

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND
Legislative Session 2026, Legislative Day No. 16

Bill No. 85-26

Mr. Michael Ertel, Chair
By Request of County Executive

By the County Council, September 8, 2026

A BILL
ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

Advisory Committee on Animal Services

FOR the purpose of renaming the Baltimore County Animal Services Advisory Commission to be the Advisory Committee on Animal Services, consistent with other County Advisory Committees; amending the purpose, membership, duties, and responsibilities of the Committee; establishing all Committee membership positions as vacant as of the effective date of this Act and thereafter requiring all members to be appointed; establishing staggered terms for all members appointed after the effective date of this Act; updating references to the Animal Services Division to the Animal Services Bureau; and generally relating to the Advisory Committee on Animal Services.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter stricken from existing law.
~~Strike-out~~ indicates matter stricken from bill.
Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

BY renaming

Subtitle 3 – Baltimore County Animal Services Advisory Commission
To be
Subtitle 3 – Advisory Committee on Animal Services
Article 3 – Administration
Title 3 – Boards, Commissions, Committees, Panels, and Foundations
Baltimore County Code, 2015

BY repealing and re-enacting, with amendments

Sections 3-3-2401 through 3-3-2407
Article 3 – Administration
Title 3 – Boards, Commissions, Committees, Panels, and Foundations
Baltimore County Code, 2015

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE
COUNTY, MARYLAND, that the Laws of Baltimore County shall read as follows:

ARTICLE 3 – ADMINISTRATION

Title 3 – Boards, Commissions, Committees, Panels, and Foundations

Subtitle 24 – [Baltimore County] ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON Animal Services [Advisory
Commission]

§ 3-3-2401. Established.

There is [a Baltimore County] AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON Animal Services
[Advisory Commission].

§ 3-3-2402. Purpose.

The purpose of the [Commission] COMMITTEE is to:

(1) COLLABORATE WITH THE BUREAU DIRECTOR OF ANIMAL SERVICES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH; AND

(2) advise the County Council and the County Executive on issues pertaining to animal care and welfare[, animal rescue and adoption, control of] IN THE COMMUNITY, REDUCING the STRAY animal population, animal bite prevention, zoonotic disease [transmission, standards for animal shelters, training of personnel and volunteers, and any other issues related to the county's Animal Services Division.] PREVENTION, AND EXPANSION OF COMMUNITY VETERINARY SERVICES.

§ 3-3-2403. Membership.

(a) (1) The COMMITTEE [Animal Services Advisory Commission] shall consist of [11] 13 members, each of whom shall be a resident of the county.

(2) Of the [11] 13 VOTING members of the [Commission:] COMMITTEE:

(i) Each member of the County Council shall appoint [one] 1 member;
and

(ii) [Four] 4 members shall be appointed by the County Executive as follows:

1. [Two] 3 members shall [be either one of the following:] HAVE
1 OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS OR TITLES:

A. A licensed veterinarian;

B. A representative from a humane organization [or;]

1 C. A person [whose duties include] WITH EXPERIENCE
2 IN the daily operation of an animal shelter, INCLUDING VETERINARY
3 PARAPROFESSIONALS; [and] OR

4 D. A PERSON WITH EXPERIENCE WITH THE
5 OPERATION OF KENNELS, ANIMAL THERAPY ORGANIZATIONS, SERVICE ANIMAL
6 ORGANIZATIONS, OR ANIMAL CARE FACILITIES; AND

7 2. The remaining members shall be at-large members from the
8 public.

9 (3) (i) The [Director of the Department of] Health OFFICER OR THEIR
10 DESIGNEE shall [designate to the Commission] SERVE AS an ex officio, non-voting member
11 OF THE COMMITTEE to provide technical assistance.

12 (ii) The ex officio non-voting member shall also have the right to address
13 the [Commission] COMMITTEE regarding any item on a meeting agenda.

14 (b) (1) The term of a member is 3 years and begins on January 1.

15 (2) If a vacancy occurs on the [Commission,] COMMITTEE, the original
16 appointing authority shall make the appointment to fill the vacancy.

17 (3) A VOTING MEMBER MAY NOT SERVE MORE THAN 2
18 CONSECUTIVE TERMS.

19
20 § 3-3-2404. Officers.

21 The [members of the Commission] COUNTY EXECUTIVE shall [elect] DESIGNATE a
22 [Chairperson] COMMITTEE CHAIR who shall serve in that capacity for a one-year term.

1 § 3-3-2405. Meetings; quorum; rules.

2 (a) The [Commission] COMMITTEE shall meet at the call of the [Chairman] CHAIR as
3 frequently as required to perform its duties, but no less than 4 times per year.

4 (b) (1) A majority of the voting members of the [Commission] COMMITTEE shall
5 constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

6 (2) An affirmative vote by a majority of those present at any meeting where a
7 quorum exists is sufficient for any action, INCLUDING REPORTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO
8 THE COUNTY COUNCIL AND COUNTY EXECUTIVE.

9 (c) The [Commission may] COMMITTEE SHALL adopt a set of rules to govern its
10 meetings and procedures.

11
12 § 3-3-2406. Duties and responsibilities.

13 (a) The [Commission] COMMITTEE has the following duties and responsibilities:

14 (1) Maintain liaison with:

15 (i) The Animal Services [Division;] BUREAU;

16 (ii) The Animal Hearing Board;

17 (iii) The Police Department;

18 (iv) Public and private humane organizations;

19 (v) [Animal services advisory] commissions or boards in other counties
20 and municipalities THAT HAVE SIMILAR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE
21 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL SERVICES; and

22 (vi) Animal services agencies in other states and the federal government;

(2) Consult with [county and municipal animal services advisory commissions or boards] COMMISSIONS OR BOARDS IN OTHER COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES THAT HAVE SIMILAR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL SERVICES on their animal welfare programs;

(3) Collect and assemble pertinent information that is available from other agencies;

(4) Subject to subsection (b) of this section, visit the county animal shelter AT LEAST ONCE ANNUALLY during hours that the shelter is open to the public [at times selected by the Commission,] IN COORDINATION WITH THE BUREAU LIAISON and observe [all phases and areas of] the operation of the shelter;

(5) Subject to the limitations of the Maryland Public Information Act, collect and assemble any and all data and records of the Animal Services [Division] BUREAU pertaining to its operation;

(6) Review and make recommendations to the County Council and the County Executive concerning:

(i) The budgets and fiscal needs of the Animal Services [Division;] BUREAU; and

(ii) The policies governing the operation of the Animal Services [Division,] BUREAU, including rules and regulations for the operation of the animal shelter;

(7) Work actively in educating the public on issues related to animal rescue and adoption and the need for sterilization of dogs and cats, and to review and make recommendations to control the animal population and enhance adoption opportunities; and

1 (8) Generally promote the mission and responsibilities of the Animal Services
2 [Division.] BUREAU.

3 (b) (1) This subsection applies only to a member who intends to visit a part of the
4 animal shelter that is not normally open to the public.

5 (2) A member shall coordinate the visit with the BUREAU director [of the
6 shelter] not less than [4 hours] 2 BUSINESS DAYS in advance.

7 (3) A member may not be accompanied by a person who is not a member during
8 a visit authorized under this subsection.

9 (4) A member may not visit the quarantine room.

10 (5) If the visit is expected to last more than [two] 2 hours, [the director of the
11 shelter and] the member must secure the permission of the Health Officer or the [Health
12 Officer's designee.] BUREAU DIRECTOR IN ADVANCE OF THE VISIT.

13
14 § 3-3-2407. Reports.

15 (a) The [Commission] COMMITTEE shall submit an annual report to the County
16 Council and the County Executive BY THE END OF EACH CALENDAR YEAR.

17 (b) The annual report shall contain:

18 (1) A summary of the [Commission's] COMMITTEE'S activities for the
19 preceding year; and

20 (2) Recommendations resulting from the [Commission's] COMMITTEE'S
21 consideration of the matters set forth in § 3-3-2406 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

22 (c) The [Commission] COMMITTEE may submit additional reports periodically, as it
23 considers necessary, regarding the animal shelter, animal services programs, or any other aspect

1 of the Animal Services [Division,] BUREAU, together with its recommendations [and/or] OR
2 advice concerning same.

3
4 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that, as of the effective date of this
5 Act, all membership positions on the Advisory Committee on Animal Services shall be
6 considered vacant and all appointments made to the Committee prior to the effective date of this
7 Act shall be considered expired, with new members to be thereafter appointed by the County
8 Executive and County Council to all respective membership positions in accordance with Section
9 3 of this Act.

10
11 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that, to ensure that the terms of the
12 Committee members are staggered, the terms of the initial members appointed after the effective
13 date of this Act shall expire as follows:

- 14 1. The initial terms of the first 4 members appointed shall expire on December
15 31, 2027;
- 16 2. The initial terms of the next 4 members appointed shall expire on December
17 31, 2028; and
- 18 3. The initial terms of the remaining 5 members appointed shall expire on
19 December 31, 2029.

20 The initial terms of the members appointed under this Section shall not be considered full
21 terms for purposes of reappointment.

1 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that this Act, having been passed by
2 the affirmative vote of five members of the County Council, shall take effect December 7, 2026.