

WEST CALN TOWNSHIP
CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

ORDINANCE NO. ____ – 2025

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST CALN, CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING THE WEST CALN TOWNSHIP CODE TO ADOPT A NEW ARTICLE II UNDER CHAPTER 98. ANIMALS TO SPECIFICALLY ALLOW FOR AND PROPERLY REGULATE DOMESTICATED CHICKENS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP AND TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY, REPEALER AND EFFECTIVE DATE PROVISIONS.

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of West Caln Township have determined that new ordinance provisions should be adopted to address domestic chickens in the Township in a manner that properly allows such animals but also protects the public health, safety and welfare;

BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED by the Board of Supervisors of West Caln Township that Chapter 98 of the Township Code, as amended, is hereby further amended as follows:

SECTION I. A new Article II shall be added to Chapter 98 immediately following Article I. Animal Control and shall read as follows:

“Article II - Domesticated Chickens

§ 98-15. Definitions.

As used in this article, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

CHICKEN PEN

A fenced or other type enclosure for the purpose of allowing chickens to leave the henhouse while remaining in an enclosed, predator-safe environment.

HENHOUSE or CHICKEN COOP

A structure for the sheltering of female chickens.

PUBLIC NUISANCE

Any condition or usage whatsoever related to the keeping of chickens within the Township of West Caln which the Township shall find to adversely impact the properties surrounding the property on which the chickens are kept as a result of noise, odor, unsanitary animal living conditions, unsanitary waste storage and

removal, the attraction of predators, rodents, insects or parasites, nonconfined chickens leaving the property, and unsightly or dilapidated henhouse, chicken coop, enclosure or area where the chickens are kept, or other adverse impacts.

§ 98-16. Purpose.

The purpose of this article is to provide standards for the keeping of domesticated chickens. It is intended to enable residents to keep a small number of female chickens on a noncommercial basis while limiting the potential adverse impacts on the surrounding properties. The Township recognizes that adverse impacts may result from the keeping of domesticated chickens as a result of noise, odor, unsanitary animal living conditions, unsanitary waste storage and removal, the attraction of predators, rodents, insects or parasites, and nonconfined animals leaving the owner's property. This article is intended to allow for chickens and create minimum requirements to ensure that domesticated chickens do not adversely impact the properties surrounding the property on which the chickens are kept.

§ 98-17. Building permits required.

- A. A building permit shall be required for the construction of a henhouse or chicken coop consisting of 200 square feet or greater. No zoning permit shall be required; however, henhouses or chicken coops, regardless of size, must still comply with the required setbacks for accessory structures as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.

§98-18. Fees.

The applicable building permit fee shall be as set forth in the annual fee schedule adopted by resolution by the Township.

§98-19. Minimum lot size, maximum number and type of chickens allowed.

- A. A minimum lot size of ¼ acre is required to raise chickens.
- B. 6 chickens are permitted on a lot between ¼ acre and ½ acres.
- C. 12 chickens are permitted on a lot between .5 and 1 acres.
- D. 18 chickens are permitted on a lot between 1 and 2 acres.
- E. There is no limit to the number of chickens on lots of two acres or larger.
- F. No roosters shall be permitted on lots less than five acres.
- G. There is no restriction on chicken species at any lot.

§98-20. Noncommercial use only.

Chickens shall be kept for personal use only; no person shall engage in chicken breeding or fertilizer production for commercial purposes. The slaughtering of chickens on a domesticated chicken-keeping property is prohibited.

§98-21. Enclosures.

- A. Chickens must be kept in an enclosure or secured area at all times. During daylight hours, chickens may be allowed outside of their chicken pens but must remain secured upon the owner's property. Chickens shall be secured within the henhouse during non-daylight hours.
- B. Enclosures must be clean, dry and kept in a neat and sanitary condition at all times, in a manner that will not disturb the use or enjoyment of neighboring lots due to noise, odor or other adverse impact.

§98-22. Odor and noise impacts.

- A. Odors from chickens, chicken manure, or other chicken-related substances shall not be perceptible at the property boundaries. Any odors perceptible at the property boundaries shall be considered a public nuisance.
- B. Perceptible noise from chickens shall not be loud enough at the property boundaries to disturb persons by creating a public nuisance.

§98-23. Waste storage and removal.

Arrangements must be made for the proper storage and removal of chicken manure. Manure and waste from chickens shall not be disposed of in sanitary or storm sewer systems.

§98-24. Violations and penalties.

In addition to any other enforcement action which the Township may take pursuant to Zoning Ordinance, violation of any provision of this article may be treated as a summary offense, and a fine not exceeding \$1,000 may be imposed. Each day that a violation continues will be treated as a separate offense.

§98-25. Removal of chickens.

- A. In addition to the penalty stated above, any violation of the provisions of this article shall be grounds for an order from the Township to remove the chickens and the chicken-related structures. If the homeowner fails to remove the chickens and their related structures, the Township may enter the property and take whatever steps are necessary to remove the chickens and related structures at the homeowner's expense, and file a municipal lien against the property to recoup any costs incurred by the Township for such removal.
- B. The Chester County Health Inspector, Health Officer, or contracted animal control officer may also order the removal of the chickens upon determination that the chickens pose a health risk.
- C. If a chicken dies, it must be disposed of promptly in a sanitary manner.

§98-26. Precedence.

To the extent this article is inconsistent with any Keeping of Animals provisions in the Zoning Ordinance of the Code of West Caln Township, the provisions of this article shall

take precedence.”

SECTION 2. Severability. If any sentence, clause, section or part of this Ordinance is for any reason found to be unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, such unconstitutionality, illegality or invalidity shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions, sentences, clauses, sections, or parts hereof. It is hereby declared as the intent of the Board of Supervisors that this Ordinance would have been adopted had such unconstitutional, illegal or invalid sentence, clause, section or part thereof not been included herein.

SECTION 3. Repealer. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances conflicting with any provision of this Ordinance are hereby repealed insofar as the same affects this Ordinance.

SECTION 4. General Code. General Code is hereby authorized to make whatever numbering and formatting changes are needed in order to properly codify this ordinance and properly incorporate this ordinance into the Township’s online Code.

SECTION 5. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be effective as provided by law.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED this _____ day of _____, 2025.

ATTEST:

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
WEST CALN TOWNSHIP**

Township Secretary

BY: _____
Nathan Sanet, Chairman

Joseph Hutton, III, Vice Chairman

Allen R. Martin, Member