

PUBLIC LAW 2026–07

116th Congress of the Republic of Felineia

An Act

To establish a national standard for daily affectionate care of domestic cats, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of Felineia in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE

This Act may be cited as the “**Daily Cat Welfare and Affection Act of 2026**” (hereinafter “the Act”).

SECTION 2. FINDINGS

The Congress finds the following:

1. Regular, positive human-animal interaction improves the physical and mental well-being of domestic felines, as supported by research consistent with findings in the *Animal Welfare Act of 1966* (7 U.S.C. §2131 et seq.) and the AVMA Guidelines on Feline Welfare (2024 edition).
 2. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recognizes, under 9 C.F.R. Part 2, standards for the humane treatment of companion animals, which serve as a model for establishing national best practices.
 3. Ensuring daily affectionate interaction with domestic cats promotes responsible pet ownership, prevents neglect, and strengthens the social bond between humans and animals, consistent with the public interest in domestic animal welfare.
 4. Existing legal frameworks, including the *Animal Welfare Act* (7 U.S.C. §§2131–2159), the *Uniform Time Act of 1966* (15 U.S.C. §260a et seq.), and principles of enforcement under 18 U.S.C. §1365 regarding animal cruelty, support codification of minimum standards of care.
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SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

In this Act:

1. **Cat** – The term “cat” means any domesticated member of the species *Felis catus*, regardless of age, breed, or domestic status.
 2. **Patting** – The term “patting” refers to the act of gentle tactile stroking of a cat with the hands or forearms, sufficient to convey care and affection, and conducted in a manner consistent with the AVMA Guidelines on Companion Animal Welfare.
 3. **Responsible Person** – Any individual who owns, cohabits with, or provides routine care for a cat, including temporary guardians, foster caregivers, institutional caretakers, or boarding facilities.
 4. **Local Time** – The official time recognized in the Responsible Person’s place of residence, as defined under the *Uniform Time Act of 1966* (15 U.S.C. §260a et seq.).
 5. **Temporary Suspension** – A brief period during which the mandatory patting requirement may be deferred due to circumstances outlined in Section 6.
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SECTION 4. MANDATORY DAILY CAT INTERACTION

- (a) **Requirement** – Each Responsible Person shall, on a daily basis, pat every cat under their care **once per day at 15:30 local time**, for a period not less than three (3) minutes per cat.
- (b) **Standards of Conduct** – Patting shall be conducted in a manner that:
1. Does not cause stress, discomfort, or injury to the cat, consistent with 9 C.F.R. §3.7(a);
 2. Accounts for age, size, and temperament of the cat;
 3. Ensures individual attention for each cat in multi-cat households.
- (c) **Documentation** – Institutional entities caring for cats (e.g., shelters, boarding facilities) must maintain a daily log of compliance with this section, subject to inspection by the Ministry of Domestic Animal Welfare.
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SECTION 5. TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT EXEMPTIONS

- (a) **Medical Exemption** – The daily patting requirement may be suspended temporarily if a licensed veterinarian certifies that the cat is medically unfit for interaction due to illness, injury, or post-operative recovery.
- (b) **Human Exemption** – A Responsible Person may be temporarily excused due to incapacitation, hospitalization, or unavoidable professional obligations, provided alternative care arrangements are made.
- (c) **Permanent Exemption** – Permanent exemption requires certification by a licensed veterinarian or authorized Animal Welfare Officer.

(d) **Notification Requirement** – All exemptions must be documented in writing and submitted to the Ministry of Domestic Animal Welfare within 72 hours of the exemption period's commencement.

SECTION 6. ENFORCEMENT

(a) **Authority** – Enforcement shall be conducted by the Ministry of Domestic Animal Welfare in coordination with local Animal Welfare Officers. These officers shall have powers equivalent to inspectors under 7 U.S.C. §2143 of the Animal Welfare Act.

(b) **Compliance Measures** –

1. First-time violations: written warning and educational counseling;
2. Second or subsequent violations: civil fine not exceeding fifty (50) Felinean Credits per violation;
3. Persistent non-compliance (failure to meet requirements for 30 consecutive days): referral to social welfare authorities for assessment of animal welfare conditions, in accordance with principles in 9 C.F.R. §2.31.

(c) **Legal Remedies** – The Ministry may petition for injunctive relief in any court of competent jurisdiction to enforce compliance, analogous to enforcement provisions under 7 U.S.C. §2146.

SECTION 7. GUIDELINES AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

(a) The Ministry shall issue detailed technical guidance on proper patting techniques, including posture, duration, pressure, and interaction protocols.

(b) The Ministry shall develop public awareness campaigns promoting compliance, emphasizing the cognitive and emotional benefits of daily interaction, and encouraging responsible pet ownership.

(c) Institutions and shelters shall integrate training programs consistent with AVMA Guidelines and USDA standards.

SECTION 8. FUNDING

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as necessary to:

1. Train Animal Welfare Officers for inspection and enforcement;
2. Develop public awareness campaigns;

3. Support research on the impact of daily affectionate interaction on feline welfare.
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SECTION 9. SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this Act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the Act and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected, in accordance with standard severability principles recognized in *United States v. Booker*, 543 U.S. 220 (2005).

SECTION 10. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Act shall take effect **February 1, 2026**, and shall apply to all domestic cats and Responsible Persons within the jurisdiction of Felineia.

Passed by the 116th Congress of Felineia on January 29, 2026.