

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 128

(Senator Simonaire, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Environment and Transportation

Local Government – Animal Control Facilities – Adoption Fee Waiver for
Veterans
(Pets for Vets Act of 2020)

This bill requires an animal control facility operated by a county or municipality to waive the adoption fee for a dog or cat adopted by a veteran who presents specified identification that notes the individual is a veteran. An animal control facility may limit the number of adoption fee waivers granted to an individual to one dog and one cat within a six-month period.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Local government revenues may decrease to the extent that dogs and cats are adopted from county and municipal run animal control facilities; however, any impact is likely to be minimal. Local expenditures are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: The Motor Vehicle Administration advises that it currently includes veteran status notations on valid driver's licenses or identification cards, as appropriate.

The Maryland Association of Counties advises that local animal adoption fees generally range from \$0 to \$150 with larger or more exotic animals having higher fees. Moreover,

county shelters sometimes waive adoption fees for certain animals or for special adoption programs and events. For example, Anne Arundel County advises that it partners with the “Pets for Patriots” program. The program works with animal shelters and adoption facilities to link military veterans and their families with companion pets, with a focus on overlooked or undervalued dogs and cats that may not otherwise be adopted.

Anne Arundel County advises that in calendar 2019 it processed 911 cat adoptions and 287 dog adoptions, with the maximum adoption fees totaling \$14 for cats and \$17 for dogs. The county also collects licensing fees from county residents who adopted/bought a pet from another organization. In total, the county collected approximately \$228,000 in adoption and license fees in fiscal 2018.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Association of Counties; Maryland Municipal League; Anne Arundel and Montgomery counties; City of Rockville; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 23, 2020
rh/tso Third Reader - March 11, 2020

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