

A NORTH CAROLINA
GUIDE TO

Animal Control Law

AIMEE N. WALL

2008



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Printed in the United States of America

12 11 10 09 08 1 2 3 4 5

ISBN 978-1-56011-577-9

∞ This publication is printed on permanent, acid-free paper in compliance with the North Carolina General Statutes.

♻️ Printed on recycled paper

Photographs courtesy of members of the faculty and staff of the School of Government.

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Preface

In 1978 the Institute of Government published *The North Carolina Dog Manual*. The author, Patrice Solberg, introduced the topic by explaining that “no problem plagues local government officials more than the issues surrounding dog control.” In later years, faculty members L. Poindexter Watts and Ben Loeb Jr. revised and expanded Ms. Solberg’s work to address, under various titles, the full range of animal control issues confronting North Carolina’s local governments.

The present publication, *A North Carolina Guide to Animal Control Law*, builds on this earlier work. It adds new material in the core areas of the law, including animal cruelty, dangerous dogs, and nuisance animals. It also introduces several entirely new areas of the law, including the regulation of animal shelters, the state’s spay/neuter program, and laws governing assistance animals. The guide is designed primarily for those who work in the animal control field at the local level and for the attorneys who advise them. Pet owners and animal welfare organizations as well members of city and county governing boards and health directors may also find it useful.

Included at the end of each chapter are texts of selected relevant laws. It is important to remember that the laws in this field change often. For example, as this guide was being finalized, controversial state regulations governing euthanasia procedures in animal shelters were under review, and legislation that would significantly change the state’s laws governing dangerous dogs was pending in the General Assembly. Officials charged with enforcing animal control laws therefore need to stay up-to-date with changes in those laws. To help them do so, supplements to this guide will be published periodically and timely updates will be available online at www.ncanimalcontrol.unc.edu.

I would like to extend sincere thanks to my most recent predecessor in this field, Ben Loeb. Before his retirement, Professor Loeb spent hours sharing stories, explaining the law, and providing much-needed guidance. I would also like to thank Harvey Barbee, who worked tirelessly as a research assistant to help fill in the gaps of my knowledge. Thanks are also due to Alex Hess and Marsha Lobacz of the Joseph P. Knapp Library at the School of Government. Alex and Marsha uncovered legislative history, tracked statutory developments, and identified other important historical trends in this field. I would also like to thank

Roberta Clark, Dan Soileau, Kevin Justice, and the rest of the Publications team for editing, designing, and organizing this new publication. Finally, I am most grateful to my husband, Steve Wall, who not only provided moral support but proofread every chapter of the manuscript.

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Chapel Hill
June 2008