

SB 442 - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-2243

08/09

SENATE BILL **442**

AN ACT relative to pet transfers.

SPONSORS: Sen. Pearl, Dist 17; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Avard, Dist 12; Sen. Lang, Dist 2; Sen. Gannon, Dist 23; Sen. Murphy, Dist 16; Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Rep. Bixby, Straf. 13; Rep. J. Aron, Sull. 4; Rep. C. McGuire, Merr. 27; Rep. Moffett, Merr. 4

COMMITTEE: Energy and Natural Resources

ANALYSIS

This bill removes certain requirements on animal shelter facilities relative to the transfer of animals.

This bill is a request of the department of agriculture, markets, and food.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT relative to pet transfers.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Health Certificates for Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets. Amend RSA 437:8, VI to read as follows:

2 VI. No dog, cat, or ferret shall be offered for transfer by a licensee or by any individual
3 without first being protected against infectious diseases using a vaccine approved by the state
4 veterinarian. No dog, cat, or ferret shall be offered for transfer by a licensee or by any individual
5 unless accompanied by an official health certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian. No transfer
6 shall occur unless the transferred animal is accompanied by a health certificate issued within the
7 prior 14 days. The certificate shall be in triplicate, one copy of which shall be retained by the signing
8 veterinarian, one copy of which shall be for the licensee's records, and one copy of which shall be
9 given to the transferee upon transfer as provided in paragraph III. If an official health certificate is
10 produced, it shall be prima facie evidence of transfer. The signing veterinarian shall provide a copy
11 of the health certificate to the department of agriculture, markets, and food upon request. ***Animal
12 shelter facilities, as defined in RSA 437:1, I shall:***

13 ***(a) Have on the premises a microchip scanner and shall maintain a file of
14 recognized pet retrieval agencies, including but not limited to national tattoo microchip
15 registries.***

16 ***(b) Inspect for tattoos, ear tags, or other permanent forms of positive
17 identification and shall scan for a microchip upon admission of an unclaimed or
18 abandoned animal as defined by RSA 437:18, IV and prior to transferring ownership of an
19 unclaimed or abandoned animal where an animal is not known. Registered owners or
20 agents shall be contacted as soon as possible, not to exceed 72 hours, and alerted that the
21 animal has been taken in and is available to be reclaimed.***

22 ***(c) Contact the secondary owner listed by microchip registries as soon as
23 possible, not to exceed 72 hours, if listed owners or agents cannot be located or refuse to
24 reclaim possession of the animal.***

25 2 Health Certificates for Dogs, Cats, and Ferrets; Prospective Changes. Amend RSA 437:8, VI
26 to read as follows:

27 VI. No animal shelter shall transfer any dog, cat or ~~ferret that is received from outside of~~
28 ~~the state]~~ until the quarantine requirements in 437:8, V have been met and without an official
29 transfer certificate. Animal shelter facilities, as defined in RSA 437:1, I, ***shall:*** ~~[are exempt from~~
30 ~~the requirements of this section relative to transferring dogs, cats, and ferrets except that:~~

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1 ~~(a) All dogs, cats, or ferrets transferred out of an animal shelter facility shall have a~~
2 ~~form of positive identification, including, but not limited to a tattoo, collar, microchip, ear tag, or any~~
3 ~~other permanent form of identification approved by the commissioner.~~

4 ~~(b) All dogs, cats, or ferrets 3 months of age or older shall be vaccinated against rabies in~~
5 ~~accordance with RSA 436:100 before transfer, if proof of rabies vaccination is not available.~~

6 ~~(c) All animal shelter facilities shall have on premises a microchip scanner and shall~~
7 ~~maintain a file of recognized pet retrieval agencies, including but not limited to national tattoo or~~
8 ~~microchip registries.~~

9 ~~(d) Where an owner is not known, all animal shelter facilities shall inspect for tattoos,~~
10 ~~ear tags, or other permanent forms of positive identification and shall scan for a microchip upon~~
11 ~~admission of an unclaimed or abandoned animal as defined in RSA 437:18, IV and prior to~~
12 ~~transferring ownership of an unclaimed or abandoned animal. Registered owners or agents shall be~~
13 ~~contacted as soon as possible, not to exceed 72 hours, and alerted that the animal has been taken in~~
14 ~~and is available to be reclaimed.~~

15 ~~(e) If listed owners or agents cannot be located or refuse to reclaim possession of the~~
16 ~~animal, every effort shall be made to contact the secondary owner listed by microchip registries as~~
17 ~~soon as possible, not to exceed 72 hours.~~

18 ~~(f) No animal shelter shall transfer any dog, cat, or ferret that is received from outside of~~
19 ~~the state without an official health certificate and until the quarantine requirements in RSA 437:8,~~
20 ~~IV have been met.]~~

21 ***(a) Have on the premises a microchip scanner and shall maintain a file of***
22 ***recognized pet retrieval agencies, including but not limited to national tattoo microchip***
23 ***registries.***

24 ***(b) Inspect for tattoos, ear tags, or other permanent forms of positive***
25 ***identification and shall scan for a microchip upon admission of an unclaimed or***
26 ***abandoned animal as defined by RSA 437:18, IV and prior to transferring ownership of an***
27 ***unclaimed or abandoned animal where an animal is not known. Registered owners or***
28 ***agents shall be contacted as soon as possible, not to exceed 72 hours, and alerted that the***
29 ***animal has been taken in and is available to be reclaimed.***

30 ***(c) Contact the secondary owner listed by microchip registries as soon as***
31 ***possible, not to exceed 72 hours, if listed owners or agents cannot be located or refuse to***
32 ***reclaim possession of the animal.***

33 3 Applicability. Section 2 of this act shall take effect at 12:01 a.m., 2 years from the date on
34 which the commissioner of the department of agriculture, markets, and food certifies to the secretary
35 of state and the director of the office of legislative services, that the animal records database
36 established in RSA 437:8-a is operational.

37 4 Effective Date.

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- 1 I. Section 2 shall take effect as prescribed in section 3.
- 2 II. The remainder of this act shall take effect upon its passage.