

**CITY OF BALTIMORE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Health Department Proposes Regulations Related to Cats and Dogs**

BALTIMORE, MD- (November 7, 2008)- The Baltimore City Health Department is proposing two sets of regulations today – one related to cats, the other related to dogs. Both aim to improve animal health and safety in Baltimore.

**Cats.** The Health Department is proposing a regulation for the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Program enacted into law by Ordinance 07-583 in November of last year. Ordinance 07-583 authorizes the Commissioner of Health to approve programs to trap, neuter and return feral cats. The Health Department has worked with local feline groups to draft a regulation that will direct the implementation of the Ordinance.

For years, the Bureau of Animal Control has trapped and euthanized thousands of feral cats with little success in the reduction of feral cats in the alleys of Baltimore. The Humane Society of the United States recognizes that the trapping and removal of feral cats allows other feral cats to fill the void of the vacated cats, thus repopulating feral cat colonies to their original size. And as cats remain unaltered, the population of the feral cat colony will continue to grow.

According to the A.S.P.C.A. of New York, feral cats that are made a part of a functional TNR program are healthier, thus reducing the spread of disease through other cats in the community, engage in less behavior that is considered a nuisance to the community such as roaming and howling, and remain close to their food source, thus reducing the chances for injury in car accidents.

The proposed regulation outlines the various responsibilities by stakeholders involved in the TNR process. The proposal in full is online at <http://www.baltimorehealth.org>.

The Health Department is soliciting comments to this cat-related proposal in writing by December 8, 2008. Comments should be sent to: Division of Environmental Health, Baltimore City Health Department, 1001 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore MD 21202.

**Dogs.** The Health Department is also releasing proposed regulations relating to dogs. These are the revised regulations governing the Vicious Dog Hearing Board. The Vicious Dog Hearing

Board is a body that holds hearings to determine the question of whether an animal is vicious or dangerous. The Board is appointed by the Animal Control Advisory Committee. Under the Health Code of Baltimore City, “The Board may adopt rules and regulations to govern its hearings and other procedures.”

The revised rules and regulations are available online at <http://www.baltimorehealth.org>.

The Health Department is soliciting comments to this dog-related proposal in writing by December 8, 2008. Comments should be sent to: Division of Environmental Health, Baltimore City Health Department, 1001 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore MD 21202.

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