

RCW 16.30.040 Confiscation—Duties of animal control authority or law enforcement officer. (1) The animal control authority or a law enforcement officer may immediately confiscate a potentially dangerous wild animal if:

(a) The animal control authority or law enforcement officer has probable cause to believe that the animal was acquired after July 22, 2007, in violation of RCW 16.30.030;

(b) The animal poses a public safety or health risk;

(c) The animal is in poor health and condition as a result of the possessor; or

(d) The animal is being held in contravention of the [this] act.

(2) A potentially dangerous wild animal that is confiscated under this section may be returned to the possessor only if the animal control authority or law enforcement officer establishes that the possessor had possession of the animal prior to July 22, 2007, and the return does not pose a public safety or health risk.

(3) The animal control authority or law enforcement officer shall serve notice upon the possessor in person or by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, notifying the possessor of the confiscation, that the possessor is responsible for payment of reasonable costs for caring and providing for the animal during the confiscation, and that the possessor must meet the requirements of subsection (2) of this section in order for the animal to be returned to the possessor.

(4) If a potentially dangerous wild animal confiscated under this section is not returned to the possessor, the animal control authority or law enforcement officer may release the animal to a facility such as a wildlife sanctuary or a facility exempted pursuant to RCW 16.30.020. If the animal control authority or law enforcement officer is unable to relocate the animal within a reasonable period of time, it may euthanize the animal.

(5) An animal control authority or law enforcement officer may euthanize a potentially dangerous wild animal under this section only if all known reasonable placement options, including relocation to a wildlife sanctuary, are unavailable.

(6) This section applies to animal confiscations on or after July 22, 2007. [2007 c 238 s 5.]