

By the Committee on Agriculture; and Senators Taddeo, Book, Rouson, Polsky, Cruz, Jones, Farmer, and Stewart

575-02381-21

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1 A bill to be entitled  
2 An act relating to tethering of domestic dogs and  
3 cats; creating s. 828.132, F.S.; defining the term  
4 "tether"; providing requirements for tethering  
5 domestic dogs and cats; providing applicability;  
6 providing penalties; authorizing enforcement of the  
7 act in accordance with specified provisions; providing  
8 construction; providing an effective date.

9  
10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

11  
12 Section 1. Section 828.132, Florida Statutes, is created to  
13 read:

14 828.132 Tethering of domestic dogs and cats.—

15 (1) As used in this section, the term "tether" means to tie  
16 a domestic dog or domestic cat to a stationary or inanimate  
17 object with a rope, chain, or other means to restrict, confine,  
18 or restrain its movement.

19 (2) (a) A person may not tether a domestic dog or domestic  
20 cat unless the person is physically present with and attending  
21 to the dog or cat and the dog or cat remains visible to the  
22 person at all times while tethered.

23 (b) A person may not tether a domestic dog or domestic cat  
24 outdoors during severe weather, including, but not limited to,  
25 extreme heat or cold, thunderstorms, lightning, tornadoes,  
26 tropical storms, or hurricanes.

27 (3) This act does not apply to hunting dogs.

28 (4) Paragraph (2) (a) does not apply to tethering a domestic  
29 dog or domestic cat in a manner that does not jeopardize its

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30 health, safety, or well-being when:

31 (a) Attending, or participating in, a legal, organized  
32 public event in which the dog or cat and the person are  
33 permitted attendees or participants;

34 (b) Actively engaging in conduct that is directly related  
35 to the business of shepherding or herding cattle or livestock or  
36 related to the business of cultivating agricultural products and  
37 tethering is reasonably necessary for its safety;

38 (c) Being treated by a veterinarian or serviced by a  
39 groomer;

40 (d) Being trained for or actively serving in a law  
41 enforcement capacity;

42 (e) Being cared for as part of a rescue operation during a  
43 natural or manmade disaster;

44 (f) Temporarily tethered by any of the following entities  
45 for a period of time which is no longer than necessary to  
46 accomplish a task such as bathing, medical care, or any other  
47 short-term valid purpose for the safety of the animal, other  
48 animals, staff, or the public:

49 1. A public or private animal shelter.

50 2. A humane organization.

51 3. An animal control agency operated by a humane  
52 organization; by a county, municipality, or other incorporated  
53 political subdivision; or by a licensed commercial boarding  
54 facility;

55 (g) Temporarily tethered while being kept in a bona fide  
56 humane shelter or at a licensed commercial boarding facility; or

57 (h) Tethered in accordance with the regulations of a  
58 camping or recreational area.

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59       (5) A person who tethers a domestic dog or domestic cat in  
60 violation of this section commits a noncriminal violation as  
61 defined in s. 775.08(3) and is subject to the following  
62 penalties:

63       (a) For a first offense, a written warning and notice to  
64 comply.

65       (b) For a second offense, a fine of \$250.

66       (c) For a third and every subsequent offense, a fine of  
67 \$500.

68       (6) This section may be enforced pursuant to s. 828.073.

69       (7) This section may not be construed to limit the  
70 authority of any local governmental entity to adopt or enforce  
71 an ordinance that is more restrictive or that imposes greater  
72 penalties than this section.

73       Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.