

**TOWN OF BENNINGTON**

**LOCAL LAW #\_\_ of 2026**

**“A LOCAL LAW ESTABLISHING ZONING GUIDELINES FOR KENNELS IN THE TOWN OF BENNINGTON”**

**SECTION I. TITLE**

This local law shall be “A Local Law Establishing Zoning Guidelines for Kennels in the Town of Bennington.”

**SECTION II. AUTHORITY**

This Kennel Local Law is adopted pursuant to Municipal Home Rule Law of the State of New York, which authorizes the Town of Bennington to adopt zoning provisions that, in accordance with the Town of Bennington Comprehensive Plan, "develop and adopt zoning provisions that advance and protect the health, safety and welfare of the community."

**SECTION III. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Kennel Local Law is to amend the Zoning Law to establish regulations governing the establishment, maintenance, and operation of dog kennels and other dog boarding facilities. It also aims to enable the Town to maintain an ongoing record of both commercial and noncommercial kennels and to ensure the healthy and humane treatment of dogs housed in such facilities. Additionally, this law is intended to protect the rights of Bennington residents to the peaceful enjoyment of their property.

Puppy mills are banned in the Town of Bennington as per New York State Law. Breeding of dogs for the purposes of fighting or bait is expressly prohibited.

**SECTION IV. DEFINITIONS**

1. **BOARDING:** Boarding means the temporary housing, feeding, care, and supervision of dogs owned by persons other than the property owner or operator, for a fee or other compensation. Boarding includes both daytime and overnight care but does not include the temporary keeping of dogs belonging to family members or guests of the property owner, or the care of dogs by a licensed veterinarian in the course of veterinary treatment.
2. **BREEDER:** A person who:
  - a. Publicly or privately sells or offers for sale any dog belonging to another person for consideration, a fee or a commission or percentage of the sale

price;

- b. Transfers dogs at wholesale or resale to another; or
  - c. Offers or maintains dogs at wholesale for resale to another.
3. **DOG:** Any member of the species *Canis lupis familiaris*, regardless of age, sex, breed, ownership status, or behavior around humans.
  4. **EXCESSIVE NOISE:** Dog(s) shall not engage in excessive loud howling or barking, crying or whining, or conduct itself in such a manner so as to unreasonably and habitually disturb the comfort or repose of any person other than the owner of such dog. For clarification, see Local Law No. \_\_\_ of 2026 for permitted criteria relating to barking.
  5. **FOSTER CARE PROVIDER:** Any individual voluntarily providing temporary care for one or more dogs in their home that remain in the custody and under the responsibility of an animal shelter.
  6. **GIANT BREEDS:** Dogs of over 100 pounds.
  7. **KENNEL:** The keeping of more than six (6) dogs over the age of four (4) months at any single residence/property shall constitute a kennel. For purposes of this definition, guide dogs, hearing dogs, police work dogs, and service dogs, shall not be counted toward the six (6) dog limit.

**COMMERCIAL KENNEL:** Any property within the Town of Bennington wherein (6) dogs over the age of four (4) months at any single residence/property are kept or maintained for any commercial purpose, including but not limited to boarding, grooming, letting for hire, or training for a fee. For purposes of this definition, the seven-dog threshold applies regardless of the number of contiguous or non-contiguous building lots owned, leased, or occupied by the same individual or entity; all such lots shall be considered collectively in determining whether the threshold is met. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the following facilities shall not be deemed commercial kennels: not-for-profit kennels, town dog kennel, dog hospitals, unless engaged in commercial boarding; and groomers, unless engaged in commercial boarding.

8. **PRIMARY ENCLOSURE:** shall mean the area of confinement used for housing a dog and where the dog spends the majority of its time.
9. **PUPPY MILLS:** Overcrowded or unsanitary breeding facilities which mass-produce puppies that are typically sold when eight weeks old or younger.

10. **RESCUE ORGANIZATION:** Any facility where homeless, stray, abandoned, rescued or unwanted dogs are received, harbored, maintained or made available for adoption to the general public and which is owned, operated or maintained by a duly incorporated humane society, dog welfare society, society for the prevention of cruelty to dogs or other nonprofit or tax-exempt organization devoted to the welfare, protection or humane treatment of dogs.
11. **RESCUE ORGANIZATION NETWORKS (FOSTERING):** Any person or persons who houses dogs at the request of a duly incorporated humane society, dog welfare society, society for the prevention of the cruelty to dogs or other nonprofit or tax exempt organization devoted to the welfare, protection or human treatment of dogs who accepts dogs for the purpose of finding permanent adoptive homes for dogs and does not maintain a central facility for keeping dogs but rather uses a system of fostering in private homes or boarding or keeping pets in dog kennels.
12. **RUN AT LARGE:** Any dog which is unaccompanied or unrestrained or out of the control of the owner or harborer in a public place or on private lands without the knowledge, consent and approval of the owner and/or lawful occupant of such lands.

## **SECTION V. REGULATIONS**

1. A person may operate a kennel in the Town of Bennington only with a special use permit issued by the Town Board.
2. A kennel shall be permitted in the Town of Bennington in its designated Agricultural/Residential district only under the conditions set out in Section VII herein.
3. A special use permit application to operate a kennel in the Town of Bennington must be accompanied by a site plan detailing the following:
  - a. The location of the kennel, including distances from adjoining properties;
  - b. Screening measures such as shrubbery or fencing designed to limit dogs' ability to see other dogs or people, thereby reducing barking;
  - c. The design of the kennel, identifying the specific areas and dimensions allocated for each dog;
  - d. The types and/or sizes of dogs to be housed, to ensure that the kennel is appropriate for the breed and age of each dog;
  - e. Assurance that each area meets the minimum space requirements established by the Agriculture and Markets Law of the State of New York,

allowing dogs to move about naturally;

- f. Adequate lighting, space, and temperature to ensure the well-being of the dogs.
- g. Adequate off-street parking accommodations for customers, staff, and service providers.

## **SECTION VII. STANDARDS**

### **1. GENERAL FACILITY STANDARDS**

- a. All facilities and all interior components of each dog kennel shall be constructed of materials that ensure a sound physical structure, and shall be maintained so as to protect dogs from injury, ensure containment of dogs within the property, and restrict unauthorized entry of other dogs and humans to the building.
- b. Indoor building surfaces in direct contact with dogs shall be constructed of materials that are non-porous, water resistant, non-toxic and able to withstand regular cleaning and disinfection. Adequate drainage shall prevent the accumulation of water or other liquids on floors.
- c. Electrical power and running water shall be maintained to all parts of the facility that house dogs, with written emergency plans for back-up sources or relocation of the dogs to a safe environment in the event of outages lasting more than four hours.
- d. Readily accessible sinks shall be convenient to all dog care areas. Single service soap and towels or electric hand dryers shall be available at all hand-washing locations.
- e. Ambient temperatures in all indoor dog housing areas shall be routinely maintained between sixty (60) and eighty (80) degrees Fahrenheit.
- f. Each dog shall be monitored and provided with an environment allowing maintenance of normal body temperature based on species, breed, body condition, medical condition, and age.
- g. Each dog kennel shall document regular maintenance of air handling systems according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- h. Ammonia levels shall be kept at less than two parts per million.
- i. Each dog kennel shall provide separate housing areas from uninfected, unexposed dogs, for the housing of any dog with an infectious disease that may be transmitted within the kennel environment and requiring isolation

as determined by a licensed veterinarian. Doors separating such rooms from the remainder of the facility shall be kept closed.

- j. Each dog kennel shall minimize continuous exposure of personnel and dogs to sound levels exceeding eighty-five decibels. Active measures shall be taken and documented to minimize sound levels in housing areas. Such measures may include modified kennel design, relocation of particularly loud dogs, or use of visual barriers, sound baffling, and behavioral enrichment protocols. Each dog kennel shall use a decibel-meter at a minimum of once weekly to measure the level of sound in their kennels during cleaning and resting times. A record of such measurements and the date such measurements were recorded shall be maintained by each dog kennel.
- k. Each dog kennel shall provide dog housing areas that provide adequate lighting and a means to maintain diurnal light cycles pursuant to an established schedule. All dogs shall have a minimum of eight hours each of light and darkness within a twenty-four-hour cycle.
- l. Each dog kennel shall establish and maintain a written plan for pest and vermin control including the following:
  - 1. Method of controlling rodent infestation that is effective and safe for both humans, and dogs housed in the facility;
  - 2. A record or copies of service reports from outside service providers related to pest and vermin control that documents dates, methods, locations, and outcomes, if applicable; and
  - 3. Food stored in rodent proof containers to prevent spoilage, contamination, and infestation once opened, if packaging has been damaged, or as otherwise required by such plan.
- m. The use of unattended drop boxes for intake of dogs is prohibited.

## **2. HOUSING**

- a. Each permitted dog kennel shall provide each dog in its custody or possession with a suitable primary enclosure that meets the requirements prescribed in this section.
- b. Unsupervised tethering for periods exceeding thirty minutes is prohibited.
- c. Dog housing shall meet the following requirements:
  - 1. materials used in housing construction shall be non-porous, water-resistant, non-toxic, and able to withstand regular cleaning and disinfection;
  - 2. drainage shall prevent accumulation of water or other liquids on floors; and

3. housing shall be structurally sound, in good repair and maintained in a safe, working condition to properly confine dogs, prevent injury, keep dogs safe from predation, keep other dogs out, and allow dogs to remain dry and clean.
- d. Wire or slat-bottom cages are prohibited unless a solid tray is provided for the cage bottom to prevent injury to the dog.
  - e. Dog populations shall be segregated appropriately, in accordance with the following requirements:
    1. dogs and cats shall be housed in separate rooms with efforts made to minimize the exposure of cats to the barking of dogs to the extent practicable;
    2. dogs of the same species shall be separated by age groups (e.g. neonates and juveniles; adults) except that nursing dogs may be housed with their offspring;
    3. dogs with known or suspected infectious diseases shall be housed in isolation areas as prescribed in section VIII (1)(i) of this Local Law;
    4. nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to prevent the temporary housing of dogs in areas without such segregation for medical care and in pre- and post-operative surgical areas.
  - f. Well-socialized, healthy dogs may be housed with one or more conspecifics. Dogs housed together shall be compatible and have similar environmental requirements. Such housing shall not allow exposure to numerous different dogs on a frequently changing basis.
  - g. Prior to being housed with one or more other dogs the following conditions shall apply:
    1. all dogs are vaccinated and dewormed against the pathogens specified in section four hundred twenty-nine of New York Agriculture and Markets Law;
    2. physical examinations verifying the absence of clinical signs of infectious diseases have been performed;
    3. surgical sterilization or housing in same-sex groupings, except littermates under twelve weeks of age; and
    4. the dog has a collar or tag to facilitate visual identification, unless the dog's age or condition is such that application of visual identification is not practicable or would be detrimental to the dog's health.
  - h. Dogs that are poorly socialized, fearful, or aggressive towards other dogs or that are ill, injured, or within a week of whelping or queening shall be housed individually in a suitably sized, enriched primary enclosure.

1. Littermates under the age of twelve weeks may be co-housed in an isolation area if all individuals are infected with the same infectious, contagious, parasitic or communicable disease.
  2. Dogs and within a week of giving birth or until separation from the offspring shall be provided with a box with a solid floor large enough to allow the dog to lie fully stretched on its side, permitting all offspring to nurse and to accommodate all offspring until weaned; and an area large enough to allow the dam or queen to leave the whelping box.
- i. Each enclosure shall clearly indicate the identities of all dogs contained within, specifying each dog's unique identifier as required under section four hundred twenty-three of the New York Agriculture and Markets Law. Each dog shall also be individually identified.
  - j. All primary enclosures shall provide sufficient space to allow each dog, regardless of species, to:
    1. make all normal postural adjustments;
    2. fully stretch its body and have sufficient room to circle, lie down, and stand upright without the head or tail touching the sides of the enclosure even with the presence of water and food bowls, beds, litter boxes, and other normal cage objects; and
    3. allow dogs to sit, sleep and eat away from areas of their enclosure where they defecate and urinate.
  - k. Any primary enclosure housing two or more dogs shall provide the following:
    1. sufficient space and quality of environment to allow all dogs to maintain social distances;
    2. adequate areas for hiding, resting, feeding, and elimination with sufficient space to separate areas and the ability for all dogs to access those areas.
  - l. Regardless of the size of the primary enclosure, the number of dogs cohoused in a primary enclosure at one time shall not exceed the following thresholds:
    1. five adult dogs; or
    2. one litter of puppies.
  - m. Puppies and less than sixteen weeks of age shall not be housed in the same enclosure with adults other than their dam or queen, or foster or surrogate dam or queen.
  - n. All dogs housed with one or more conspecifics shall be separated for feeding or observed at feeding times for antagonistic interactions that pose a safety and welfare concern.

- o. Dogs shall not be housed outdoors for more than twelve hours within a twenty-four-hour period.
- p. Outdoor primary enclosures shall comply with all housing requirements prescribed in this section and shall provide the following:
  - 1. protection from the elements at all times;
  - 2. adequate drainage to prevent the accumulation of excess water in or around the enclosures;
  - 3. a moisture-proof, insulated kennel structure large enough to simultaneously accommodate all dogs in the enclosure, unless immediate entry to an indoor portion of the enclosure is accessible
  - 4. security from unauthorized entry of other dogs into the enclosure;
  - 5. a separate, shaded area sufficient to simultaneously accommodate all dogs, except when dogs have immediate access to an indoor portion of the enclosure;
  - 6. clean dry bedding at all times and a heat source when the outdoor temperature falls below fifty degrees Fahrenheit;
- q. For any dog in the custody or possession of any dog kennel for fourteen days or longer, alternative housing shall be provided in one of the following formats:
  - 1. enriched cages at least twice the size otherwise required for an dog's size;
  - 2. foster care in a private home, office, or other suitable off-site location; or;
  - 3. room housing.

### 3. **BEHAVIOR**

- a. Each dog kennel shall take measures, by way of written questionnaire, personal interview or other means deemed necessary by the Dog Control Officer to collect a behavioral history for each dog in its custody or possession at the time of intake.
- b. Routine care and handling of any dog in the custody or possession of each dog kennel, including the timing of feeding and sanitation procedures shall be performed on a regular daily schedule.
- c. At least twenty minutes of positive social interactions, in addition to time spent providing feeding, cleaning, basic husbandry or care with people shall be provided by each dog kennel on a daily basis for any dog in such kennel's custody or possession except those so poorly socialized to humans that such contact would be unpleasant, stressful or pose a safety risk to other dogs or humans. Daily handling and positive exposure to

people and other dogs shall be provided for any dog less than four months of age, while taking appropriate precautions to limit infectious disease. Positive social interactions shall include but not be limited to petting an dog, walking, reward based training or interactive play with toys. Time spent providing basic husbandry and dog care shall not be used to offset the social interaction time requirements of this subdivision.

- d. Each dog kennel shall provide each dog in its custody or possession opportunity for exercise and exploration in the following manner:
  - 1. all dogs residing in the kennel for fourteen days or longer shall be permitted time outside of their primary enclosure to exercise and explore for at least twenty minutes per day five days per week; or
  - 2. in the event such activities are not possible due to any dog's health, behavior, order of the commissioner or legal restriction, the condition and reason shall be documented in such dog's medical record.
- e. Each dog kennel shall implement additional measures for enrichment and stress reduction for any dog in its custody or possession showing persistent hiding, hostile interactions with other dogs, reduced activity, depression or social withdrawal, barrier frustration or aggression, self-injurious behavior, repetitive non goal-oriented movement, or stereotypic behaviors. Such measures shall be documented in such dog's medical record created pursuant to section four hundred twenty-three of the New York Agriculture and Markets Law.
- f. Use of aversive methods in dog training or behavioral modification is prohibited except in reward-based method situations, where skilled application of the least aversive method that is expected to succeed may be appropriate.
- g. Any dog in the custody or possession of a licensed dog kennel that is observed to be experiencing mental suffering or behavioral deterioration shall be assessed and appropriately treated.

#### 4. **HEALTH & NUTRITION**

- a. Each dog kennel shall provide each dog under its care with fresh, potable water at all times unless otherwise directed by a duly licensed veterinarian.
- b. Each dog kennel shall feed each dog under its care a complete and nutritionally balanced, species-specific and life-stage-appropriate diet as indicated by the dog's age, weight, and medical health, or as directed by a duly licensed veterinarian in accordance with the written protocols

required by section four hundred twenty-three of New York Agriculture and Markets Law.

- c. Food shall be provided at least once daily for adult dogs, at least twice daily for dogs less than six months of age, and at least three times daily for dogs less than two months of age.
- d. Perishable dog food shall be refrigerated.
- e. Dog food and water containers shall be present in sufficient number and location to safely enable each dog in the enclosure to access an adequate supply of food and water. Food and water bowls shall be of the type that can be easily sanitized, be kept clean and shall be cleaned and disinfected prior to use by a different dog, unless disposable bowls are used and replaced between dogs.
- f. Each dog shall be observed during or following each feeding time to ensure daily food intake, or at least once every twenty-four hours for dogs continually offered food. Such observations shall be recorded.
- g. Humane and safe physical restraint to limit some or all normal voluntary movement of any dog in each dog kennel's care shall minimize fear, pain, stress and suffering for the dog, protect both the dog and personnel from harm, and be of the least intensity and duration required to allow the specific procedure or procedures to be performed properly.
- h. Frightened or fractious dogs may be appropriately tranquilized, under the orders and supervision of a duly licensed veterinarian, if they cannot be restrained safely and humanely.
- i. No physical force shall be used as punishment or in anger.
- j. Handling methods shall minimize the chance of escape and ensure the safety of both humans and dogs.
- k. Restraint devices and handling techniques employed by each dog kennel shall be used in a manner that minimizes dog stress and risk of injury to both dogs and personnel, in the event such devices and techniques are necessary for the safe handling of the dog.
- l. All equipment shall be maintained in good working order.

5. **PERMIT REGULATIONS AND INSPECTIONS**

- a. Kennels must prominently display their special use permit on the premises.
- b. No person who has been convicted of cruelty to dogs or otherwise deemed to have mistreated or harmed dogs shall be issued a permit to operate a kennel.
- c. No person who has been convicted of cruelty to dogs or otherwise deemed to have mistreated or harmed dogs shall be employed or volunteer at any kennel.
- d. A permit issued on the basis of false information supplied by the applicant shall be revoked and the operation of the subject kennel shall be terminated.
- e. The County Building Inspector and the Dog Control Officer shall conduct an inspection of the applicant's facilities prior to the issuance of a permit pursuant to this section, and annual inspections of the applicant's facilities permitted pursuant to this section prior to renewal of such permit. The Dog Control Officer may periodically conduct unannounced inspections of such facilities, and whenever, in the discretion of the Dog Control Officer, a complaint warrants such investigation. Kennels permitted pursuant to this section shall provide open hours to the Dog Control Officer so that inspections can occur in a timely manner. Renewal of a permit shall not be granted until all outstanding violations issued pursuant to this article are corrected and any outstanding monetary penalties assessed pursuant to this article are paid in full. Such permit shall be renewable annually, in accordance with the Town's annually adopted fee schedule. All applicable permit fees, as established by the Town Board and subject to change, shall be set forth in the Town's fee schedule. The Town Board may decline to grant or renew, or may suspend or revoke a kennel permit, on any one or more of the following grounds, provided that before any of the aforementioned actions are taken pursuant to this section, the Town Board shall hold a hearing, upon due notice to the permittee in accordance with any regulations promulgated by the Town, and provided further that any action of the Town Board is subject to judicial review in a proceeding under article seventy-eight of the civil practice law and rules:
  - 1. material misstatement in the permit application;
  - 2. material misstatement in or falsification of records required to be kept pursuant to this article, or under any regulation promulgated thereunder, or failure to allow the Dog Control Officer to inspect records of kennel;
  - 3. violation of any provision of this article or conviction of a violation pertaining to humane treatment of animals, cruelty to

- animals, endangering the life or health of an animal, or violation of any federal, state, or local law pertaining to the care, treatment, sale, possession, or handling of animals or any regulation or rule relating to the endangerment of the life or health of an animal;
4. failure to renew a permit within the period prescribed herein; or
  5. the applicant was previously licensed as a pet dealer pursuant to article twenty-six-A of the New York Agriculture and Markets Law.
- f. Any owner who possesses six (6) or more dogs as of the effective date of this Local Law shall be exempt from the permit requirements of this Local Law. However, if the number of such dogs is reduced for any reason, the owner may not acquire additional dogs that would exceed the permitted limit unless and until a Special Use Permit is obtained.
- g. Noncommercial and mixed kennels are required to apply for and secure a kennel permit.
- h. Noncommercial kennels housing between seven (7) and nine (9) dogs will not be required to meet all the requirements for commercial kennels. They will be required to demonstrate that they are providing adequate care in terms of feeding, water, sanitation, exercise and other aspects of best practice of dog care without having to provide housing as cited for commercial kennels. If upon inspection by the dog control officer, it is determined that the standard of care is not adequate, they will not be issued a permit and will have to make other arrangements for the dogs at their address.
- i. Noncommercial kennels as described in Section (g) above will be inspected yearly to ensure that the health and safety of the dogs in their care is being maintained. The Dog Control Officer can inspect the premises of any kennel whether commercial, non-commercial or mixed at any time when they deem that adequate health and safety conditions are not being met.
- j. Foster care providers may only foster six dogs over the age of four (4) months at a time. A mother and pups or a group of pups may be fostered together and shall be counted as a single unit for purposes of this limitation. If the foster home already has a dog, they must consult with the fostering organization to determine the compatibility of the dogs. Any foster care provider that seeks to house more than six (6) foster dogs at any given time must first obtain a Special Use Permit.

**SECTION IX. REVOCATION OF SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

1. **Grounds for Revocation.** The Town may revoke a Special Use Permit for a kennel if the permit holder:
  - a. Violates any condition of the permit;
  - b. Violates any provision of this local law, Town Code, or applicable state or federal law;
  - c. Fails to maintain the permitted use in a safe and lawful manner; or
  - d. Provides false or misleading information in the permit application.
2. **Notice and Opportunity to Cure.** Prior to revocation, the Code Enforcement Officer or Dog Control Officer shall provide the permit holder with written notice specifying the alleged violation(s). The permit holder shall have 30 days from the date of notice to correct the violation(s) or to request a hearing before the Town Board.
3. **Hearing.** If the violation is not corrected or a hearing is requested, the permit holder shall have the right to a public hearing before the Town Board, at which the permit holder may present evidence and testimony in their defense.
4. **Decision and Appeal.** The Town Board may revoke the permit following the hearing if it finds the violation persists. The permit holder may appeal the revocation to the Zoning Board of Appeals.
5. **Effect of Revocation.** Upon revocation, the permit holder shall cease all activities authorized by the Special Use Permit immediately or within a timeframe determined by the Town.

**SECTION X. AUTHORITY**

1. **Code Enforcement Officer.** The Code Enforcement Officer has the authority to examine the premises and locations of any buildings or structures in the Town of Bennington and shall determine whether they are in compliance with the existing laws, and shall have the authority to issue appearance tickets for violations of this Local Law. The Code Enforcement Officer shall keep a permanent record of all violations of this Local Law, whether reported by private citizens or by any board agency; officer or employee of the Town and such record shall show the disposition of all such violations.
2. **Dog Control Officer.** The Dog Control Officer has authority to inspect the premises and buildings and assess the conditions of the dogs within the buildings and structures in the Town of Bennington.

**SECTION XI. COMPLAINTS**

1. Filing. Whenever a suspected violation of the code occurs, any person may file a signed written complaint reporting such violation to the Dog Control Officer.
2. Contents. Written complaints made to the Dog Control Officer regarding any violations of the law must be made by a person with firsthand knowledge of the alleged violation or deficiency. Complainants must provide their name, address, and how the information regarding the complaint was legally obtained.
3. Investigation. The Dog Control Officer will investigate any written complaint made to him/her. All complaints shall be properly recorded, filed, and immediately investigated by the Dog Control Officer.
4. The Dog Control Officer shall, as needed, review any complaints or reports of potential code violations. Upon review, the Officer shall exercise prosecutorial discretion in determining whether enforcement action is warranted. Reports made solely on the basis of hearsay or concerns without an observed violation by the complainant shall not be reviewed. Should any enforcement action proceed to court, all determinations regarding violations, penalties, and remedies shall be made by a court of competent jurisdiction in accordance with the Town Code and applicable law.

**SECTION XII. PENALTIES**

A violation shall be an offense, punishable by a fine not to exceed \$100 or imprisonment for a period not to exceed six (6) months, or both. Each week's continued violation shall constitute a separate additional violation. The penalties set forth herein are subject to modification or amendment in accordance with the Town of Bennington Zoning Law, as may be adopted from time to time.

**SECTION XIII. SEVERABILITY**

Each separate provision of this Local Law shall be deemed independent of all other provisions herein, and if any provisions shall be deemed or declared invalid, all other provisions shall remain valid and enforceable.

**SECTION XIV. EFFECTIVE DATE**

The provisions of this Local Law shall take effect upon the filing of this law with the Secretary of State.