

ORDINANCE 2025-30

**AN ORDINANCE
AMENDING CHAPTER 10 – ANIMALS
CHICKENS**

WHEREAS, the City of Lafayette recognizes the growing interest among residents in sustainable living practices, local food production, and responsible urban agriculture; and

WHEREAS, the current municipal code prohibits the ownership of chickens within city limits, limiting residents' ability to engage in small-scale urban farming; and

WHEREAS, allowing the keeping of chickens in residential areas, subject to reasonable regulations, can provide benefits such as access to fresh eggs and educational opportunities while promoting sustainability and self-sufficiency; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lafayette seeks to balance these benefits with the need to protect public health, safety and neighborhood harmony through appropriate regulations governing the care and keeping of chickens; and

WHEREAS, while this ordinance permits the keeping of chickens within city limits under specified conditions, it does not override any private restrictive covenants, homeowners' association rules, deed restrictions, or rental lease agreements that may prohibit or further regulate the keeping of chickens on certain properties; and

NOW, THEREFORE, be it ordained by the Common Council of the City of Lafayette, Indiana, as follows:

Section 1. Section 10.01.100 of the Lafayette Municipal Code entitled "Definitions" shall be amended by adding the following definitions in alphabetical order:

"Chicken" means a domestic bird typically kept on a farm. This definition does not include other fowl, such as, but not limited to, peacocks, turkeys, guineafowl, or waterfowl.

"Chicken flock" means one chicken or a group of two or more chickens which contains no more than five hens and no roosters.

"Chicken coop" means an enclosed structure for housing chickens that provides shelter from the elements.

“Chicken pen” means an enclosure that is connected to and/or surrounding a chicken coop for the purpose of allowing chickens to leave the coop while remaining in an enclosed, predator-safe environment.

Section 2. Section 10.01.100 of the Lafayette Municipal Code entitled “Definitions” shall be amended by modifying the definition of livestock to state:

“Livestock” means and includes any cow, pig, horse, pony, goat, sheep, llama, mule, donkey, or any other animal typically raised for agricultural purposes but does not include chickens authorized under Chapter 10.11 “Chickens”.

Section 3. New Chapter. Chapter 10.11 entitled “Chickens” shall read as follows:

Section 10.11.010 Chickens.

Residential property owners are permitted to keep a chicken flock, as defined in Section 10.01.000, for non-commercial use.

Section 10.11.020 Permit Required

- A. Any person keeping a chicken flock must first obtain a permit through the City Clerk’s Office prior to acquiring chickens. The purpose of the permit is to maintain a registry of chicken flocks within the city limits to ensure compliance with this Chapter and to support enforcement and public health coordination.
- B. There shall be no fee for the permit. Permits shall be valid unless revoked pursuant to this section and do not require renewal.
- C. The permit application shall include:
 - a. The name and contact information of the applicant;
 - b. The address of the property where chickens will be kept; and
 - c. The number of hens to be kept (not to exceed five).
- D. The Board of Public Works and Safety may revoke a permit upon the recommendation of the Animal Control Department if the permit holder is found to be in violation of this Chapter. The permit holder shall be given notice of the alleged violation and an opportunity to be heard before the Board prior to any revocation.

Section 10.11.030 Identification of Chickens

All chickens kept under this Chapter must be individually identifiable. Acceptable identification methods include leg bands or other forms of visible, non-invasive identification. The purpose of identification is to support compliance, facilitate return if chickens escape, and assist in disease control if needed.

Section 10.11.040 Enclosures

- A. A chicken coop and chicken pen shall be provided for all chicken flocks on residential properties. During daylight hours chickens may be in the chicken pen.
- B. The chicken coop shall:
 - 1. Be enclosed with solid material on all sides and have a solid roof and door(s).
 - 2. Be at least eighteen (18) inches high.
 - 3. Be constructed of traditional building materials.
 - 4. Include doors that can shut and latch securely.
 - 5. Include vents, covered with wire, placed as necessary for adequate ventilation.
 - 6. Be impermeable to rodents, wild birds, and predators, including dogs and cats.
- C. The chicken pen shall:
 - 1. Be constructed of traditional building materials and be predator-proof.
 - 2. Not exceed six (6) feet in height.
 - 3. Be covered with wire, aviary netting, or solid roofing.
- D. Minimum Coop and Pen Space Requirements:

Number of Hens	Minimum Coop Floor Area	Minimum Pen Area
One Hen	1 square foot	2 square feet
Two Hens	2 square feet	4 square feet
Three Hens	3 square feet	6 square feet
Four Hens	4 square feet	8 square feet
Five Hens	5 square feet	10 square feet

- E. The chicken coop and pen must be located at least twenty (20) feet from any home or other structure designed or suitable for human habitation, unless the harborer owns or resides in that structure.
- F. The chicken coop and chicken pen must be at least ten (10) feet from the property line of any adjoining lots.
- G. Chicken coops and chicken pens shall be located behind the residential structure.
- H. All chicken coops and chicken runs shall comply with the requirements for accessory structures outlined in the Unified Zoning Ordinance as adopted by the City of Lafayette as the same may be hereafter amended or replaced.

Section 10.11.050 Standards for maintaining chicken flocks

- A. All harborers of chicken flocks shall:
 - 1. Operate in such a manner to not constitute a public nuisance or disturb neighboring residents due to noise, odor, or damage.
 - 2. Operate in a manner to not pose a threat to public health. Harborers shall isolate chickens which are sick or diseased to not engender the health and

well-being of other animals and humans. When necessary for the protection of the public health and safety, an animal control officer may require the specified animal being kept or confined in a secured enclosure. All provisions relating to the harboring of chickens is subordinate to any state or federal code governing the treatment of chickens in the event of a threat to human or livestock health.

3. Always keep all chickens completely and securely enclosed and under the control of the harborer's property.
4. The chicken coop, chicken pen, and surrounding area shall be maintained in a clean, dry and odor-free condition, and kept in a neat and sanitary state at all times. Manure, uneaten feed, and other waste shall be disposed of in a sanitary manner on a regular schedule. During cold weather, alternative waste management methods, such as deep litter bedding, may be used if they are consistent with accepted agricultural or animal husbandry practices and promote flock health. The harborer shall take all necessary action to reduce the attraction of predators and rodents and the potential infestation of insects and parasites.
5. Always provide chickens with access to feed and clean water, such feed and water shall be unavailable to rodents, wild birds, dogs, and other predators.

Section 10.11.990 Penalty

- A. Any person violating any of the provisions of this chapter that does not have a specific penalty for that provision shall be fined for each offense, in any sum not more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) and each day's violation shall constitute a separate offense.
- B. Violations of this chapter may result in the order of removal or physical removal, relocation and/or destruction of any chicken(s) at the discretion of an animal control officer or his/her designee.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon passage and publication as required by law.

Section 5. This Ordinance shall automatically expire and be of no further force and effect one year from the date it becomes effective, unless reauthorized by ordinance of the Common Council. Prior to expiration, the Council may review the impact of the ordinance and determine whether to continue, amend, or repeal its provisions.

ADOPTED AND PASSED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL of the City of Lafayette, Indiana this 2nd day of September, 2025.


Nancy Nargi, President

ATTEST:


Cindy Murray, City Clerk

Presented by me to the Mayor of the City of Lafayette, Indiana, for his approval and signature this 2nd day of September, 2025.


Cindy Murray, City Clerk

This Ordinance approved and signed by me on this 2nd day of September, 2025.


Tony Roswarski, Mayor

ATTEST:


Cindy Murray, City Clerk

Sponsored by: Councilmember Eileen Hession Weiss