

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TEMECULA AMENDING TITLE 6 OF THE TEMECULA MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING ANIMAL KEEPING SETBACK REQUIREMENTS AND MAKING A FINDING THAT THIS ORDINANCE IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15061 (b)(3)

WHEREAS, the City of Temecula (“City”) previously adopted Ordinance 2022-09 on June 14, 2022, comprehensively updating Title 6 (Animals) of the Temecula Municipal Code to modernize definitions, implement best practices, and codify a spay/neuter program; and

WHEREAS, as part of that update, the City amended the setback requirement for accessory animal-keeping structures for large animals, such as cattle and horses, outdoor aviaries, poultry, and small animals, such as goats and pigs, changing the required setback from seventy-five (75) feet from a neighboring residence to seventy-five (75) feet from a property line as to not preclude or negatively affect future residential development; and

WHEREAS, although the Ordinance achieved its intended purpose, it also created an unintended consequence by rendering some smaller or uniquely shaped equestrian properties of approximately one-half acre unable to keep horses or similar animals; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance would reduce the required setback for accessory animal-keeping structures for large animals, outdoor aviaries, poultry, and small animals from seventy-five (75) feet from the property line to twenty-five (25) feet from the property line in order to correct this unintended effect; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance would also codify that existing, legally permitted animal-keeping structures constructed prior to June 14, 2022, that do not meet the setback requirements are considered legal nonconforming structures pursuant to Temecula Municipal Code Section 17.03.070.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Temecula, California, does ordain as follows:

Section 1. Recitals Incorporated. The above recitals are true, correct, and incorporated herein.

Section 2. Table 6.08.010 (Animal Keeping Standards Table) of Chapter 6.08 (Animal Keeping Standards) of Title 6 (Animals) of the Temecula Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows (with deletions appearing in strikethrough text and additions appearing in underline text), with all other provisions of Table 6.08.010 remaining unchanged.

TABLE 6.08.010 ANIMAL KEEPING STANDARDS ^{1, 2, 3, 4}					
Type of Animal or Use	Minimum Lot Size	Maximum Number ⁷	Zoning	Setback / Separation Requirements	Additional Information
ANIMAL AND AGRICULTURAL USES/KEEPING PERMITTED BY RIGHT					
Apiaries or Beekeeping	0.5 acres	N/A	All zones except: Hillside Residential (HR), Hillside Residential-Santa Margarita (HR-SM), and OpenSpace/Conservation (OS/OS-C)	Four hundred (400) foot minimum setback of all bee hives, apiaries or boxes housing bees from any public streets or highways, day care, educational institution, park, property line to a different ownership, or from any dwelling or place of human habitation other than that occupied by the owner or caretaker of the bees.	A source of fresh water shall be made continuously available on site for the bees
Cats and Dogs					
Single-family dwellings	N/A	Any combination of 4 cats or dogs.	Any parcel of any zoning designation with a permitted and occupied residential structure on site.	N/A (for accessory structure requirements see TMC Title 17)	Only animals over 4 months of age are counted
Multiple-family dwellings	N/A	Any combination of 4 cats or dogs.			
Large Animals (Cattle, Horses and Mules)	0.5 acres	First half (0.5) acre - 2 large animals Each additional half (0.5) acre - 1 additional large animal	All zones except: Low Medium Residential (LM), Hillside Residential (HR), Hillside Residential-Santa Margarita (HR-SM), and OpenSpace/Conservation (OS/OS-C)	All animals shall be kept a minimum distance of 75 feet from the property line of any adjacent residence, day care, or educational institution, hospital or church that is located on adjacent property. ⁸	Only animals over 12 months of age are counted
Outdoor Aviary (All birds must be confined)	Greater than 1.0 acre Less than 0.5 acres	50 Birds/acre 24 Birds	All zones except: Hillside Residential (HR), Hillside Residential-Santa Margarita (HR-SM), and OpenSpace/Conservation (OS/OS-C)	All animals shall be kept a minimum distance of 75 feet from the property line of any adjacent residence, day care, or educational institution, hospital or church that is located on adjacent property. ⁸	Only animals over 3 months of age are counted
Poultry ^{5, 6} (All poultry to be contained)	Greater than 1.0 acre ⁵ Less than 1.0 acre ⁵ LM & M zoned property ^{5, 6}	50 poultry/acre 12 poultry 4 poultry	All zones except: High Density Residential (H), Hillside Residential (HR), Hillside Residential-Santa Margarita (HR-SM), and OpenSpace/Conservation (OS/OS-C)	All animals shall be kept a minimum distance of 75 feet from the property line of any adjacent residence, day care, or educational institution, hospital or church that is located on adjacent property. ⁸	Only animals over 3 months of age are counted
Small Animals (Burros, Goats, Pigs, Ponies, and Sheep)	0.5 acres	First half (0.5) acre - 2 small animals Each additional half (0.5) acre - 3 additional small animals	All zones except: Low Medium Residential (LM), Hillside Residential (HR), Hillside Residential-Santa Margarita (HR-SM), and OpenSpace/Conservation (OS/OS-C)	All animals shall be kept a minimum distance of 75 feet from the property line of any adjacent residence, day care, or educational institution, hospital or church that is located on adjacent property. ⁸	Only animals over 6 months of age are counted
ANIMAL USES/KEEPING THAT REQUIRE A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT					
Animal Shelter	N/A	Set by conditional use permit.	CC, HT, SC, BP, LI	Set by conditional use permit In no case shall setback from property lines be less than that of the properties zoning designation per TMC Title 17.	See also TMC 17.04.010: Conditional use Permit
Commercial Kennels, Commercial Catteries, or Cat/Dog Training Center	N/A	Set by conditional use permit.	CC, SC, BP, LI	Set by conditional use permit In no case shall setback from property lines be less than that of the properties zoning designation per TMC Title 17.	See also TMC 17.04.010: Conditional use Permit
Commercial Frog Farms	N/A	Set by conditional use permit.	All zones except Hillside Residential (HR), Hillside Residential-Santa Margarita (HR-SM), and OpenSpace/Conservation (OS/OS-C)	Set by conditional use permit In no case shall setback from property lines be less than that of the properties zoning designation per TMC Title 17.	See also TMC 17.04.010: Conditional use Permit
The keeping of exotic animal(s), including keeping exotic animals as pets or novelties.	Minimum set by Conditional Use Permit.	Set by conditional use permit.	All zones except Hillside Residential (HR), Hillside Residential-Santa Margarita (HR-SM), and OpenSpace/Conservation (OS/OS-C)	Set by conditional use permit In no case shall setback from property lines be less than that of the properties zoning designation per TMC Title 17.	See also TMC 17.04.010: Conditional use Permit
The commercial raising of more than four chinchilla, nutria, hamsters, guinea pigs, cavy, rabbits, and similar small animals.	N/A	Set by conditional use permit.	All zones except Hillside Residential (HR), Hillside Residential-Santa Margarita (HR-SM), and OpenSpace/Conservation (OS/OS-C)	Set by conditional use permit In no case shall setback from property lines be less than that of the properties zoning designation per TMC Title 17.	See also TMC 17.04.010: Conditional use Permit
Commercial Worm Farms	N/A	Set by conditional use permit.	All zones except Hillside Residential (HR), Hillside Residential-Santa Margarita (HR-SM), and OpenSpace/Conservation (OS/OS-C)	Set by conditional use permit In no case shall setback from property lines be less than that of the properties zoning designation per TMC Title 17.	See also TMC 17.04.010: Conditional use Permit
NOTES:					
¹ : These standards only apply to properties located within a specific plan area, planned development overlay or similar overlay zoning designation when said zoning document does not adequately address the subject or standards of animal keeping.					
² : All uses found in this Table are found incompatible with the Hillside Residential (HR) and Open Space-Conservation (OS-C) Zoning designations and are not permitted.					
³ : In no event shall there be any limit to the permissible number of sheep which may be grazed per acre, where such grazing operation is conducted on fields for the purposes of cleaning up unharvested crops, stubble, volunteer or wild growth where such grazing operation is not conducted for more than four weeks in any six-month period.					
⁴ : Concentrated lot feeding and commercial poultry and/or rabbit raising are not permitted in any zoning designation within the City.					
⁵ : The keeping of roosters or crowing fowl, of any species, is prohibited within the City.					
⁶ : Properties with the zoning designation LM and M are allowed a maximum of 4 poultry.					
⁷ : All calculations for the number of animals permitted on a lot shall round down to the nearest whole number.					
⁸ : All legally permitted structures constructed, for the purpose of animal keeping, prior to 14 June 2022 shall be considered legal non-conforming and can remain in accordance with TMC 517.03.070, as amended.					

Section 3. Effective Date of Ordinance. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in full force and operation thirty (30) days after its second reading and adoption.

Section 4. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Exemption. Pursuant to Section 15061, subdivision (b)(3) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, the Ordinance is exempt from CEQA because the “activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.” A Notice of Exemption has been prepared and will be filed in accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Section 5. Severability. If any section, subsection, subdivision, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this Ordinance is, for any reason, held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance, and each section, subsection, subdivision, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, subdivisions, sentences, clauses, phrases, or portions thereof be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 6. City Clerk Action. The City Clerk is authorized and directed to cause this Ordinance to be published within fifteen (15) days after its passage in a newspaper of general circulation and circulated within the City in accordance with Government Code Section 36933, subdivision (a) or, to cause this Ordinance to be published in the manner required by law using the alternative summary and posting procedure authorized under Government Code Section 36933, subdivision (c).

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Temecula this day of , .

Jessica Alexander, Mayor

ATTEST:

Randi Johl, City Clerk

[SEAL]

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE) ss
CITY OF TEMECULA)

I, Randi Johl, City Clerk of the City of Temecula, do hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance No. 2026- was duly introduced and placed upon its first reading at a meeting of the City Council of the City of Temecula on the 27th day of January, 2026, and that thereafter, said Ordinance was duly adopted by the City Council of the City of Temecula at a meeting thereof held on the day of , , by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

NOES: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ABSTAIN: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Randi Johl, City Clerk