

## Cat Licenses May Be Required in Arkansas

**Legislation would set annual fees for owners of multiple animals.**

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A bill has been introduced in Arkansas that would require licensing for a household with 12 or more cats. A bill to require owners of multiple cats or dogs to get annual licenses has been introduced in the Arkansas Senate.

The bill, SB 864 by state Sen. Sue Madison, says that owners of 12 or more dogs, cats or any combination of dogs and cats must purchase an annual license from the Arkansas Agriculture Department. Under the bill, an owner means a person who meets the following criteria: Has a right of property in a dog or cat Keeps or harbors a dog or cat Has a dog or cat in his or her care Acts as a custodian of a dog or cat

The license fee for an owner of 12-24 cats and/or dogs would be set at \$250. For owners of more than 24 cats and/or dogs, the fee goes up to \$1,000.

SB 864 includes the following exemptions: A veterinarian or veterinary facility that provides services under the Arkansas Veterinary Medical Practice Act. A boarding, kennel or grooming business that acts as a temporary custodian in exchange for compensation. An agency of the federal government acting under its official duties. An agency of the federal, state, county, municipality or other governmental or political subdivision acting under official duties. An entity owned or managed by a state or local government agency that is responsible for animal control. Research facilities.

In addition, the bill states that an animal-control officer may investigate a case where there has been a complaint, "or upon his or her own motion." The investigation may include the inspection of dogs or cats on the premises and any place where the animals are kept.