

RCW 16.52.015 Enforcement—Law enforcement agencies and animal care and control agencies. (1) Law enforcement agencies and animal care and control agencies may enforce the provisions of this chapter. Animal care and control agencies may enforce the provisions of this chapter in a county or city only if the county or city legislative authority has entered into a contract with the agency to enforce the provisions of this chapter.

(2) Animal control officers enforcing this chapter shall comply with the same constitutional and statutory restrictions concerning the execution of police powers imposed on law enforcement officers who enforce this chapter and other criminal laws of the state of Washington.

(3) Animal control officers have the following enforcement powers when enforcing this chapter:

(a) The power to issue civil penalties based on violations under RCW 16.52.360;

(b) The power to issue citations based on probable cause to offenders for civil infractions and misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor violations of this chapter or RCW 9.08.070 through 9.08.078 or 81.48.070;

(c) The power to cause a law enforcement officer to arrest and take into custody any person the animal control officer has probable cause to believe has committed or is committing a violation of this chapter or RCW 9.08.070 or 81.48.070. Animal control officers may make an oral complaint to a prosecuting attorney or a law enforcement officer to initiate arrest. The animal control officer causing the arrest shall file with the arresting agency a written complaint within 24 hours of the arrest, excluding Sundays and legal holidays, stating the alleged act or acts constituting a violation;

(d) The power to carry nonfirearm protective devices for personal protection;

(e) The power to prepare affidavits in support of search warrants and to execute search warrants when accompanied by law enforcement officers to investigate violations of this chapter or RCW 9.08.070 or 81.48.070, and to seize evidence of those violations.

(4) Upon request of an animal control officer who has probable cause to believe that a person has violated this chapter or RCW 9.08.070 or 81.48.070, a law enforcement agency officer may arrest the alleged offender. [2023 c 208 § 2; 2011 c 172 § 2; 2003 c 53 § 110; 1994 c 261 § 3.]

Intent—Effective date—2003 c 53: See notes following RCW 2.48.180.

Finding—Intent—1994 c 261: See note following RCW 16.52.011.