

Pet Businesses & Public Health

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Public Health
Seattle & King County 

OUTLINE



- WHY PUBLIC HEALTH SEEKS TO UPDATE THE CODES
- WHAT'S BEING PROPOSED
- HOW WE ARE ENGAGING BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- NEXT STEPS

Pet Code and Rates are Outdated

- Code established in **2010**
 - Code merger project with City of Seattle, King County, and Public Health
- **No substantial reviews or revisions** since the code was established
- Environmental Health committed to return to the Board with a **full cost recovery fee proposal**.



Objectives

BOH [Title 8](#)



Improve animal health and worker safety



Strengthen infection control and disease prevention



Reduce risks of animals in public settings



Update and streamline regulations

BOH [Title 2](#)



Update rates to stabilize program, full cost recovery

Improve animal health and worker safety

Establishes enclosure size requirements that align with national and veterinary standards.

- e.g. Animals should be able to stand up, turn around and move normally, and avoid overcrowding.

Establishes group housing standards on dog/cat comingling for animal health and staff safety.

- e.g. Required staffing ratios and group size limits to ensure animals are properly supervised and safe. This also provides a safer environment for staff.

Requires facilities that house dogs overnight to provide an enclosure for each animal.

- Every facility should be able to individually house cats and dogs when needed. Kennel free facilities can still operate the same, but they will have enclosures available for emergencies or when needed. There are some exceptions for puppies, kittens and owner permission.

Strengthen infection control and disease prevention

Updates requirements for the existing infection control plan.

Improves worker safety with new requirement for staff training on zoonotic disease prevention and procedures for working with animals.

Adds new requirement for an isolation plan for sick or injured animals.

Updates requirements for documenting and reporting animal bites.

Reduce risks of animals in public places

Public animal contact health standards for permitted businesses.

- Handwashing or hand sanitizer is available to the public.
- Rabies vaccination records are maintained and current for eligible animals.
- Young animals not eligible for rabies vaccinations are restricted from open public contact areas.

Update and streamline

Simplified Clearer Codes.

- Removes outdated or redundant language.
- Consolidates animal enclosure requirements into one section.
- Updates definitions and clarifies which businesses are regulated (i.e., home-based businesses).
- Aligns with current state law (e.g., RCW prohibits sales of dogs and cats at retail pet stores).
- Updated permit requirements (removes low risk categories (fish shops), requires permit display, authorizes permit suspension if fee is not paid).



Fees & Administration (KCBOH Title 2)

Rate Update Objectives:

- Stabilize the pet business program revenue (note: small program scale – 1.5 FTE in total).
- Increase program fees to reflect actual service costs, consistent with Board of Health's policy for full cost recovery, while not reducing services.
- Continue to review and adjust rates annually to account for inflation, consistent with BOH authority in BOH Code Title 2 (CPI +1).

What are the pet businesses paying for?

- Public Health's Environmental Health Services (EHS) permits for pet businesses include:
 - Pet daycares/boarding
 - Pet shops
 - Animal shelters
 - Pet grooming services
 - Pet food retailers
- The permit fee is the cost pet businesses pay for EHS services:
 - Plan review for new or remodeled facilities
 - Inspections
 - Education and technical assistance



What is the permit fee?

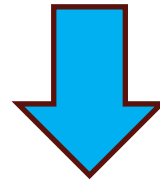


Cost per hour for providing our services

Amount of time needed for the permit services

Cost paid by business for a permit

Focus of Title 2 Changes



Hourly
Rate*



Time



Permit
Fee

* 2027 fees depend on inflation/costs adjustments to the EHS hourly rate, which are not known until later in the year.

Title 2 Proposed Changes: Overview



Upfront Plan Review Fee
Predictable, reduces delays



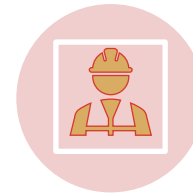
Adjusted Inspection/Permit Fees Time
Reflects actual level of effort



Unpermitted businesses.
New one-time 2x fee.



Updated Service Fees
Variances, re-inspections,
return field visits



Tiered Pet Daycare/Boarding Permits
(by size)



Title 2 Proposed Changes: Details

Assess a more realistic minimum plan review fee upfront.

- Change fee basis from 1 to 3 hours, improves transparency in costs upfront, minimizes need for secondary billing for additional hours.

Establish tiered fees for pet daycare and boarding facilities.

- Better aligns fees to scale of business/level of effort for pet daycare/boarding businesses.
- Based on number of animals/business complexity.
- Maintains lower fees for smaller businesses while increasing for larger and more complex operations.

Implement full cost recovery permit fees.

- Updates service hour basis for all permits, reflecting actual level of effort. Most current fees are based on initial 2010 estimates when Public Health started the program.
- Proposed increases from 0.25 to 1.75 service hours, with the latter for larger and more complex boarding facilities. (Net \$ increases range from \$57 - \$394.)



Title 2 Proposed Changes: Details

Unpermitted businesses/establish a one-time unpermitted facility fee.

- Public Health estimates there are ~100 unpermitted establishments in King County based on public business records and complaints.
- We propose a double initial permit fee for unpermitted businesses that are non-responsive to outreach.
- High effort is needed to gain significant compliance. This is not built into proposed rates to avoid distributing costs to permitted businesses.

Update miscellaneous service fees.

- Similar to food establishment fees, Public Health proposes to update fees for miscellaneous services, including variance requests, re-inspections, etc.
- Helps ensure that businesses requiring an additional level of service are paying those direct costs rather than distributing broadly across all permitted businesses.

How will the changes impact pet businesses?

Example 1:

- Annual permit for a pet grooming service (most common permit type):
 - Current: \$281
 - Proposed: \$450*



Example 2:

- Annual permits for pet daycare/boarding facilities:

Tier 1 (smallest)

- Current: \$506
- Proposed: \$563*

Tier 4 (largest)

- Current: \$506
- Proposed: \$900*



- 2027 fees depend on inflation/costs adjustments to the EHS hourly rate, which are not known until later in the year.

Engagement

- Public Health engaged businesses and community members through:
 - Online presentations and input sessions, newsletters, social media, direct emails, and webpage.
 - General interest and code-specific feedback surveys (open through 7/13/26).
- Upcoming:
 - Industry specific engagement sessions.
 - Tailored outreach to small industry groups.
- Input will inform final code language, fee structure, and guidance.



How we will support businesses

- Guidance
 - FAQ overview of all the changes will be available online after the changes are adopted.
 - Templates, guides, and resources provided to businesses.
- One year grace period to comply with new changes for existing businesses.
- Variances considered case-by-case.
- Onsite technical assistance upon request.





What comes next?

- **Summer:**
 - Continue to gather feedback from businesses and interested community members
 - Finalize proposed code and fee changes based on input
- **September:**
 - Present proposed code and fee changes to Board of Health
 - Potential Board of Health Vote
- **January 2027** (if approved):
 - Code implementation



Thank you!



Questions? Contact:
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Environmental Health Services Division