

ORDINANCE 1505-25

AN ORDINANCE BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ZEPHYRHILLS, FLORIDA CREATING A NEW SECTION TO CHAPTER 93 OF THE CITY OF ZEPHYRHILLS CODE OF ORDINANCES, SECTION 93.03 ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS FOR THE KEEPING, HARBORING AND MAINTENANCE OF BACKYARD CHICKENS; PROVIDING FOR APPLICABILITY, REPEALER, SEVERABILITY, INCLUSION IN THE CODE, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article VIII, Florida Constitution and Chapter 166, Florida Statutes, the City of Zephyrhills has broad home rule powers to carry out city government, including the power to adopt ordinances to provide for the public health, safety and welfare; and

WHEREAS, an interest in local food sources, food resilience and desire for fresher, more nutritious foods is being embraced by residents throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, the City of Zephyrhills intends to integrate sustainability and resilience strategies that foster healthy communities, educate and empower residents to lead healthy, sustainable lifestyles, and invest in the wellbeing and success of our children; and

WHEREAS, many communities in Florida and throughout the United States have found in adopting ordinances to integrate the keeping of chickens in residential areas that up to four (4) chickens are sufficient to meet the needs of the average family's egg consumption; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to law, notice has been given by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the City, notifying the public of the proposed ordinance and of a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has conducted duly noticed public hearings as required by law, at which hearings all parties in interest and citizens were afforded notice and the opportunity to be heard; and

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby finds and declares that this Ordinance is in the best interest of the public health, safety and welfare, and that it advances a valid and important public purpose.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Zephyrhills, Florida, that the following addition to the City of Zephyrhills Code of Ordinances shall be referred to as the "Backyard Chickens Ordinances," as follows:

SECTION 1. Authority

This ordinance is enacted pursuant to Chapter 166, Florida Statutes, and under the home rule powers of the City.

SECTION 2. Legislative Findings of Fact

The foregoing Whereas clauses are hereby adopted as legislative finds of the City Council of the City of Zephyrhills and are ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of the Ordinance upon adoption.

SECTION 3. Purpose and Intent

This Ordinance establishes standards and regulations for the keeping, harboring and maintenance of backyard chickens in the City of Zephyrhills, Florida, to protect public health, safety and welfare.

SECTION 4. Establishment of Section 93.03 Standards and Conditions for the Keeping of Backyard Chickens

§93.03 Standards and Conditions for the Keeping of Backyard Chickens

Backyard Chickens shall be permitted to be raised, kept, maintained, harbored and/or allowed as an accessory use to owner-occupied single-family detached residential dwelling units in the following zoning districts: Estate Residential (ER), Low Density Residential (R1), Single-Family Residential (R2), and Medium Density Residential (R3). The keeping of live domesticated chickens shall be prohibited in all other zoning districts and on all duplex and multi-family residential lots.

- (A) A maximum of five (5) chickens, whether hens or pullets or a combination thereof, shall be kept on a property at any one given time. The keeping of roosters, capons or cockerels shall be prohibited.
- (B) All chickens shall be protected from the elements and kept in a secure enclosure at all times; except that chickens may be allowed outside the enclosure periodically between

sunrise and sunset only, provided they are confined on the property by a secured fence a minimum of six (6) feet in height. No person shall release or set any chicken free from such fence or enclosure.

- (C) Enclosures shall be covered and ventilated, and shall consist of a chicken coop and fenced run area. The coop shall have not less than four (4) square feet of space per chicken kept on the property to permit free movement but shall not exceed 50 square feet in size.
- (D) Enclosures shall be located in the rear yard of the property, behind the residence, and shall meet a set back of a minimum of 20 feet from side and rear lot lines.
- (E) Enclosures shall be kept in a neat and sanitary condition at all times, and shall be regularly cleaned to prevent offensive odors and attraction of vermin.
- (F) Properties shall be maintained by properly removing waste and ensure vegetation and groundcovers are maintained at all times. Any property on which live chickens are kept that has more than 100 square feet of defoliated ground, outside the enclosure area, shall be in violation of this section.
- (G) The chicken coop must be no taller than six (6) feet from the ground.
- (H) Live chickens shall be properly fed and watered. Stored feed shall be kept in a rodent and predator-proof container.
- (I) It shall be unlawful to slaughter or process live chickens for consumption on any property residentially zoned property within the boundaries of the City of Zephyrhills.
- (J) Backyard chickens shall be kept for personal use only. The onsite sale of eggs, poultry, or manure shall be prohibited.
- (K) Residents wishing to own or possess backyard chickens must complete a Residential Backyard Chicken Application as established and amended by the City of Zephyrhills.
- (L) For purposes of this section, the breeding of chickens is prohibited.
- (M) The keeping, maintaining, harboring, feeding, and/or providing of shelter to ducks, geese, turkeys, peafowl, or any other poultry or fowl is not authorized under the provisions of this section. Further, this section shall not be construed to authorize the keeping, maintaining, harboring, feeding, and/or providing of shelter for wild (roaming) chickens and roosters within the City limits.
- (N) It shall be a violation of this section to keep, maintain, harbor, feed and/or provide shelter to chickens within the boundaries of the City, except as authorized by this section.
- (O) A violation of this section shall result in a fine in the amount of \$500.00 per day that the violation continues.
- (P) If a resident or property is subject to three (3), separate code enforcement violations being issued by the City of Zephyrhills shall lose their ability to own or possess backyard chickens as determined by a City Code Enforcement Officer.

SECTION 5. Repealer

All ordinances and resolutions or parts thereof of the City in conflict with the provisions herein contained are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby superseded and repealed.

SECTION 6. Severability

It is declared the intent of the City Council of the City of Zephyrhills, Florida, that if any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or provision of this Ordinance shall be declared invalid, the remainder of this Ordinance shall be construed as not having contained said section, subsection, sentence, clause or provisions and shall not be affected by such holding.

SECTION 7. Inclusion in Code

It is the intent of the City Council of the City of Zephyrhills, Florida that the provisions of this Ordinance shall become and be made a part of the City of Zephyrhills Code of Ordinances, and that the sections of this Ordinance may be renumbered or re-lettered and the word "ordinance" may be changed to "section," "article," "regulation," or such other appropriate word or phrase in order to accomplish such intentions.

SECTION 8. Effective Date


This Ordinance shall become effective upon passage on the second reading and signing by the Mayor.


The foregoing Ordinance No. 1505-25 was read and passed on the first reading in an open and regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Zephyrhills, Florida, on this 14th day of July 2025.

Attest: 
Ricardo Quinones, City Clerk

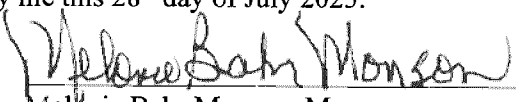

Charles E. Proctor, Council President

The foregoing Ordinance No. 1505-25 was read and passed on the second reading, following a public hearing, in an open and regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Zephyrhills, Florida, on this 28th day of July, 2025.

Attest: 
Ricardo Quinones, City Clerk


Charles E. Proctor, Council President

The foregoing Ordinance No. 1505-25 was approved by me this 28th day of July 2025.


Melonie Bahr Monson, Mayor

Approved as to legal form and legal content


Matthew E. Maggard, City Attorney