

December 1, 2005

**REVISED PERMIT PLAN FOR
CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT DOG FRIENDLY AREAS**

I. Introduction

The Chicago Park District currently operates several enclosed “Dog Friendly Areas” (“DFAs”) (sometimes referred to as “Dog Parks”) where dogs can exercise, play and socialize “off-leash.” Until recently, the Park District has operated these DFAs in compliance with the Code of the Chicago Park District and its own administrative decisions, as well as under City of Chicago ordinances. Recently, the Administrator of the Cook County Department of Animal and Rabies Control, acting under Section 20-15 of the Cook County Animal and Rabies Control Ordinance, has issued Regulation VIII to regulate the operation of DFAs.

Regulation VIII contains a requirement that “all dog parks within Cook County” must develop a plan for the operation of its DFAs consistent with this regulation. This plan must contain a “(licensing/permitting and/or user of a key or keycard system) satisfactory to” the Administrator and require that in addition to a City of Chicago license and current rabies vaccination, any dog in a DFA must have had an examination, additional vaccinations and a recent fecal sample.

The Park District has developed this permit plan for the use of DFAs to make them operate in compliance with the Code of the Chicago Park District including Chapter VII, Section B 10 of the Code relating to

“Bringing Animals In Park,” with its own administrative decisions, with City of Chicago ordinances and with Cook County ordinances and regulations.

II. Conditions For Entering DFAs

The Chicago Park District will require that people escorting dogs into DFAs shall have obtained from licensed veterinarians permits and registration tags for all dogs issued pursuant to the requirements in Regulation VIII. People bringing dogs into a DFA must have both a permit with them and a registration tag for each dog. The registration tag, Cook County Rabies Tag must be on the dog’s collar or harness. The permit and registration tag may be used at any officially sanctioned Park District DFA. Any permit and registration tag shall be valid only for a single season no matter when purchased. A single season is defined as the period running from January 1st of any year through December 31st of the same year.

III. Operation Of DFAs

A. The Park District will operate its DFAs in compliance with this plan and where possible, in cooperation with local community groups.

B. At each entrance to every DFA, the Park District shall post a sign containing the rules that any person bringing a dog into a DFA must follow. Such sign shall contain at least the following messages:

1. Only dogs that are healthy, fully immunized and dewormed may use this area. People bringing dogs into this area must have with

them a permit for the current season for each dog, and each dog must have a current Cook County Rabies Tag and a registration tag for the current season on their collar.

2. Owners are legally responsible for their dogs and any injuries caused by their dogs;
3. Owners must remain with their dogs, and dogs must be watched at all times;
4. Dogs must be leashed prior to entering and upon leaving the area. Gates to this DFA must remain closed at all times;
5. Owners must immediately clean up after their dogs. Failure to do so can result in a fine up to \$500. (*City of Chicago Ordinance 7-12-420*)
6. Dogs with a known history of, or who exhibit, dangerous behavior are prohibited;
7. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult;
8. Only three dogs per person allowed;
9. Puppies under four months old and female dogs in heat are prohibited.
10. Failure to have a valid permit and registration tag, or the violation of these rules may result in the commission of a misdemeanor under Cook County ordinance subject to \$1,000 fine and/or a six-month imprisonment.

C. The Chicago Park District shall also post a sign at each DFA explaining how permits and registration tags allowing dogs to enter a DFA may be obtained.

D. Each DFA must have a least one leak-proof container available for storage of waste materials before disposal to control vermin and insects. These containers shall be emptied periodically and maintained in a sanitary condition.

IV. Licensed Veterinarians To Issue Permits

A. Permits and registration tags for dogs using DFAs will be issued by licensed veterinarians in Cook County who participate in the permitting plan. The Park District will work with the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association to obtain the cooperation of all licensed veterinarians in Cook County. The Park District will have a list of cooperating veterinarians available at its web site and at other locations. The Park District will make all documents and tags necessary to complete the permit-application process available to all cooperating veterinarians.

B. The permit-application process shall consist of three documents:

1. A Permit Application;
2. A statement of DFA Rules And Procedures, a copy of which must be signed to show that it has been read.

C. The Park District will work with cooperating veterinarians to ensure the smooth functioning of the permitting process. In addition to

making all necessary documents available to cooperating veterinarians, the Park District will sell registration tags to cooperating veterinarians for a (\$4) charge agreed to by the Park District and cooperating veterinarians. When issuing the tags, the cooperating veterinarians may charge a fee of (\$5) to cover the cost of the tags and of processing permits.

D. Once any cooperating veterinarian has issued a permit and registration tag for any dog, the veterinarian shall provide the Park District with a copy of the completed permit application identified in paragraph B above for each dog.

V. Veterinarians To Follow The Requirements of Rule VIII

A. Veterinarians will issue permits and tags pursuant to the requirements of Rule VIII.

B. To obtain a permit and registration tag, the dog's owner or other person responsible for each dog for which a permit and tag is sought must do the following:

1. Show proof that the dog has a current rabies vaccination in compliance with the Illinois Animal Control act (*510 ILCS 5*); and
2. Complete a Chicago Park District permit and registration tag application providing written proof showing that a licensed veterinarian (or other authorized person) has vaccinated each dog for the following:
 - a. distemper;
 - b. hepatitis;

- c. parainfluenza;
 - d. parvovirus; and
 - e. bordetella vaccine (for Kennel Cough).
 - f. evidence of vaccination tithers where applicable.
3. The requirement for any or all of vaccinations listed in paragraph 3 may be waived if the owner or other responsible person presents written proof that the County Administrator has granted an exemption from this requirement.
4. The owner or other responsible person must show that each dog has had a fecal sample tested within 9 months before applying for a permit and registration tag.

VI. Enforcement.

A. The Park District will work to implement the permit plan for the operation of DFAs through education of the public and where necessary, through cooperation with law enforcement. While Park District Security Officers do not have the authority under Illinois law to issue citations, they will cooperate with law enforcement agencies to enforce the plan;

B. The Park District will cooperate with the Administrator of the Cook County Department of Animal and Rabies Control to implement this plan;

C. The Park District will cooperate with the City of Chicago Department of Animal Control to review this plan;

D. The Park District will work through DFA support groups to encourage compliance with the permitting plan:

1. Representatives from local DFA support groups who are at a DFA will be encouraged to educate and to remind DFA users about the permit and registration requirements;
2. Representatives from local DFA support groups will be encouraged to report to the Cook County Department of Animal And Rabies Control persons who bring unpermitted dogs into DFAs and fail to leave when asked.

E. Park District employees who observe that unpermitted dogs are using DFAs should educate and remind DFA users about the permit and registration requirements. If DFA users with unpermitted dogs fail to leave a DFA when asked or repeatedly bring unpermitted dogs into a DFA, Park District employees shall report this conduct to the Cook County Department of Animal And Rabies Control.

F. Park District Security Officers who become aware that unpermitted dogs are using Park District DFAs shall report such violations to the Cook County Department of Animal And Rabies Control.

VI. Public Awareness And Implementation

The Park District will work with the Cook County Department of Animal And Rabies Control to educate the public about the permit plan and the importance of making DFAs healthy places for dogs and their people.