Republic of Latvia

Cabinet

Regulation No. 412

Adopted 25 June 2024

**Regulations Regarding Animal Shelters and Animal Boarding Facilities**

*Issued pursuant to*

*Section 39.1, Paragraph three of the Animal Protection Law*

**1. General Provisions**

1. This Regulation prescribes:

1.1. the procedures for the registration and approval, for the suspension of the operation and also for the cancellation of registration and approval of an animal shelter (hereinafter – the shelter);

1.2. the procedures for the registration, for the suspension of the operation and also for the cancellation of registration of an animal boarding facility (hereinafter – the boarding facility);

1.3. the requirements for the personnel and also for premises, equipment, and inventory;

1.4. the requirements for the acceptance, marking, and registration of animals;

1.5. the welfare requirements in relation to keeping animals, including their feeding, watering, and physical activity;

1.6. the requirements and procedures for the alienation of animals;

1.7. the procedures for the preparation of reports on animal circulation;

1.8. the requirements for veterinary medical care and the duties of a practising veterinarian;

1.9. the requirements in relation to the collection and storage of by-products;

1.10. the disinfection procedures.

2. In addition to the requirements laid down in this Regulation, the shelter and the boarding facility shall comply with the welfare requirements laid down for the relevant animal species in the laws and regulations regarding the health, welfare, and protection of animals, and shall fulfil the obligations specified for the animal owner and the animal keeper. The shelter shall ensure the storage and disposal of deceased animals and also the collection and storage of by-products in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding the requirements for the circulation of animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption.

3. In order to register or approve the shelter or boarding facility, and also make changes in the register of objects under supervision of the Service and communicate with the shelter and the boarding facility, the Food and Veterinary Service (hereinafter – the Service) shall process the data of a natural person, such as the given name, surname, personal identity number, address of the declared, registered, or indicated place of residence, telephone number, official electronic address, and electronic mail address. The data of natural and legal persons (the owner of the shelter, the owner of the boarding facility, the owner of the immovable property in which the shelter or boarding facility is registered, the owner and keeper of the animal) shall be kept for five years after the shelter or boarding facility has been removed from the register of objects under supervision of the Service.

**2. Registration and Approval of the Shelter and the Boarding Facility, Suspension and Cancellation of the Operation Thereof**

4. Prior to commencing the operation of the shelter or boarding facility, a person shall submit a submission to the Service for the registration of the shelter or boarding facility, providing the following information:

4.1. for a natural person – the given name, surname, personal identity number, address of the declared, registered, or indicated place of residence, telephone number;

4.2. for a legal person – the name, registration code, legal address, telephone number;

4.3. the official electronic address if the account of the official electronic address has been activated, or electronic mail address;

4.4. the given name, surname, telephone number, and electronic mail address or official electronic address of the submitter of the submission and the contact person if the account of the official electronic address has been activated;

4.5. the maximum number of animals and animal species that can be accommodated in the shelter or boarding facility in conformity with the required minimum area for keeping animals as laid down in the laws and regulations regarding animal welfare;

4.6. the address and cadastre number of the immovable property intended for the establishment of the shelter or boarding facility and the cadastral designation of the object for the land parcel, structure, or building unit.

5. The following shall be appended to the submission referred to in Paragraph 4 of this Regulation:

5.1. a written authorisation of the owner of the premises or territory intended for the operation of the shelter or boarding facility if the shelter or boarding facility is not the property of the owner, and a copy of the document certifying the rights of the person to establish a shelter or boarding facility on the respective immovable property if the ownership rights or rights of use have not been corroborated in the Land Register in the name of that person;

5.2. the approval of the local government for the operation of the shelter or boarding facility at the specified address;

5.3. the plan of the territory and premises of the shelter or boarding facility;

5.4. a contract concluded with a practising veterinarian regarding veterinary medical care for animals present in the shelter or boarding facility.

6. The Service shall verify in the State Immovable Property Cadastre Information System whether the registered type of use of the relevant structure or building unit corresponds to the operation of the shelter or boarding facility.

7. If the intended type of use referred to in Paragraph 6 of this Regulation corresponds to the intended operation, the Service shall inspect the shelter or boarding facility within 10 working days after receiving the submission referred to in Paragraph 4 of this Regulation.

8. If the shelter or boarding facility meets the requirements of this Regulation, the Service shall record it and enter the data specified in Sub-paragraphs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.6 of this Regulation in the register of objects under supervision of the Service and shall inform the local government thereof.

9. The Service shall approve the shelter in accordance with the procedures laid down in Section 39.1, Paragraph four of the Animal Protection Law.

10. If the shelter or boarding facility ceases its operation or the information referred to in Sub-paragraphs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.6 of this Regulation changes, the Service shall be notified thereof within seven working days after the occurrence of that event. The Service shall make changes in the register of objects under supervision of the Service within three working days after receiving the abovementioned information.

11. The Service may suspend the operation of the shelter or boarding facility in accordance with the procedures laid down in Chapter XII of the Veterinary Medicine Law.

12. The Service may cancel the registration or approval of the shelter or the registration of the boarding facility and remove it from the register of objects under supervision of the Service if:

12.1. a notification of the discontinuation of the operation of the shelter or boarding facility has been received;

12.2. the decision to suspend the operation of the shelter or boarding facility has been taken and the identified non-conformities have not been eliminated within the time limit specified by the Service or if the operation has been suspended repeatedly;

12.3. it has been established that the information provided by the shelter or boarding facility to the Service is incomplete or false.

**3. Welfare Requirements for Keeping Animals, Requirements for the Personnel, Premises, Equipment, and Inventory**

**3.1. General Requirements**

13. The shelter or boarding facility shall ensure:

13.1. keeping conditions suitable for the physiological and zoo-psychological needs of animals of the relevant species and their protection against the spread of infectious animal diseases;

13.2. veterinary medical care, precluding animal suffering;

13.3. training provided by a veterinarian to animal caretakers in the areas of hygiene, animal protection and welfare. The animal caretaker shall confirm by his or her signature that he or she has become acquainted with the welfare requirements of animals;

13.4. at least one animal caretaker for every 20 dogs and at least one animal caretaker for every 30 cats;

13.5. feeding of animals with unspoiled food appropriate for their species, weight, and physiological needs, and also providing them with fresh drinking water;

13.6. formulation of and compliance with the rules of internal work procedures.

14. The following shall be arranged in the shelter and boarding facility:

14.1. premises or other spaces for keeping animals, such as enclosures or pens;

14.2. a room or individual space in a room for the storage and preparation of animal feed;

14.3. a room or a detached space in a room for the storage of litter (if litter is used for animals), disinfectants, and inventory;

14.4. sanitary facilities.

15. In the premises for keeping animals as referred to in Sub-paragraph 14.1 of this Regulation:

15.1. walls, partitions, and surfaces shall be smooth and easy to clean, wash, and disinfect;

15.2. floors and surface coverings shall be even, non-slip, resistant to mechanical damage, and easy to clean, wash, and disinfect;

15.3. doors and windows shall be equipped so as to prevent the animals from escaping the room on their own.

16. The equipment to be used for the care and maintenance of animals shall be easy to clean and disinfect.

17. The room or space for keeping an animal as referred to in Sub-paragraph 14.1 of this Regulation shall be:

17.1. equipped with a sleeping area;

17.2. numbered;

17.3. resistant to mechanical and chemical damages and made of a non-corrosive material that is harmless to animal health;

17.4. equipped with a plaque indicating the information specified in Sub-paragraphs 52.3, 52.4, and 52.5 of this Regulation on the animal, and also with a warning sign of a dangerous dog if the dog has been recognised as dangerous in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding the procedures for recognising a dog as dangerous and the requirements for keeping a dangerous dog.

18. The requirements referred to in Sub-paragraph 17.4 of this Regulation shall not apply to boarding facilities.

19. A comfortable, clean, and dry sleeping area shall be arranged for the animal. The mats and other materials used shall be clean, dry, and treated with an antiparasitic agent.

20. The containers used for watering and feeding the animals shall be washed daily. If dry feed is not used for feeding the animals, the containers used for feeding the animals shall be washed after each meal.

21. The premises or a space in the room intended for storing and preparing animal feed shall be secured against animal access and protected against humidity. The abovementioned premises shall be also maintained at a temperature suitable for feed storage.

22. The room or space for keeping animals as referred to in Sub-paragraph 14.1 of this Regulation shall be cleaned at least once a day, maintaining cleanliness throughout the day.

23. The room for keeping animals or the space to be vacated to accommodate another animal and also the relevant inventory before being used for another animal shall be cleaned, washed, and disinfected.

24. In addition to the premises referred to in Paragraph 14 of this Regulation, the following premises shall be arranged in the shelter:

24.1. a quarantine room with a separate entrance bearing a warning notice “Quarantine”;

24.2. a room intended for providing veterinary medical care to animals.

25. The quarantine room shall be used for keeping sick animals or animals suspected of being sick.

26. The quarantine room shall be cleaned only with equipment intended for that area.

27. Only the service personnel may be present in the quarantine room.

28. The duration of quarantine and the movement restrictions shall be determined by a practising veterinarian.

29. The animal caretaker shall check the animals each day and inform the owner of the shelter or boarding facility and the practising veterinarian of any changes in the behaviour and health of the animal.

30. The following animals shall be accommodated separately in the shelter:

30.1. animals of different species and psychologically incompatible animals;

30.2. aggressive animals;

30.3. female and male animals if they are not sterilised;

30.4. young animals and adult animals, unless the young are being nursed by their mother;

30.5. nursing mothers with their young;

30.6. animals that are to be kept separately as indicated by a practising veterinarian;

30.7. each animal accepted in the shelter until it has been clinically examined by a practising veterinarian, except for the animals referred to in Sub-paragraph 30.5 of this Regulation and animals that were kept together before being accepted in the shelter.

**3.2. Special Requirements for Keeping Animals of Wild Species in the Shelter**

31. After accepting a wild game animal, the shelter shall inform the State Forest Service but, in the case of accepting a wild non-game animal, it shall inform the Nature Conservation Agency. The shelter shall consult with the State Forest Service or the Nature Conservation Agency regarding the keeping of animals of wild species in the shelter.

32. Only wild animals capable of adapting to natural conditions or captivity after a rehabilitation period or overwintering shall be kept in the shelter in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding nature protection and hunting.

33. A practising veterinarian shall provide an opinion on whether the health condition of the wild animal is suitable for its release into the wild, while a wild predatory animal shall be vaccinated against rabies if a vaccine is available for the relevant order of wild predatory animals. Once the vaccinated animal has developed immunity in conformity with the instructions on the use of medicinal products, it shall be released into the wild.

**3.3. Special Requirements for Keeping Dogs and Cats in the Shelter and the Boarding Facility**

34. A dog may be kept in a room or space where sufficient distance between animals is ensured and a partition is installed or where the animals are otherwise separated to prevent a contact between them.

35. The minimum area shall be ensured in the room or space for keeping a dog, based on the size and weight of the dog (see the Annex).

36. The height of the room or space for keeping a dog shall be at least twice the length of the dog, measured from the chest to the tail set.

37. If a dog is kept in an enclosure or pen, an area suitable to its physiological needs and physical activity shall be provided.

38. A dog, cat, or ferret may be kept in an individual crate only for transportation and quarantine purposes.

39. A cat may be kept only indoors, ensuring:

39.1. an area of at least 4.5 square metres and an additional area of at least 2 square metres for each additional cat in the room;

39.2. a sleeping area at a height of no less than 60 to 90 centimetres above the ground;

39.3. ceiling with a height of at least 1.8 metres.

40. A cat shall be provided with suitable items for sharpening of claws.

41. The litter box of the cat shall be cleaned and washed at least once a day, unless special cat litter is used.

**4. Veterinary Medical Care Requirements, Obligations of a Practising Veterinarian, Acceptance, Marking, and Alienation of Animals in the Shelter**

42. Acceptance of an animal in the shelter shall be reported to a practising veterinarian, and a clinical examination of the animal shall be ensured within 72 hours after its acceptance in the shelter.

43. A practising veterinarian shall:

43.1. perform the clinical examination of the animal after its acceptance in the shelter and immediately provide assistance to any animal showing visible signs of a disease or health disorders;

43.2. provide veterinary medical care to a sick animal and, if necessary, perform euthanasia of the animal in the cases specified in laws and regulations;

43.3. vaccinate dogs, cats, ferrets, and wild predatory animals against rabies in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding veterinary medicine if a vaccine is available for the wild predatory animals of the relevant order;

43.4. treat animals against external and internal parasites;

43.5. prescribe an individual diet for the animal, if necessary.

44. The shelter shall, immediately but not later than within one hour after accepting the animal in the shelter, verify the identification and registration data of the pet animal in the database of the register of pet animals (hereinafter – the database) and shall proceed as follows:

44.1. if the owner or keeper of the animal can be identified based on the identification and registration data of the pet animal, the owner of the animal shall be immediately notified of the time and place of receiving the pet animal;

44.2. if the owner or keeper of the animal can be identified based on the identification and registration data but cannot be contacted, the local government in the administrative territory of which the pet animal is registered and which operates in accordance with the procedures laid down in the binding regulations shall be informed of that pet animal immediately but not later than within 24 hours;

44.3. if the owner does not arrive to retrieve the pet animal within 24 hours after the notification, a practising veterinarian shall register the location of the pet animal in the database, without changing its holding location, and indicate the address of the shelter, and also the date and time the animal was accepted in the shelter;

44.4. if the owner or keeper of the animal cannot be identified based on the identification and registration data of the pet animal, the shelter shall ensure the search for the owner or keeper of the pet animal accepted in the shelter;

44.5. if a dog, cat, or ferret has not been marked with a microchip and registered in the database, a practising veterinarian shall, within 72 hours, considering the age and health condition of the animal, mark it with a microchip, vaccinate it against rabies, register it in the database, indicating the shelter as the keeper of the animal, and issue a pet animal passport;

44.6. if the Provision State Agency (hereinafter – the Agency) has placed a dog, cat, or ferret for safekeeping in the shelter and that animal has not been marked with a microchip and registered in the database, a practising veterinarian shall, within 72 hours, considering the age and health condition of the animal, mark it with a microchip, vaccinate it against rabies, and register it in the database, indicating the shelter as the place of storing the animal until a further decision on the animal is taken;

44.7. if the Agency has placed a dog, cat, or ferret for safekeeping in the shelter and that animal has been marked with a microchip and registered in the database, a practising veterinarian shall, within 72 hours, indicate the shelter in the database as the place of storing the animal until a further decision on the animal is taken.

45. The shelter may return a dog, cat, or ferret to its former owner or alienate it to another person or another shelter registered with the Service only if the animal is marked with a microchip, vaccinated against rabies, registered in the database, and holds a pet animal passport or vaccination certificate.

46. The shelter shall alienate the pet animal along with a certificate issued by a practising veterinarian regarding the health condition and required treatment of the animal in accordance with the procedures laid down in the laws and regulations regarding the alienation of pet animals.

47. The shelter shall keep and alienate a dog, cat, or ferret to another person or another shelter registered with the Service only if the animal has been sterilised and this event has been registered in the database. The sterilisation shall not be performed if a practising veterinarian has provided a relevant opinion (e.g., due to the age or health condition of the animal). The practising veterinarian shall indicate the reason for refusal to perform sterilisation in the database.

48. When marking a dog, cat, or ferret with a microchip, registering the animals and also recording the change of the holding location of the pet animal in the database, a practising veterinarian shall comply with the laws and regulations regarding the procedures for the registration of pet animals.

49. A practising veterinarian shall immediately register the event with an animal in the database if the animal registered in accordance with Paragraph 44 of this Regulation has been claimed within 14 days by its owner or keeper.

50. If a dog, cat, or ferret has not been claimed within 14 days by its owner or keeper, the animal shall be sterilised, that event shall be registered in the database, and the shelter shall be indicated as the owner, except for the case referred to in Sub-paragraphs 44.6 and 44.7 of this Regulation.

51. The person to whom the pet animal has been returned or alienated or the shelter which has been registered with the Service and in which the animal has been placed for safekeeping shall ensure the registration of true and up-to-date information in the database.

**5. Registration of Animals Accepted in the Shelter and Procedures for Preparing Reports on the Circulation of Animals**

52. A single register of animals shall be established and maintained in the shelter. Information on an animal and the personal data of natural and legal persons referred to in this Paragraph shall be retained in the register for three years after acceptance of the animal in the shelter. The register shall include at least the following information:

52.1. the date and time of accepting the animal;

52.2. details on circumstances in which the animal was found and accepted (e.g., the location, date, and description of the situation);

52.3. the sequence number assigned to the animal in the shelter;

52.4. the species of the animal;

52.5. the name of the animal and the identity number indicated on the microchip, tattoo, or leg band (for birds) (if any);

52.6. a description of the animal (sex, age, breed, colour, and special features);

52.7. the date and results of the clinical examination of the animal;

52.8. the treatment provided and medicine administered to the animal;

52.9. vaccination of the animal and its treatment against internal and external parasites;

52.10. surgical procedures (including sterilisation) performed on the animal;

52.11. the grounds for euthanasia of the animal and the date of that procedure;

52.12. the given name and surname of the relevant practising veterinarian in addition to the information referred to in Sub-paragraphs 52.7, 52.8, 52.9, 52.10, and 52.11 of this Regulation;

52.13. details on the person to whom the animal is returned:

52.13.1. the given name, surname, address of the declared, registered, or indicated place of residence, and telephone number of a natural person;

52.13.2. the name, registration number, legal address, and telephone number of a legal person;

52.14. the identity number indicated on the microchip implanted in the returned dog, cat, or ferret.

53. The owner of the shelter shall, once a year by 15 February, provide the Service with the following information, specifying the name and address of the shelter:

53.1. the species and number of accepted animals;

53.2. the species and number of returned animals, specifying separately:

53.2.1. the animals returned to the owner or keeper of the animal;

53.2.2. the animals alienated to another person;

53.2.3. the animals transferred for keeping in another shelter;

53.3. the species and number of euthanised and deceased animals;

53.4. the species and number of animals released into the wild;

53.5. the species and number of sterilised animals.

**6. Requirements for Accepting and Keeping Animals in the Boarding Facility**

54. When placing an animal in the boarding facility, the owner or keeper of the animal shall present:

54.1. in case of a pet animal:

54.1.1. its passport or vaccination certificate if the permanent holding location of the animal is a European Union Member State;

54.1.2. a veterinary (health) certificate, a document issued by an officially authorised veterinarian certifying the health condition of the animal, or the European Union Pet Passport if the permanent holding location of the animal is a country other than a European Union Member State;

54.2. a document certifying the origin of an animal of wild species and written information on its keeping conditions. The owner of the shelter shall ensure animal keeping conditions that correspond to the animal keeping conditions specified by the owner or keeper of the animal.

55. A dog, cat, and ferret shall be accepted in the boarding facility if:

55.1. it has been marked with a microchip and registered in the database in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding the procedures for the registration of pet animals;

55.2. it has been vaccinated against rabies in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding veterinary medicine.

56. A single register of animals shall be arranged and maintained in the boarding facility. Information on the animal and the personal data of natural and legal persons referred to in this Paragraph shall be kept in the register for one year after acceptance of the animal in the boarding facility. The register shall include the following information:

56.1. the given name, surname, address of the declared, registered, or indicated place of residence, and telephone number of the owner or keeper of the animal;

56.2. the date and time of accepting the animal;

56.3. the species, breed, and sex of the animal;

56.4. the name of the animal and the identity number indicated on the microchip, tattoo, or leg band (for birds) (if any);

56.5. special features of the animal (if identified);

56.6. the date on which the animal was returned to its owner or keeper.

57. The owner of the boarding facility shall, within 14 days after expiry of the contractual period for keeping the animal in the boarding facility, inform the owner of the animal in writing of the intention to place the unclaimed animal in a shelter, transfer it to another person, retain the animal at the boarding facility, or euthanise it. If the owner of the boarding facility receives a written refusal from the local government shelter to accept the animal, the owner of the boarding facility is entitled to keep the animal in the boarding facility, transfer it to another person, or euthanise it no earlier than 14 days after expiry of the contractual period for keeping the animal in the boarding facility.

**7. Closing Provisions**

58. Prior to the day of coming into force of this Regulation, the owner of a registered shelter or boarding facility operating in a structure or a building unit for which no type of use of the structure or building unit is registered in the State Immovable Property Cadastre Information System or the indicated type of use does not correspond to the operation carried out shall, by 31 December 2025, update the data in the State Immovable Property Cadastre Information System.

59. The Service shall take the decision on the cancellation of registration of the shelter or boarding facility in the register of objects under supervision of the Service in cases where the data referred to in Paragraph 58 of this Regulation have not been updated by the specified deadline.

60. The Regulation shall come into force on 1 July 2024.

61. Cabinet Regulation No. 407 of 16 May 2006, Regulations Regarding Welfare Requirements of Animals in Animal Shelters and Animal Boarding Facilities, Procedures for Transferring Animals to Animal Shelters or Animal Boarding Facilities, as well as Procedures for Registration of Animal Shelters and Animal Boarding Facilities (*Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 2006, Nos. 83, 148; 2008, No. 179; 2010, No. 42; 2011, No. 99, 2022, No. 10), is repealed.

Prime Minister E. Siliņa

Minister for Agriculture A. Krauze

**Annex**

Cabinet Regulation No. 412

25 June 2024

**Minimum Area of a Room or Space for Keeping Dogs**

1. A room or space for keeping dogs shall have at least the following area:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Number of dogs** | **Area (m2) and the weight of the dog (kg)** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Up to 5 kg | Up to 10 kg | Up to 20 kg | Up to 30 kg | Up to 40 kg | Up to 50 kg |
| 1 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 5.0 |
| 2 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 5.0 | 5.5 | 7.0 |
| 3 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.5 | 6.0 | 6.5 | 8.0 |
| 4 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 6.5 |  |  |  |
| 5 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 7.5 |  |  |  |
| 6 | 4.5 | 5.5 |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | 5.0 | 6.0 |  |  |  |  |

2. The room for keeping puppies aged 8–16 weeks that have been separated from their mother shall have at least the following area:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Total weight of puppies (kg)** | **Area (m2)** |
| 10 | 3.0 |
| 20 | 3.5 |
| 30 | 4.5 |