participation in competitive or  
4 recreational sled dog activities and housed outdoors in close proximity with  
5 other dogs may, if necessary for the safety of the dog, be maintained on a  
6 tether three times the length of the dog, as measured from the tip of its nose to  
7 the base of its tail.

8 (3) A tether used for any dog shall be attached to both the dog and the  
9 anchor using swivels or similar devices that prevent the tether from becoming  
10 entangled or twisted. The tether shall be attached to a well-fitted collar or  
11 harness on the dog. The tether shall be of a size and weight that will not cause  
12 discomfort to a tethered dog. A choke collar shall not be used as part of a  
13 tethering method.

14 ~~(g) A cat, over the age of two months, shall be provided minimum living~~  
15 ~~space of nine square feet, provided the primary structure shall be constructed~~  
16 ~~and maintained so as to provide sufficient space to allow the cat to turn about~~  
17 ~~freely, stand, sit, and lie down. Each primary enclosure housing cats must be~~  
18 ~~at least 24 inches high. These specifications shall apply to each cat regardless~~  
19 ~~of whether the cat is housed individually or with other animals. [Repealed.]~~

20 ~~(h) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, animals may be~~  
21 ~~temporarily confined in a space sufficient for them to stand and turn about~~

1 ~~freely, provided that they are exercised in accordance with accepted~~  
2 ~~agricultural or veterinarian practices, and are provided sufficient food, water,~~  
3 ~~shelter, and proper ventilation. [Repealed.]~~

4 (i) Violations. Failure to comply with this section shall be a violation of  
5 subdivision 352(3) or (4) of this title.

6 (j) ~~Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, an animal may be~~  
7 ~~sheltered, chained, confined, or maintained out of doors if doing so is directed~~  
8 ~~by a licensed veterinarian or is in accordance with accepted agricultural or~~  
9 ~~veterinarian practices. [Repealed.]~~

10 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

11 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.