

2019 -- H 5246

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY - ANIMAL CARE

Introduced By: Representatives Lima, Solomon, Costantino, and Serpa

Date Introduced: January 31, 2019

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 4-19 of the General Laws entitled "Animal Care" is hereby
2 amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **4-19-7.1. Renting or leasing of dogs and cats prohibited.**

4 (a) The rental or leasing of a dog or cat, as a "forever pet" by any business or individual is
5 hereby prohibited. A "forever pet" is defined as any dog or cat purchased from a business or
6 person which purchase does not vest permanent ownership in the buyer, except as provided for in
7 subsection (e) of this section.

8 (b) No person or business may enter into any rental, leasing or loan agreement for the
9 sale of a dog or cat in which the animal is used as collateral for the agreement and/or loan or is
10 subject to repossession in any manner upon default of the agreement, except as provided for in
11 subsection (e) of this section.

12 (c) No financial institution, as defined in § 19-1-1, in Rhode Island shall offer a loan or
13 financing agreement for the sale or lease of a "forever pet" where the "forever pet" is used as
14 collateral for the loan default, except as provided for in subsection (e) of this section.

15 (d) Any business or person entering or offering a dog or cat for lease or rental in violation
16 of this section, and any financial institution found in violation of this section, shall be subject to
17 the penalties provided for in § 4-19-11.3. In addition, any pet shop, breeder, broker, dealer, hobby
18 breeder, firm or business that violates any provision of this section may have its business or retail
19 sale license suspended or revoked after hearing by the issuing authority. Any business found to

1 be in violation of this section may also have its retail license suspended or revoked at the
2 discretion of the court.

3 (e) The provisions of this section shall not apply to, and shall not prohibit the temporary
4 leasing or rental of the following animals, so long as the animals are used in accordance with
5 applicable federal, state, and local animal protections laws:

6 (1) A purebred dog which is rented for the express purpose of breeding pursuant to a
7 written lease recorded with a national purebred dog registry, and which lease is for a specific time
8 and has an established end-date;

9 (2) An animal used in spectator events, shows, exhibitions, motion pictures, and other
10 entertainment, including, but not limited to, animal exhibitions, racing events, field trials, polo,
11 rodeo, and the use of animals for any audiovisual media; or

12 (3) A "working animal", which means an animal trained or utilized to perform tasks,
13 including, but not limited to, guide dogs, security dogs, law enforcement dogs, and other
14 assistance animals.

15 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY - ANIMAL CARE

1 This act would prohibit the rental, lease, or financing of any sale of a dog or cat by any
2 person, or business with violations punishable by a fine of five hundred dollars (\$500) for the first
3 violation and up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each subsequent violation, and/or revocation
4 of its retail sales license. This act would not prohibit the temporary leasing or rental of purebred
5 dogs for breeding, animals used in shows and exhibitions, and working animals such as guide
6 dogs.

7 This act would take effect upon passage.

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