



The Leon County

LINK

Connecting Citizens with Leon County Services

Animal Control Ordinance Changes to Enforce the Humane Treatment of Animals

The Leon County Board of County Commissioners recently approved new rules regarding animal control that will provide for better protection of pets and the public.



The new ordinance addresses several issues including new definitions, general enforcement and penalties, public nuisances, and rabies vaccination requirements. In addition, significant changes were implemented to address the humane care of animals, animals in motor vehicles, and the dangerous or aggressive animal classification process.

Pet owners who tether their dogs outside must use a properly fitting collar or harness and a chain that does not injure the animal. The chain must be a minimum of six feet long or three times the length of the dog as measured from the nose to the base of the tail, whichever is greater. Also, owners are not allowed to confine an animal to a vacant or abandoned structure, or leave an animal outside during a natural disaster.

Pet owners are no longer permitted to leave their pet unattended inside a motor vehicle where conditions, including heat or lack of water, could result in the suffering or death of an animal. Animal Control officers now have the right to take any necessary action to rescue the animal. Violation of these rules may result in a fine up to \$500.

Additionally, there are changes in how aggressive and dangerous animals are classified, allowing for the director of the Animal Control Division to make the initial determination. The owner's right to contest the classification, where to file an appeal, and how to conduct the hearing was streamlined to comply with recent court rulings.

For more information on the animal control ordinance changes, please call the Leon County Division of Animal Control at 487-3172 or click on *Animal Control* under *Departments* at www.leoncountyfl.gov.

Join County Volunteers for "Make a Difference Tallahassee"

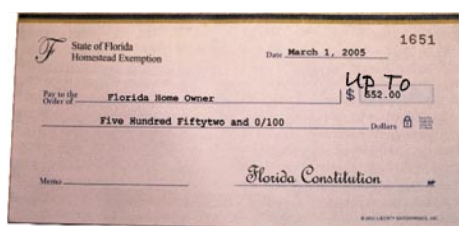


Make a Difference Tallahassee is a day of service where neighbors help neighbors. The event, which takes place on Saturday, Feb. 19, will unite County residents with students from FAMU, FSU, Keiser College, and TCC to help more than 20 local nonprofit agencies that address community issues, such as animal

services, children and youth, disaster services, elder care services, health services, hunger and homelessness. *Make a Difference Tallahassee 2005* will start at 8 a.m. in the Union Ballrooms on the FSU Campus. After signing in, volunteers will be treated to a light breakfast to kick off the event and then sent to the agency sites at 9 a.m. for three hours of volunteer work. At noon, volunteers will wrap up their projects and return to the Union Ballrooms at FSU for lunch, a message from a special guest speaker, door prizes, and a reflection on the day. For more information or to register for the event, contact Jeri Bush at VolunteerLEON, 921-3015 or jerib@leoncountyfl.gov.

Remember to File for Your Homestead Exemption: It's Like Money in Your Pocket!

If you have had any change in homeownership in the last year, make sure you have applied for Homestead Exemption by March 1. The Florida Constitution grants homeowners a \$25,000 exemption on the appraised value of their home. This year, a full exemption is worth \$552 in tax savings. The County Property Appraiser's Office is accepting applications throughout February. Applicants need two forms of identification, such as a Florida driver's license, voter registration card, or vehicle tag number, and the Social Security numbers of all owners. For more information, call 488-6102 or visit the Property Appraiser's website at www.leoncountyfl.gov/propappr.



Board of County Commissioners Meets at New Time



The Board of County Commissioners will now begin regularly scheduled Commission meetings at 3 p.m. On Jan. 11, the Board approved changing the regular meeting time from 5 p.m. to 3 p.m. to allow for additional citizen participation. The Board will recess for dinner at 5 p.m., then resume at 6 p.m. with public hearings. Meetings will continue to be held every second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Tuesday's Board workshops will take place prior to the regular meeting at 12 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. Board of County Commissioner meetings and workshops are broadcast live on Comcast Channel 16. You can also watch meetings in Real Player format, as well as view the Commission calendar, at www.leoncountyfl.gov under Commission Meetings. Please call 488-9962 for more information.

Leon County Libraries Celebrate Black History Month

Come celebrate Black History Month with a series of programs presented by the LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System. The programs are free and open to the public. For the complete library calendar, visit www.leoncountyfl.gov/library.

Unite, Share, Create: Celebrating African American Heritage - A special program featuring storytelling, music, poetry, and crafts for children of all ages and their families **Saturday, Feb. 19, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

Main Library, 200 W. Park Avenue
For more information, call 487-2665.

Florida Humanities Council Road Scholars Program: "James Weldon Johnson" - Meet LeRoy Mitchell, Jr. as James Weldon Johnson, a renaissance man from Jacksonville, Florida. Mitchell will reflect on Johnson's life as a composer, poet, diplomat, and civil rights activist. **Thursday, Feb. 24, 6:30 p.m.**

Dr. B. L. Perry, Jr. Branch Library, 2804 S. Adams St.
For more information, call 487-1815.

All That Jazz!

Special guest jazz musicians: Sir Charles Atkins, keyboardist and President of the Apalachee Blues Society; trumpeter



Don Fortner of the "Don Juan Band", and drummer Dale Robinson, will lead a discussion on the history of jazz in America and play examples of jazz through the ages. Bring the family! Children of all ages will be invited to make their own musical instruments.

Thursday, Feb. 24, 5 to 7 p.m.
Lake Jackson Branch Library, 3840 N. Monroe St.
For more information, call 488-2665.

February 2005

Board of County Commissioners Schedule

Please note the new meeting time!

8 Commission Meeting 3 p.m.
Public Hearings 6 p.m.
Leon County Courthouse, Commission Chambers

22 Commission Meeting 3 p.m.
Public Hearings 6 p.m.
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The Link is produced by Leon County Public Information, 488-9962.