

Second Regular Session  
Sixty-eighth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

**REENGROSSED**

*This Version Includes All Amendments  
Adopted in the House of Introduction*

LLS NO. 12-0211.01 Kate Meyer x4348

**HOUSE BILL 12-1125**

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**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Ramirez**, Sonnenberg,

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Steadman**,

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**House Committees**

Agriculture, Livestock, & Natural Resources  
Appropriations

**Senate Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101 **CONCERNING PROCEDURES RELATED TO THE COSTS OF IMPOUNDED**  
102 **ANIMALS.**

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**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries>.)*

The bill modifies procedural requirements related to the payment of impoundment, care, and provision costs for an animal that has been impounded because of alleged neglect or abuse or other criminal acts involving the animal. Currently, the owner or custodian (owner) of the impounded animal may request a hearing to contest the reasonableness of

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.*  
*Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

HOUSE  
3rd Reading Unamended  
March 1, 2012

HOUSE  
Amended 2nd Reading  
February 29, 2012

those costs. The bill specifies that the owner must make that request within 10 days after the date of impoundment. Because costs associated with caring for the animal continue to accrue during the pendency of an animal's impoundment, the bill requires the hearing to be conducted in a criminal court of competent jurisdiction no later than 10 days after the request.

The bill also:

- ! For an owner requesting a hearing, delays the payment of costs until the date of the hearing;
- ! Expands the scope of the hearing to include a judicial determination as to whether probable cause existed to justify the impoundment;
- ! Describes circumstances under which a payment for impoundment, care, and provision costs must be refunded to an owner; and
- ! Clarifies that the criminal law procedures governing impoundments do not apply to matters solely brought in an administrative context.

In order to increase clarity, **section 1** of the bill also reorganizes the existing statute governing impounded animals. **Sections 2, 3, and 4** make corresponding nonsubstantive amendments to conform current law to that reorganization.

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1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 18-9-202.5  
3 as follows:

4 **18-9-202.5. Impounded animals - costs of impoundment,**  
5 **provision, and care - disposition - procedures - application -**

6 **definition.** (1) (a) **(I)** The owner or custodian of an animal that has been  
7 impounded by an impound agency because of alleged neglect or abuse or  
8 because of investigation of charges of cruelty to animals pursuant to  
9 section 18-9-202; animal fighting pursuant to section 18-9-204;  
10 mistreatment, neglect, or abandonment under article 42 of title 35, C.R.S.;  
11 or unlawful ownership of a dangerous dog as described in section  
12 18-9-204.5, may prevent disposition of the animal by an impound agency  
13 by ~~posting a bond~~ FILING A PAYMENT FOR IMPOUNDMENT, CARE, AND

1 PROVISION COSTS with the court in an amount DETERMINED BY THE  
2 IMPOUND AGENCY TO BE sufficient to provide for the animal's care and  
3 provision at the impound agency for at least thirty days, including the day  
4 on which the animal was taken into custody.

5 (II) AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE, BUT NO LATER THAN TWENTY-FOUR  
6 HOURS AFTER AN IMPOUNDMENT DESCRIBED UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF  
7 THIS PARAGRAPH (a), AN IMPOUND AGENCY SHALL ALLOW A LICENSED  
8 VETERINARIAN OF THE OWNER'S OR CUSTODIAN'S CHOOSING AND AT HIS OR  
9 HER EXPENSE TO EXAMINE THE ANIMAL, WHICH EXAMINATION MAY  
10 INCLUDE TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ANIMAL AND TAKING BIOLOGICAL  
11 SAMPLES FOR THE PURPOSE OF DIAGNOSTIC TESTING. FOLLOWING SUCH  
12 EXAMINATION, THE IMPOUND AGENCY SHALL ALLOW, AT REASONABLE  
13 HOURS AND UPON THE OWNER'S OR CUSTODIAN'S REQUEST AND EXPENSE,  
14 THE VETERINARIAN TO MAKE SUBSEQUENT VISITS AS NECESSARY IN ORDER  
15 TO PROVIDE MEDICAL CARE OR CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP EXAMINATIONS.  
16 NOTHING IN THIS SUBPARAGRAPH (II) PREVENTS AN IMPOUND AGENCY  
17 FROM PROVIDING REASONABLE MEDICAL CARE TO ANY IMPOUNDED  
18 ANIMAL AS OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED BY THIS SECTION.

19 (b) The owner or custodian of any impounded animal may request  
20 a hearing in a court of competent jurisdiction within ten days after  
21 impoundment to determine whether the costs associated with the bond are  
22 fair and reasonable for the care of and provision for the impounded  
23 animal. Such bond shall be filed with the court MUST FILE THE PAYMENT:

24 (I) Within ten days after the animal is impounded; OR

25 (II) IF THE OWNER OR CUSTODIAN REQUESTS A HEARING PURSUANT  
26 TO SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF PARAGRAPH (c) OF THIS SUBSECTION (1), IN  
27 ACCORDANCE WITH SUBPARAGRAPH (IV) OF PARAGRAPH (c) OF THIS

1 SUBSECTION (1).

2 (c) (I) WITHIN TEN DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF IMPOUNDMENT, THE  
3 OWNER OR CUSTODIAN MAY REQUEST A HEARING IN A CRIMINAL COURT OF  
4 COMPETENT JURISDICTION. THE OWNER OR CUSTODIAN MUST PROVIDE  
5 NOTICE TO THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY OF HIS OR HER REQUEST FOR A  
6 HEARING. IF THE OWNER OR CUSTODIAN REQUESTS A HEARING, THE COURT  
7 SHALL HOLD THE HEARING WITHIN TEN DAYS AFTER THE REQUEST IS MADE.

8 (II) AT THE HEARING, THE COURT SHALL DETERMINE, AS  
9 APPROPRIATE:

10 (A) WHETHER COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPOUNDMENT, CARE,  
11 AND PROVISION, AS DETERMINED BY THE IMPOUND AGENCY, ARE FAIR AND  
12 REASONABLE;

13 (B) WHETHER THERE WAS SUFFICIENT PROBABLE CAUSE FOR THE  
14 IMPOUNDMENT; AND

15 (C) IF THE COURT FINDS PROBABLE CAUSE FOR IMPOUNDMENT  
16 EXISTED AND THE OWNER OR CUSTODIAN ELECTS NOT TO PAY THE  
17 REASONABLE IMPOUNDMENT, CARE, OR PROVISION COSTS TO PREVENT  
18 DISPOSITION, RELEASE OF THE ANIMAL TO THE IMPOUND AGENCY FOR  
19 DISPOSITION.

20 (III) A WARRANT ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH C.R.C.P. 41 (b)  
21 AUTHORIZING SEIZURE OF THE IMPOUNDED ANIMAL CONSTITUTES PRIMA  
22 FACIE EVIDENCE OF SUFFICIENT CAUSE FOR IMPOUNDMENT.

23 (IV) IF PROBABLE CAUSE IS FOUND AT A HEARING CONDUCTED  
24 UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH (c), THE OWNER OR CUSTODIAN SHALL FILE  
25 PAYMENT FOR COSTS AT THE HEARING.

26 (d) At the end of the time for which expenses are covered by ~~the~~  
27 ~~bond~~ AN INITIAL OR ANY SUBSEQUENT IMPOUNDMENT, CARE, AND

1 PROVISION PAYMENT:

2 (I) If the owner or custodian desires to prevent disposition of the  
3 animal, the owner or custodian ~~shall post~~ MUST FILE a new ~~bond~~ PAYMENT  
4 with the court within ten days ~~after~~ PRIOR TO the ~~prior bond's~~ PREVIOUS  
5 PAYMENT'S expiration. ~~However, if, in the opinion of a licensed~~  
6 ~~veterinarian, the animal is experiencing extreme pain or suffering or is~~  
7 ~~severely injured past recovery, severely disabled past recovery, or~~  
8 ~~severely diseased past recovery, the animal may be euthanized without a~~  
9 ~~court order.~~

10 (II) ~~At the end of the time for which expenses are covered by the~~  
11 ~~bond~~ IF THE OWNER OR CUSTODIAN HAS NOT TIMELY FILED AN  
12 ADDITIONAL PAYMENT FOR IMPOUNDMENT, CARE, AND PROVISION COSTS,  
13 the impound agency may determine disposition of the animal unless there  
14 is a court order prohibiting ~~such~~ disposition. UNLESS SUBSECTION (4) OF  
15 THIS SECTION APPLIES, the owner or custodian ~~shall be~~ IS liable for ~~the~~  
16 ~~cost of~~ ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS FOR the care of, provision for, or disposal  
17 of the animal.

18 (2) (a) FAILURE TO PAY THE IMPOUNDMENT, CARE, AND PROVISION  
19 COSTS PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION RESULTS IN THE  
20 FORFEITURE OF THE RIGHT TO CONTEST THOSE COSTS AND ANY OWNERSHIP  
21 RIGHTS TO THE ANIMAL IN QUESTION.

22 (b) A dog that is not claimed by its owner within five days after  
23 being eligible for release from impoundment for investigation of a charge  
24 of unlawful ownership of a dangerous dog as described in section  
25 18-9-204.5 ~~shall be~~ IS deemed abandoned and may be disposed of as the  
26 impound agency deems proper.

27 (c) IF, IN THE OPINION OF A LICENSED VETERINARIAN, AN

1 IMPOUNDED ANIMAL IS EXPERIENCING EXTREME PAIN OR SUFFERING OR IS  
2 SEVERELY INJURED PAST RECOVERY, SEVERELY DISABLED PAST  
3 RECOVERY, OR SEVERELY DISEASED PAST RECOVERY, THE ANIMAL MAY BE  
4 EUTHANIZED WITHOUT A COURT ORDER.

5 (3) THE COURT SHALL ORDER AN IMPOUND AGENCY TO REFUND TO  
6 THE OWNER OR CUSTODIAN ALL IMPOUNDMENT, CARE, AND PROVISION  
7 PAYMENTS MADE FOR THE ANIMAL IF, AFTER TRIAL, A JUDGE OR JURY  
8 ENTERS OR RETURNS IN FAVOR OF THE OWNER OR CUSTODIAN A VERDICT  
9 OF NOT GUILTY FOR ALL CHARGES RELATED TO THE ORIGINAL  
10 IMPOUNDMENT OF THE ANIMAL.

11 ~~(c)~~ ~~(f)~~ (4) (a) With respect to the sale of an animal, the proceeds  
12 ~~shall~~ ARE first ~~be~~ applied to the costs of the sale and then to the expenses  
13 for the care of and provision for the animal DURING IMPOUNDMENT AND  
14 THE PENDENCY OF THE SALE, including expenses incurred by the impound  
15 agency THAT HAVE NOT BEEN PAID BY THE OWNER OR CUSTODIAN. If the  
16 owner of the animal is convicted of cruelty to animals under section  
17 18-9-202, animal fighting under section 18-9-204, or unlawful ownership  
18 of a dangerous dog under section 18-9-204.5 or is found by court order  
19 to have mistreated, neglected, or abandoned the animal under article 42  
20 of title 35, C.R.S., the remaining proceeds, if any, ~~shall be~~ ARE paid to the  
21 impound agency. If the owner of the animal is not convicted of such  
22 charges or is not found by court order to have ~~so~~ mistreated, neglected, or  
23 abandoned the animal, the IMPOUND AGENCY SHALL PAY OVER THE  
24 remaining proceeds, if any, ~~shall be paid over~~ to the owner of the animal.

25 ~~(H)~~ (b) If the impound agency is the department of agriculture,  
26 ~~moneys credited to the department of agriculture~~ SHALL TRANSMIT THE  
27 MONEYS CREDITED for expenses ~~shall be transmitted~~ to the state treasurer,

1 ~~and credited~~ WHO SHALL CREDIT THEM to the animal protection fund  
2 created in section 35-42-113, C.R.S. ~~If the department of agriculture is~~  
3 ~~not the impound agency, moneys for expenses shall be paid to such other~~  
4 ~~impound agency as the court orders.~~

5 (HH) (c) If the owner of the animal cannot be found, THE COURT  
6 SHALL PAY any remaining proceeds after all other expenses have been  
7 paid ~~shall be paid~~ TO THE IMPOUND AGENCY into the animal protection  
8 fund or, if the impound agency is not the department of agriculture, to  
9 such other impound agency as the court orders. ~~Any claim for such AN~~  
10 ~~OWNER CLAIMING THE remaining proceeds by the owner of the animal~~  
11 ~~shall be made~~ MUST MAKE THE CLAIM within one year after the payment  
12 ~~thereof~~ OF THE PROCEEDS to the impound agency. ~~and, unless~~ A CLAIM  
13 NOT so presented to the court ~~shall be~~ IS forever barred unless the court,  
14 by proper order made in any case, otherwise decrees. AN IMPOUND  
15 AGENCY SHALL PAY TO THE CLAIMANT any refund ordered by court  
16 decree. ~~shall be paid to the claimant by the impound agency.~~

17 (IV) (d) At least six days prior to sale of the animal, the impound  
18 agency shall provide written notice to the owner, at the owner's  
19 last-known address, of the time and place of the sale of the animal.

20 (V) (e) If the owner of the animal is unknown, the impound  
21 agency shall ~~cause to be published~~ PUBLISH for one week, in a newspaper  
22 of general circulation in the jurisdiction ~~wherein such~~ IN WHICH THE  
23 animal ~~is~~ WAS found, notice of sale of the animal, and shall further ~~cause~~  
24 POST notice of the sale of the animal ~~to be posted~~ at a place provided for  
25 public notices in the jurisdiction ~~wherein such~~ IN WHICH THE sale will take  
26 place, at least five days prior to the sale.

27 (VI) (f) ~~The provisions of This paragraph (c) shall~~ SUBSECTION (4)

1 DOES not apply to the disposition of an animal for a fee by:

2 ~~(A)~~ (I) Adoption of an animal;

3 ~~(B)~~ (II) Release of an animal to a rescue group licensed pursuant  
4 to article 80 of title 35, C.R.S.;

5 ~~(C)~~ (III) Release of an animal to another pet animal facility  
6 licensed pursuant to article 80 of title 35, C.R.S.; or

7 ~~(D)~~ (IV) Release of an animal to a rehabilitator licensed by the  
8 PARKS AND WILDLIFE division ~~of wildlife~~ or the United States fish and  
9 wildlife service.

10 ~~(2)~~ (5) For purposes of this section, "impound agency" means ~~an~~  
11 ~~agency, including, but not limited to,~~ an animal shelter as defined in  
12 section 35-80-102 (1), C.R.S., ~~and~~ the department of agriculture, created  
13 in section 24-1-123, C.R.S., OR ANY OTHER AGENCY that impounds an  
14 animal pursuant to ~~the provisions of~~ PARAGRAPH (a) OF subsection (1) of  
15 this section or section 18-9-202 (1.8).

16 (6) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO ANIMALS IMPOUNDED  
17 SOLELY UNDER ARTICLE 42 OF TITLE 35, C.R.S.

18 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 18-9-201, **amend**  
19 (2.5) as follows:

20 **18-9-201. Definitions.** As used in this section and sections  
21 18-9-201.5, 18-9-202, 18-9-202.5, and 18-9-204.5, unless the context  
22 otherwise requires:

23 (2.5) "Disposal" or "disposition" means adoption of an animal;  
24 return of an animal to the owner; sale of an animal under section  
25 18-9-202.5 ~~(+)~~ ~~(c)~~ (4); release of an animal to a rescue group licensed  
26 pursuant to article 80 of title 35, C.R.S.; release of an animal to another  
27 pet animal facility licensed pursuant to article 80 of title 35, C.R.S.; or

1 RELEASE OF AN ANIMAL to a rehabilitator licensed by the ~~division of~~  
2 PARKS AND wildlife DIVISION or the United States fish and wildlife  
3 service; or euthanasia.

4 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 18-9-204.5, **amend**  
5 (4) as follows:

6 **18-9-204.5. Unlawful ownership of dangerous dog - legislative**  
7 **declaration - definitions.** (4) Upon taking an owner into custody for an  
8 alleged violation of this section or the issuing of a summons and  
9 complaint to the owner, pursuant to the Colorado rules of criminal  
10 procedure and part 1 of article 4 of title 16, C.R.S., the owner's dangerous  
11 dog may be taken into custody and placed in a public animal shelter, at  
12 the owner's expense, pending final disposition of the charge against the  
13 owner. In addition, in the event the court, pursuant to the Colorado rules  
14 of criminal procedure and part 1 of article 4 of title 16, C.R.S., sets bail  
15 for an owner's release from custody pending final disposition, the court  
16 may require, as a condition of bond, that the owner's dangerous dog be  
17 placed by an impound agency, as defined in section 18-9-202.5 ~~(2)~~ (5), at  
18 the owner's expense in a location selected by the impound agency  
19 including a public animal shelter, licensed boarding facility, or  
20 veterinarian's clinic, pending final disposition of the alleged violation of  
21 this section. The owner ~~shall be~~ IS liable for the total cost of board and  
22 care for a dog placed pursuant to this subsection (4).

23 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 35-42-113, **amend**  
24 (1) as follows:

25 **35-42-113. Animal protection fund - creation.** (1) There is  
26 hereby created an animal protection fund. Any donations collected for  
27 animal protection, any net proceeds from the sale of an animal pursuant

1 to section 18-9-202.5 ~~(1)(c)~~ (4), C.R.S., and any moneys from restitution  
2 ordered for the expenses of the department of agriculture in selling and  
3 providing for the care of and provision for ~~animals~~ AN ANIMAL disposed  
4 of under the animal cruelty laws in accordance with part 2 of article 9 of  
5 title 18, C.R.S., or this article shall be transmitted to the state treasurer,  
6 who shall credit the ~~same~~ MONEYS to the animal protection fund. The  
7 general assembly shall make annual appropriations from ~~such~~ THAT fund  
8 to the department of agriculture to aid in carrying out the purposes of this  
9 article; EXCEPT THAT NO such appropriations ~~shall not~~ MAY be made for  
10 personal services.

11 **SECTION 5. Act subject to petition - effective date -**  
12 **applicability.** (1) This act takes effect September 1, 2012; except that,  
13 if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of  
14 the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act  
15 within the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general  
16 assembly, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless  
17 approved by the people at the general election to be held in November  
18 2012 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official  
19 declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

20 (2) The provisions of this act apply to animals impounded on or  
21 after the applicable effective date of this act.