

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, it shall be unlawful for any person to perform a procedure that results in the partial or complete declawing (partial digital amputation) of a cat in the City of Tacoma.

(b) Notwithstanding the restrictions set forth in subsection (a) of this section, a person may perform a procedure to declaw a cat only if:

(1) The person performing the procedure is a licensed veterinarian; and

(2) The procedure has a therapeutic purpose.

(c) As used in this section:

(1) "Declaw" means to surgically remove or alter the claw or claws of a cat by a surgical procedure such as onychectomy or tendonectomy, in order to prevent the normal functioning of a cat's paws or toes. Tendonectomy is a surgical procedure where tendons to the cat's toes are severed in order to prevent their normal function. Declawing does not include the trimming of a nonviable claw husk or placing nonpermanent nail caps.

(2) "Therapeutic purpose" means a medically necessary procedure to address an existing or recurring infection, disease, injury, or abnormal condition in the claws, nail bed, or toe bone, that jeopardizes the cat's health. "Therapeutic purpose" does not include a procedure performed for a cosmetic or aesthetic purpose or to make the cat more convenient to keep or handle.

(d) A person found to be in violation of this section shall be subject to a civil fine of up to \$250, not including any statutory assessments.