

TORONTO LIFE

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TORONTO LIFE

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Toronto looking at ending failed pet-licensing program

Toronto Animal Services Licence Application

All dogs and cats living in Toronto must be licensed with Toronto Animal Services and wear the City-issued tag.

Office: Toronto CA/201 Phone: 416-338-PEIS (7387) x 311 • Mon - Fri • 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Mail: Mail completed form and cheque or credit card information to: **Toronto Animal Services**, 35 Spadina St., Toronto, ON, M5S 2S9
In person: 35 Spadina St. or at any Animal Centre here over! Your pet licence will be mailed to the address listed on an Animal Services' location

Owner					
First Name		Last Name		Valid Credit Card on file	
Address					
Home Telephone		Alternate Telephone		E-mail	
City					
Age		Sex		Postal code	
Type of pet: <input type="checkbox"/> Dog <input type="checkbox"/> Cat					
Pet					
Dog / Cat Name		Primary Breed/Secondary Breed		Primary Colour/Secondary Colour	
Age					
Mandatory Clinic					
Mandatory Clinic Address					
Mandatory Clinic Telephone					
Annual Fee (Dogs & Cats \$30.00)					
Regular Rates	Dog	Cat	Senior Citizens Rate (50% discount)	Dog	Cat
Unaltered	\$60 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$50 <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered	\$30 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$25 <input type="checkbox"/>
Sterilized/Neutered	\$25 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$15 <input type="checkbox"/>	Sterilized/Neutered	\$15 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$7.50 <input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Assistance Dog - No Fee (Visually Impaired)					
Hearing Impaired - Registration Fee	\$3.00 <input type="checkbox"/>				
*Must be residency of customer/owner. For Dogs of Canada, the Low Income Tax Credit is a satisfactory substitute.					

A Toronto pet licence application; dogs cost \$60 (unaltered) or \$25 (sterilized); cats cost \$50 (unaltered) or \$15 (sterilized). Seniors get a 50 per cent discount.

nudging from the city. But enforcement costs money. And this program is not very profitable: It brings in \$3 to \$4 per licence; at about 100,000 total dog and cat licences citywide, that works out to less than \$400,000....

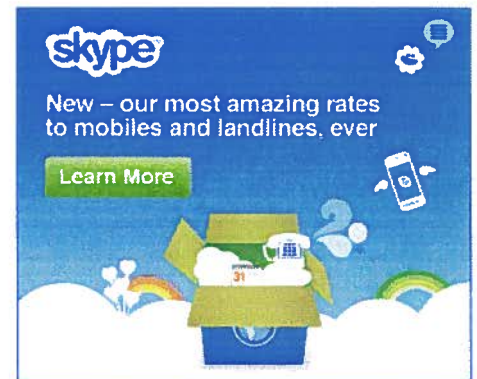
Staff are bringing forward a report on the merits of the licensing program to the city's licensing and standards committee's meeting later this month. Alternatives might include lifetime licences rather than annual ones, says [municipal licensing and standards executive director **Jim Hart**]. But if the city's primary goal is to ensure that pets gone astray end up back home, rather than in shelters, the focus should perhaps be on ensuring owners tag or microchip their animals themselves, he said.

The issue isn't that the fees don't go to a good cause—the licensing fees support Toronto Animal Services and all the work they do—but that it might just be cheaper for the city to fund this kind of thing directly, especially if it's such an irritant. And given the mayor's hate-on for the [minor irritants coming from city hall](#), this one sounds like a no-brainer.

Here's a new entry in the "good in theory, not in practice" file. Toronto brought in a pet-licensing system to help control the animal population—and yes, the animal population, especially cats, is out of control. The problem is that due to lack of enforcement and really, really low participation from the public (90 per cent of pet owners couldn't be bothered), the system is basically worse than useless. **It offends pet owners**, who feel like they're being asked to license their kids, and it doesn't bring in any money. So the city is doing the sensible thing and looking at ditching the system.

Or so says the *Globe and Mail*:

That reluctance on owners' parts indicates the need for a little more



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