

Chapter 5 Updates

South Bend Animal Resource Center (SBARC) Ordinance

South Bend Common Council

Health and Public Safety Committee

July 27, 2026



City of South Bend
Legal

Filed in Clerk's Office

JUL 28 2026

Bianca Tirado
City Clerk, South Bend, IN

Overview & Purpose



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Updates South Bend's animal care and welfare regulations in Chapter 5 of the Municipal Code

Improves clarity and aligns the ordinance with current SBARC practices

Strengthens the City's ability to protect public safety and animal welfare

Enhances regulatory tools, Expands permitting and enforcement

Reorganizes Chapter 5 into clear, logically grouped articles

Comprehensive Reorganization of Chapter 5

Chapter 5 is fully restructured into clear articles that group related requirements to improve usability and enforceability

General
provisions

Animal care
standards

Species-
specific
regulations

Permitting
requirements

Prohibited
Actions

Enforcement

Administration



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Expanded Animal Care Standards

Minimum care requirements are significantly expanded and clarified for domestic and permitted animals

These standards:

- Set clearer benchmarks for identifying neglect or mistreatment
- Support timely, appropriate enforcement action
- Cover domestic animals as well as permitted species such as horses, honeybees, chickens, and pigeons

Examples of care standards

Shelter
requirements

Adequate space
standards

Veterinary care

Protection from
extreme weather



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Expanded Permitting & Licensing Framework

Standardized
permits across
activities

- Breeders, pet shops, kennels, and grooming facilities
- Animal events and specialty animal activities

Stronger,
consistent
oversight

- Inspection authority for permitted uses
- Health and recordkeeping requirements
- Clear compliance criteria applied consistently



Formal Animal Designation System

- A tiered classification system for animal designations with defined criteria, procedures, and corresponding restrictions or outcomes
- Promotes consistency in enforcement decisions and provides clear expectations for residents

Public
Nuisance
designation

Dangerous
designation

Vicious
designation



Regulated Animal Possession Permit

- A new, graduated enforcement tool for repeated or high-risk violations
- Focused on seeking compliance while reducing the need for more severe enforcement
- Promotes safe and responsible possession of animals

Requires a permit for owners with repeated or high-risk violations to possess animals

May set individualized conditions—animal limits, required training, or inspections

Replaces the Habitual Animal Offender designation with a compliance-focused approach



Strengthened Enforcement & Due Process

Clarified enforcement authority paired with clear hearing procedures

Clarifies authority for investigations, inspections, and impoundment

Establishes detailed hearing procedures before the Animal Welfare Commission

Sets notice, appeal rights, and evidentiary standards to enhance transparency and promote due process



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Alignment with Current Practices

Ordinance language is aligned with the City's current operational practices

Standardizes
references to SBARC
and codifies current
operational practices

Codifies
impoundment and
licensing processes
to close policy-
practice gaps



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Improved Readability & Definitions

Streamlined definitions and plain-language drafting improve clarity for residents

Definitions
streamlined and
reorganized; outdated
or redundant terms
removed

Plain-language
drafting helps
residents understand
their responsibilities
and City processes



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Addressed Feedback from AWC

Feedback from AWC in July discussion addressed in Substitute Bill

Clarified that RAPP cases where denial of a permit is recommended will be presented to AWC

Eliminated reference to hearing officer to avoid confusion

Added labels to fee chart



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Questions & Discussion?



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