

Pets

Since our Middle Lake Covenants prohibit fences, dogs cannot be put out in the “backyard” to yap all day. Likewise the County’s Animal Control Ordinance prohibits tying a rope or chain to a dog and staking it outside to also yap all day. The County’s Animal Control Ordinance further requires that dogs and cats must be in the “direct control” of the owner via a leash when they are outside. This means that a dog cannot be let out unattended to do its “business”. And a cat cannot be let out to roam.

If you have not given permission, an animal that roams onto your property can be trapped and turned over to the County.

Here are two internet quotes about animal control in Hillsborough County.

“Your dog or cat may not be loose on public property and may not be on another person's private property without their express consent in Hillsborough County. Before allowing your pet onto someone else's property, even with their verbal permission, obtain this consent in writing to prevent it later being contested because of property or personal damages. Dogs confined to your own property may not be tethered to a stake or otherwise confined unsafely. If you allow a cat to roam on your property, it must be spayed or neutered.”

“Dog owners residing in Hillsborough County, Florida are required by law to keep their dog from going stray, or

running or going at large upon any street, sidewalk, park or private property of another without that property owner's consent. Owners are defined as any person, owning, harboring, possessing or otherwise keeping or exercising direct control of a dog. Or, if the owner of the dog is an individual under the age of 18-years-old, the individual's parents or guardian will be deemed as the dog's owner.

Dogs found at large can lawfully be captured and humanely confined. "At large" means a dog is off its owner's property and not under the restraint or the direct control of the owner or other responsible person.

In order for dogs to be allowed on public streets, roads, parks or other public property the dog must be under the direct control of its owner or keeper. "Direct Control" is defined as the immediate, continuous physical control of a dog at all times by means of a fence, leash, cord or chain of sufficient strength to restrain the dog. “

And here are extracts of Hillsborough County's Animal Ordinance 00-26 As Amended By Ordinance 03-8:

Section 2 – Definitions

AT LARGE - shall mean not on the owner's property, and not under restraint or the direct control, custody, charge or possession of the owner, or other responsible person.

DIRECT CONTROL - shall mean immediate, continuous physical control of an animal at all times such as by means of a fence, leash, cord or chain of such strength to restrain the animal.

Section 10 – Confinement to property; Dogs and cats at large

(A) Excluding public right-of-way on an owner's private property, no dog or cat shall be allowed to stray, run or go, at large upon any public property or street, sidewalk, park, or on the private property of another without the consent of the property owner.

(B) Any cat that is outdoors while not under direct control must be sterilized.

(C) Any dog or cat that is on private property without the consent of the property owner or resident may be captured in a humane trap or otherwise humanely confined. Persons capturing large dogs or cats will be responsible for the humane care of the animal until the captured animal is turned over to the department, other humane organizations, or licensed wildlife trappers. A person shall not entice a dog or cat to become at large for the purpose of trapping or apprehending when that dog or cat would otherwise not be at large.

(D) No person shall under any circumstance tether or otherwise confine any animal in a manner that is injurious to its health.

(E) In order for a dog or cat to be allowed on a public street, road, park or other public property, excluding public right-of-way on an owner's private property or unless otherwise specifically permitted, the dog or cat shall be under the direct control of the owner or keeper, except while hunting pursuant to permit or during a legitimate obedience demonstration, show, trial, training exercise, competition, show and/or match or educational program, so long as proper precautions are taken by the owner of the dog and/or sponsor of the event to insure the safety and protection of both the public and other animals.

The contents of an aquarium, including fish and plants, must not be dumped into the lake.

There have been residents who have put their parrot out on the back porch where it squawks all day long, while their owners blissfully sit inside unaware of the peace and quiet of the Lake that is being shattered by their stupid bird. In such cases, the Community Deputy Sheriff has been called. And the result has been that the owners take the bird inside – for a day or two – and then put the bird back outside because they can't stand the squawking, either.