
**Technology, Economic Development, &
Veterans Committee**

HB 1201

Brief Description: Identifying accommodations allowing pets in an emergency or extreme weather event.

Sponsors: Representatives Leavitt, Ryu, Macri, Bronoske, Simmons and Berg.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires each county and city to identify emergency shelters, cooling centers, and heating centers that can accommodate pets in updates to local comprehensive emergency management plans.
- Requires each county and city to provide pet emergency preparedness information on its website.

Hearing Date: 1/21/25

Staff: Martha Wehling (786-7067).

Background:

Each political subdivision is required to either establish or join a local organization for emergency management. Each local or joint local organization for emergency management is required to submit a local comprehensive emergency management plan to the Washington Military Department Emergency Management Division. The local plans are coordinated with the state's comprehensive emergency management plan, and are required to be reviewed pursuant to the schedule created by the Adjutant General. The state's comprehensive emergency management plan was most recently revised on August 28, 2024, and recommends review and revision at least every two years.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

A local comprehensive emergency management plan is required to include a communication plan to provide life safety information during an emergency. Each local or joint local organization for emergency management is encouraged to consult with affected community organizations.

Rules promulgated by the Military Department specify the local comprehensive emergency plan elements, periodic review and updating, testing of operational capabilities, and a limited English proficiency communication plan. Local emergency management organizations may collaborate with other entities with a mutual aid or interlocal agreement.

In 2006, the federal Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act was enacted. It requires state and local planners to plan for the mass care of household pets and service animals during mass sheltering and evacuation operations, including providing veterinary care.

Summary of Bill:

When a county or city updates its local comprehensive emergency management plan, it is required to identify at least one emergency shelter, cooling center, and heating center that can accommodate pets within each county or city's jurisdiction. The county or city must only identify the shelter or centers to the extent practicable.

The emergency shelter identified by a county or city to accommodate pets is required to have safety procedures for pet sheltering, and comply with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) published disaster assistance policies and procedures.

A county or city is required to provide pet emergency preparedness information on its website. The information should include whether each designated emergency shelter, cooling center, or heating center can accommodate pets; information to create a pet evacuation plan and emergency checklist, consistent with FEMA recommendations; and identification of local organizations that provide emergency pet assistance.

A "cooling center" is a facility that mitigates the public health impacts of extreme heat. An "emergency shelter" is a temporary location that provides basic shelter for individuals affected by an emergency or disaster. A "pet" is a domesticated animal commonly kept in the home for pleasure, rather than commercial, purposes. A "warming center" is a facility that mitigates the public health impacts of extreme cold.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 13, 2025.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.