

APPLICATION FOR CONDITIONAL WAIVER FOR HENS

Return completed application in person to the
Office of the City Marshal of Enid

Date: _____

Applicant Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Telephone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Property Information

1. Where will the hens be housed on your property? (be specific): _____

2. Do you own your house? _____ If not, do you have written permission from the owner? _____
Attach a printout from the Garfield County Assessor's website showing the Owner Information
of the Property. If you do not own your house, also attach a copy of the owner's written
permission for you to have hens as pets and provide the following information of the owner:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email: _____

3. Does the property have a fence? _____

4. Do you plan on releasing the hens from their shelter, coop, or barn during the day? _____

5. Why do you want pet hens? _____

6. Have you had chickens before? If no, what research have you done on chickens? _____

7. Will the hens you get be adult hens, pullets or chicks? _____

Should you have any questions when completing this application, please do not hesitate to
contact the City Marshal at 580.402.5721.

By signing below:

I attest that I have read and understand Title 5, Chapter 7, Section 27 of the Enid Municipal Code, and all additional materials attached to this Application.

I have attached a printout of the Garfield County Assessor's Page showing the ownership information of my property, and, if applicable, I have included a copy of the property owner's written permission to keep hens as pets.

I understand that male chickens (roosters) are prohibited under the waiver and can only be raised on property zoned agriculture.

I understand that the waiver is conditioned upon my continued compliance with Title 5, Chapter 7 of the Enid Municipal Code.

I understand that the City Marshal will inspect my property and that the waiver is for no more than six pet hens.

I understand the waiver is personal to me and applies to this location only and that additional inspections by the City Marshal may be required in the future.

Applicant

Date

Received By _____

ORDINANCE NO. 2022-

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ENID MUNICIPAL CODE, 2014, TITLE 5, “PUBLIC SAFETY”, CHAPTER 7 “ANIMAL WELFARE”; TO ADD SECTION 5-7-27 “CONDITIONAL, LIMITED, HEN WAIVER”; TO PROVIDE A WAIVER FOR SIX HENS AS PETS ON A LOT LESS THAN AN ACRE; PROVIDING FOR REPEALER, SAVINGS CLAUSE, SEVERABILITY AND CODIFICATION.

ORDINANCE

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF ENID, OKLAHOMA:

Section I: That Title 5, Chapter 7, Section 5-7-27 is hereby adopted to read:

5- 7- 27: CONDITIONAL, LIMITED, HEN WAIVER

A. The City Marshal may issue a waiver of Section 5-7-17 to a allow person who resides on a lot, that is not zoned Residential Estates (R-1) and is less than an acre, to conditionally allow the resident to have up to six hens as pets.

B. To qualify for the waiver the resident must have adequate space for the upkeep and care of the hens. If the property is leased, the renter must provide a letter from the owner consenting to the keeping of the hens.

C. The property, the shelter or coop, and the yard must be maintained consistent with this chapter. The person seeking the waiver must consent in writing to the inspections from the City Marshal. The City Marshal will provide notice of an inspection prior to the inspection.

D. Failure to comply with the conditions will result in the loss of the conditional waiver and the removal of the hens from the property.

Section II: Repealer. All ordinances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section III: Savings Clause. Nothing in this ordinance hereby adopted shall be construed to affect any suit or proceedings now pending in any court, or any rights acquired or liability incurred, nor any cause or causes of action accrued or existing, under any act or ordinance repealed hereby. Nor shall any right or remedy of any character be lost, impaired or affected by this ordinance.

Section IV: Severability. If any one or more of the sections, sentences, clauses or part of this ordinance, chapter or section shall, for any reason, be held invalid, the invalidity of such section, clause or part shall not affect or prejudice in any way the applicability and validity of any other provision of this ordinance. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City Commission of the City of Enid that this section of the Enid Municipal Code would have been adopted had such unconstitutional, illegal or invalid sentence, clause, section or part not been included.

Section V: Codification. This ordinance shall be codified as Title 5, Chapter 5, Sections 5-7-27 of Enid Municipal Code 2014.

RAISING CHICKENS

By: Carol Lahman

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Raising Chickens | 2 |
| Baby Chicks | 2 |
| Breeds | 2 |
| Regulations | 3 |
| How Many | 3 |
| Ordering | 4 |
| Incubation | 4 |
| Juvenile Hens | 5 |
| Hen as Mom | 5 |
| Eggs | 5 |
| Molting | 6 |
| Roosters | 6 |
| Coops | 6 |
| Nests | 7 |
| Roosts | 7 |
| Socializing | 7 |
| Where To Order | 7 |
| Resources | 8 |
| Books | 8 |

Raising Chickens

There are many ways to raise chickens and for many purposes. You can raise them for fun as pets, for breeding purposes, for eggs, for meat, for fertilizer, for tick control or all of the above. There are books that focus on all or some of these reasons. There are web sites that provide lots of information. Backyard Chickens is a good one. As with anything there is special terminology.

Female chickens when young, before they begin to lay, are called “pullets” and once big you call them “hens”. Males are roosters. If you go to a feed store to get your chickens and if you only want females than you want to get pullets. “Straight run” means that the hatchery has not sexed the chickens and you will have both females and males. Roosters crow and that can upset neighbors. They don't crow only in the morning they crow throughout the day as well.

Baby Chicks

Before you get your chicks you need to know where you are going to keep them. Initially you will need a brooder which is a fancy name for a draft free space with a heat lamp. Any space will do if you put the chicks in a stock tank like they do at Atwoods. A bathtub would also work well. How long you need to keep them under the light depends on the time of the year. The books say you should start them at 90 F and go down about 5 degrees a week. The chicks will let you know by what they do. You will want enough space so they can get away from the lamp if they get hot. Baby chicks when sleeping can look like they are dead, so don't panic. Have everything set up before you buy your chicks. Make sure you have your heat lamp ready, that it works and that it is secure so it won't fall and burn your chicks. Once you deal with the lamp you will understand why this is important.

It is not uncommon to lose one or two chicks in the first days. You must check to make sure they are drinking and that their vent (where they poop) doesn't crust over with poo. If it does you need to soak it clean. Initially, the chicks eat chick starter and then they move on to egg layer and fancy scratch. If you cage your chickens or have them in a barn all the time you will need to give your hens oyster shell but if they are free range you don't need that supplement.

Breeds

There are different breeds. There are breeds that get heavy early and are meat birds. There are egg layers that produce a lot of eggs. There are dual purpose birds that get big and lay a good quantity of eggs. There are fancy chickens with top knots, chickens with feathered feet,

chickens with long tails, chickens that are soft and silky, chickens that lay colored eggs, dark chocolate, brown, or white. There are heritage birds that are endangered and chickens that are gregarious. There are easy going, laid back breeds and flighty breeds. There are standard sized birds and small bantam birds.

You could choose one breed with an eye to preserving or strengthening that breed or you could pick many different ones so you can tell your birds apart. I like to get different breeds because I name my chickens. Over the years, I have tried many breeds. Some of my favorites are: Black Jersey Giants, Barred Plymouth Rocks, Dominiques, Silver or Golden Laced Wyandottes, Polish (small delicate birds with top knots), and Rhode Island Reds.

Regulations

There are probably rules about chickens where you live. If you live in a subdivision chickens may be against your covenants or your city may have an ordinance against chickens. If you live close to neighbors you should check with them about roosters even if there are not any prohibitions about roosters or chickens.

In Enid, you can't have livestock unless you have an acre or your property is zoned Residential Estates or Agriculture. Roosters over six months old are prohibited except for property zoned Agriculture. or Residential Estates.

Some property that have had livestock continually since August 18, 2007 have a grandfathered use. This means that if you purchase the grandfathered property and continue the use without disruption you may have livestock, the same type and number of animals, what have been on the land and in the since August 18, 2007. Documentation of the use will be necessary and you should seek out this documentation prior to purchase from the owner if having livestock is important to you. If there is a break in the grandfathered use of a year or more the grandfathered use ceases. See, Enid Municipal Code §11-14-2.

As of August 18, 2022, there is an additional option. If a resident wants to have up to six hens as pets the resident may make application with the City Legal Department to obtain a waiver. This waiver, if approved will be personal and site specific and various conditions will need to be met in order to receive a waiver. The waiver is also conditioned on maintaining the property and the hens in compliance with the waiver's conditions. The waiver is covered in another paper.

How Many

Here is my opinion about chickens. If you have a large lot, a privacy fence and you don't have any neighbors from hell near you, who is going to know you have a chicken-- if you are tidy, meticulous, careful and lucky. There is no rule against parrots or parakeets and one could

keep a chicken in a spare bathroom, on a porch or in a garage during the night and let it outside during the day. But my opinion is not the law. If you decide to have chickens anyway you should have a plan for when one of your pullets turns out to be a rooster instead of a hen or when the authorities come knocking at your door and cite you for having illegal chickens.

But if you can have chickens legitimately then how many chickens you should get really depends on how much yard and coop space you have. It also depends on why you are getting them. If you are going to eat your birds then you need more. If you are just going to eat the eggs, and you live alone, two hens will give you more than enough eggs and if you have a large family five hens will provide plenty of eggs. If you just want chicken pets and you work from home, a single hen could be happy with you just like a parrot or parakeet. If you have the space, the time and the money and you can legally have chickens, you will not want to get only one, because the hen will want friends. And for the same reason, due to death you probably don't want to start with only two. So absent unusual conditions the minimum number is probably three.

Ordering

If you get your chicks from a feed store you can get the number you want. It is easy and quick. However, Atwoods only gets a few breeds and they don't have them all the time.

If you order through a hatchery you have a larger selection but there may be a minimum order number or special charges for small orders. Ideal Hatchery will let you place any size order but they may add males for warmth. Another option is My Pet Chicken which allows you to place small orders of specific chickens without adding males to the order. McMurray Hatchery has a great catalog and great chickens but the minimum order is 25. A good way to get the birds you want in the number you want is to go in with another person to split an order. If you aren't getting 200 chickens you don't need to have them vaccinated.

If you order them from a hatchery they will come to the post office. It is important to know exactly when they will ship, and you need to give the hatchery an accurate 24 hour number so the post office can call you when the chicks get to the main post office. You usually get the call around 6 am, so be prepared.

Incubation

You could also order fertile eggs and put them in an incubator and hatch them yourself. Obviously, the chicks won't be sexed. I have not tried this method.

Juvenile Hens

It is possible to order six to eight- week old pullets from a hatchery. They are expensive and you need to order well in advance of when you want them.

Hen as Mom

If you can have roosters and you have a hen go broody, you could let her sit on her eggs and get baby chicks. The hen will raise them and you won't need a lamp. It is pretty neat to watch the Mom with her babies. It is easier for you. But you don't have control over how many, what they will turn out to be or their sex.

Eggs

Once the hens start laying, a good layer will average about an egg a day but you get less in the winter. Why? On average hens will lay their eggs an hour later each day until its dusk then they take a day off and start back early the next morning. This a kind of a chicken Sabbath; so during the summer when the days are longer there are more days in a row for laying before the chicken sabbath. Some hens don't lay as well as others. You can tell who is laying by looking at the feathers around the vent—clean feathers probably means she isn't laying.

Also, a hen may also “go broody”. She may start to sit on eggs and not get up. She is trying to have chicks. This is tough on the hen so unless you want her to have chicks pick the eggs up promptly and make her get up. Once she is broody, the hen will stop laying. Broody hens will find secret places to hide their eggs so if suddenly you can't find a hen or your egg production is down look around. Hens can go broody even if you have no roosters. The best way to stop chickens from getting broody is to pick up the eggs often. If you do this, it will keep the nests and the eggs cleaner.

As chickens age, they lay fewer eggs but bigger eggs. You can tell what color of eggs a hen lays by looking at the color of their ear lobes. If the ear lobes are white the hen will lay white eggs. The egg comes out of the hen with a protective covering so only wash the egg right before you are ready to use it. To keep your eggs nice get them out of the nest on a regular basis. Eggs can last weeks. If you eat them soon you don't need to refrigerate eggs. Eggs from hens that are free range will be more favorable with bright orange yolks. They are also less fatty. Fresh hard-boiled eggs are hard to peel so be ready for odd looking, messy deviled eggs. If you want deviled eggs, boil the eggs a day early and put them in the refrigerator. Chilled fresh hard-boiled eggs are easier to peel.

You can sell your eggs but note there are rules about selling eggs that are pretty involved. I give my eggs away; there are no rules about free eggs. You can get cartons from friends, hatcheries sell them and there are on line stores where you can order personalized cartons.

Molting

Once a year, chickens molt. They lose their feathers and grow news ones. They will look sick during the process and they don't lay while they molt. Some chickens molt fast (a week) and some take a long time. Some molt during the summer and some molt in the middle of winter..

Roosters

One big issue is the rooster question. You don't need a rooster to get eggs but without the rooster none of the eggs will be fertile so you won't get any chicks. Roosters can be noisy and aggressive. If you have small children you should really consider carefully whether you need a rooster, for two reasons: one, small children could be scared or get hurt by a rooster; and, they will see sex if you have a rooster. Some roosters are not good lovers and the hens can have scarred backs. Rhode Island roosters are generally considered aggressive to both hens and humans. There are some breeds like the Dominiques that tend to produce gentlemanly roosters so they might be a better pick if you want roosters. Also, just so you know, even if you get all pullets, you may end up with a rooster—it is hard to tell the sex of day old chicks.

Coops

You will need to put your chickens in their coop every night before dark which means 5 pm at Christmas and 9 pm in the summer. Chickens sleep at night and are not safe even in the middle of the town. They may get along fine for weeks but eventually predators will find them and kill them. The enclosure you need depends on the number of chickens. It needs to be secure, have a roof and be something that cannot be dug under. There are fancy coops and basic ones. If you have a couple hens you could use a large portable dog crate. A shed will work, a screened in porch or garage could work. A spare bathroom could work well for the solitary chicken as a pet.

During the day the chickens can be released into a fenced yard. will work. They will want both shade and sun. They will want grass and dirt. They like to take dirt baths so you might select a place for that or they will make one where you might not want it. If you have a patio they will enjoy it and will sit on the chairs and under and on top of tables. If you have a water feature like a pond or a fountain they will like that too.

Nests

When they start laying you will need nests. Hens can share. Hatcheries have fancy nests for sales. Model coops have nests built in. My hens like to make their own nests but I have some wooden ones they use too. Most nests are wood or metal, you can use a box or one of those round rubber livestock feeders. Put a little straw or hay in it and you are set.

Roosts

Your hens will also like a roost but will use a window ledge or a shelf if you don't give them a roost. You can use a broom handle or a long stick. I have wooden roosts in my chicken rooms in the barn and in my outside night enclosure (which is built out of dog pens with a roof) I have roosts of wood and old branches stuck in the corners. Some like outside even in winter and some prefer inside even in summer and some pick the window ledges.

Socializing

If you want them to be friendly and have them around to sit with -- feed them snacks. Bananas are a favorite snack. Chickens will eat about any leftovers and they love any kind of fruit.

With chickens, as with any thing, how much you enjoy them will depend on how much time you spend with them. If you spend time with them you will notice that they each have different likes and dislikes. They have friends, special spots in the yard, different sounds and calls. Some will like to be held. Some will lift up to let you get their egg and others will peck at you. Some will go in at night on their own and others will have to be herded in. When herding a long stick will help. This is not for hitting them but it will extend the reach of your arm and waving with a stick makes it easier to move them inside.

Some of these tips will make little sense now but when you have your chickens then you will remember and understand.

Where to Order

Ideal Poultry

Cameron Texas (Atwoods uses Ideal)

No minimum order (will add males to order)

Murray McMurray Hatchery

Iowa

25 minimum

My Pet Chicken

Connecticut

Minimum order depends on Mail Service and size of bird:

6-8 chickens for Enid

3-5 chickens for Oklahoma City

Resources:

Backyard Poultry Magazine

Hatchery websites

Your veterinarian

Atwoods

Other persons with chicken

Egg Cartons:

Murray McMurray Hatchery

Egg Cartons.com

Other stuff:

Hatcheries

Feed Stores

My Pet Chicken (for diapers and specialized products for the house chicken)

Books

There is no shortage of books on chickens. There are books about chickens, their history, their uses, chickens in literature and in the bible. There are books about specific breeds, about making money raising chickens, about how to grow and create your own feed for chickens, about how to organize your barn so it is efficient, about building your own coop, about the movable chicken tractor, about the mating and scientific breeding of chickens to keep and create certain traits. There are books on the illnesses of chickens and how to medicate them yourself.

A good overall book, that includes butchering, is A Guide to Raising Chickens by Gail Damerow (a Storey Animal Handbook). It is comprehensive and professional. It is usually available at Atwoods, Hatchery web sites and Amazon. It is one of the first books I got.

Two other books that are written for a small flock audience are also interesting because of the years they were written. Chickens in Your Backyard, by Rick and Gail Luttmann, was

written in 1976. The information is still valid; but the resources are dated. Hobby Farms Chickens by Sue Weaver was published in 2005. It has color pictures, a glossary and tons of resources. Weaver's focus is the same as the Luttmans, but you can tell her book was written more recently during the new golden age of chickens.

My favorite chicken book is Barbara Kilarshi's Keeping Chickens! She lives in a Chicken city—Portland, Oregon. She has three hens: Zsa Zsa, Lucy and Whoopee. She loves her girls and it is out of love that she keeps her hens. It is a wonderful book. It has lots of good information for the person who wants to have pet chickens. It does not have chapters on butchering or culling. Another good one is Starting with Chickens by Katie Thear. It is labeled a beginner's guide but covers everything from the origins of particular breeds to the diagrams of the digestive system of a chicken.

I love British chicken books. The language is a bit stilted and you can tell that the whole country has a deep, quirky love of poultry. Most of the British books have to be ordered on line. (They make you feel like you could meet your Grandmother around the corner wiping flour from her apron or perhaps making sure her sensible shoes are clean before she returns to the kitchen to pop the pie in the oven.) There is no reason to order British chicken books but I could not help mentioning that they exist.

