

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: 11/10/2025

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Amos Morris, Executive Zoo Director *Amos D. Morris, Jr.*

Subject: From the Executive Zoo Director requesting approval to amend Milwaukee County Ordinance Sections 47.06 and 63.09

File Type: Action Report, Resolution, Ordinance

REQUEST

The Executive Zoo Director requests approval to amend Milwaukee County Ordinance Section 47.06 (1), Animals in Parks and Section 63.09, Enforcement Procedure.

POLICY

Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	Chapters 47& 63
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BACKGROUND

The Milwaukee County Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture. All habitat construction follows strict safety protocols designed to protect animals, staff, and guests. In today’s social media landscape, some individuals deliberately trespass into restricted areas or animal habitats, endangering themselves, animals, and others. Across the country, there have been instances of dangerous zoo habitat breaches. To help prevent such incidents, the Zoo is requesting amendments to County Ordinance section 47.06 (1) to explicitly “restrict entering any zoo animal habitat” and amend section 63.09 Enforcement Procedures by increasing the fine for violating section 47.06 (1) to \$2,500. This change will provide a stronger deterrent and help ensure the safety and wellbeing of both guests and animals.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe how the item aligns to the objectives in the [strategic plan](#):

- 1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government
- 1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- 1C: Increase the number of County contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses
- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- 2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions

- 3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities
- 3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

FISCAL EFFECT

The request to amend County Ordinance sections 47.06(1) and 63.09 (2) to include a fine for entering any animal habitat has a minimal fiscal impact.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Amos Morris, Executive Zoo Director, Amos.Morris@milwaukeecountywi.gov
Vera Westphal, Deputy Zoo Director, Vera.Westphal@milwaukeecountywi.gov

PREPARED BY:

Vera Westphal, Deputy Zoo Director, Milwaukee County Zoo

APPROVED BY:

Amos Morris, Executive Zoo Director, Milwaukee County Zoo

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution/Ordinance, Fiscal Note

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk
Allyson R. Smith, Finance Committee Coordinator
David Crowley, County Executive
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive
Liz Sumner, Comptroller
Aaron Hertzberg, Executive Director Administrative Services
Joseph Lamers, Director of Strategy Budget and Performance
Jim Moon, Deputy Comptroller
Steve Cady, Director Research and Policy, Comptroller’s Office
Anthony Rux, Sr Analyst Budget and Management, DAS-SBP
Vera Westphal, Deputy Zoo Director
Matthew Haseman, Facilities Director