



December 20, 2024

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# Abandoned Animals

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Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website ([ctas.tennessee.edu](http://ctas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

The University of Tennessee  
County Technical Assistance Service  
226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard, Suite 400  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
615.532.3555 phone  
615.532.3699 fax  
[www.ctas.tennessee.edu](http://www.ctas.tennessee.edu)

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# Abandoned Animals

## Public Acts of 1974 Chapter 683

**SECTION 1.** An "abandoned animal", for the purposes of this act, is one that has been forsaken entirely by the owner thereof or his agent, or with respect to which the owner thereof or his agent has neglected or refused to provide for, or to perform the legal or contractual obligation for care and support of an animal by its owner or his agent, and such abandonment shall constitute a relinquishment of all rights and claims of the owner to such animal after notice is given as hereinafter provided.

Any animal placed in the custody of a stable or pasture keeper for treatment, boarding or other care, shall be considered to be abandoned by its owner or his agent following thirty (30) days written notice by registered mail being given by the stable or pasture keeper to the owner or his agent at the last known address of such owner or agent, and the failure of the owner or the agent to fulfill his contractual obligation within thirty (30) days after receipt of such notice with the stable or pasture keeper, and after such abandonment, may be turned over by the stable or pasture keeper to the custody of the nearest humane society or dog pound in the area for disposal as the custodian of such humane society or dog pound may consider proper. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as relieving the owner of such animal or his agent from any liability which the owner or his agent may have incurred as a result of the furnishing of such treatment, boarding, or other care by the stable or pasture keeper for the entire period the animal has been in the custody of said stable or pasture keeper.

The giving of notice as provided herein to the owner, or the agent of the owner, of such animal by the stable or pasture keeper shall relieve the stable or pasture keeper and any custodian, to whom such animal may be given, of any further liability for the care or treatment of said animal. The stable or pasture keeper or custodian of a humane society or dog pound shall not be liable for disposal of any such animal.

**SECTION 2.** This Act shall apply to counties having a population of more than 600,000 according to the 1970 federal census or any subsequent federal census.

**SECTION 3.** This Act shall take effect on becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

Passed: March 20, 1974.

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