

Chicken Care in Northglenn



Backyard Chickens Rules and Regulations

- **Legal Parameters** – It is unlawful to keep backyard chickens without a license, in violation of the terms in Ordinance 14-3-18 (regulations referenced below), or if the license has been revoked for any reason.

- **License** – A backyard chicken license is required. Licenses may be issued on residential properties with dedicated rear yards; this excludes apartments and condominiums with shared outdoor spaces.

- **Number allowed** – No more than six (6) chickens are permitted per parcel.

- **Gender Restriction** – Hens or females only; roosters or males are prohibited.

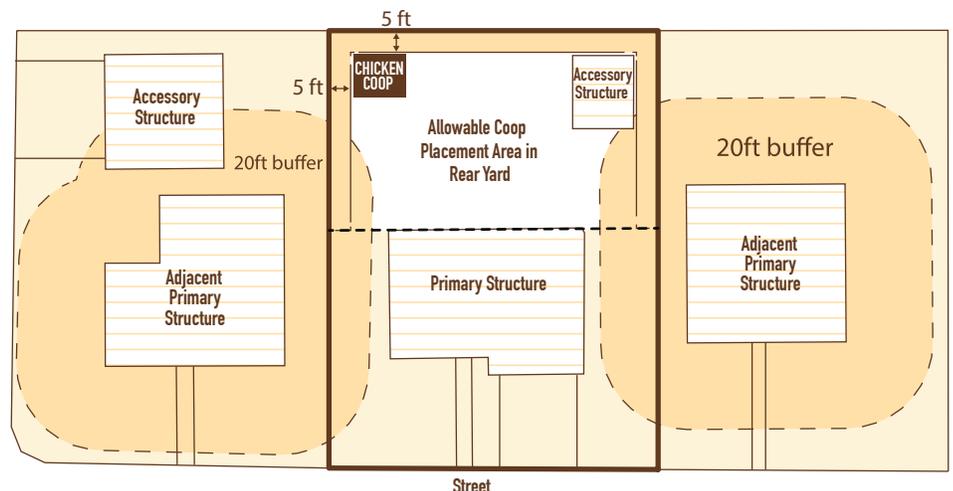
- **Slaughtering** – Chickens may not be killed, on the premises, by or at the direction of the owner or keeper except pursuant to the lawful order of state or county health officials, or for the purpose of euthanasia when surrendered to a licensed veterinarian for such purpose, or as otherwise expressly permitted by law.

- **Excrement** – The owner of any chickens kept in the City of Northglenn shall remove excrement from any pen, cage, coop or yard in which such chickens are kept to prevent contamination, diseases, hazards and odors. The accumulation of excreta upon any premises in violation of the provisions of this ordinance shall be unlawful and shall be deemed a public nuisance in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 11 (Northglenn Nuisance Ordinance) of the Northglenn Municipal Code.

Coop and Ranging Standards

- **Structure** – A coop is a physical structure where chickens are kept and that provides such chickens with protection and shelter.

- The coop must be predator resistant.
- The coop size must not exceed one hundred and twenty (120) square feet, and must provide at least four (4) square feet of space per bird.
- The coop height must not exceed six (6) feet in height.



- **Location** – The chicken coop must be placed at least five (5) feet from property fence line and at least twenty (20) feet from residence or primary structure on adjacent property. Coops must reside in the rear yard of the premises.

- **Ranging** – Chickens must have space to range in the rear yard.

- If a chicken run is used, chickens must be provided a minimum of twenty (20) square feet of permeable surface per bird.
- Chickens are allowed to range in the rear yard, up to the property line, but must be kept in the required chicken coop from dusk until dawn.
- Chickens allowed to range in the rear yard must be contained by a fence adequate to contain animals. The fence must be a minimum of four (4) feet in height.



Frequently Asked Questions

- **Is there a permit or a license required to have backyard chickens in Northglenn?**
Yes – A backyard chicken license is required prior to having chickens on the premises. A license application can be completed with the Northglenn Planning and Development Department. Applications will be taken at the Building Department front counter.
- **What is the cost for a backyard chicken license?**
A \$25 one-time fee must be submitted with the license application.
- **Northglenn allows me to have chickens, but my Homeowners Association (HOA) or Subdivision Covenants does not. Which rules do I follow?**
Homeowner associations and subdivision covenants have private authority to regulate the structures and uses permitted within a neighborhood. Whether or not Northglenn allows them, if your HOA or subdivision covenants prohibits chickens, you are not allowed to have them. Always check if you are governed by subdivision covenants or with your HOA prior to making any home improvements or keeping chickens.
- **Can my chickens roam free in my yard?**
Yes – but they must remain in the rear yard and the yard must have at least a 4-foot fence that is adequate to contain the chickens. Chickens must be secured in the coop during non-daylight hours.
- **Can I keep roosters or other domestic fowl?**
No – it is unlawful to keep any other domestic fowl or roosters within the City of Northglenn. Backyard chickens are restricted to only allow for female hens.
- **My neighbor has chickens, but I don't think they have a license. Who should I call?**
To report the keeping of chickens without a license, you should contact the Northglenn Planning and Development Department at 303.450.8739.
- **My neighbor has a chicken license, but I think they are in violation of the regulations. Who should I call?**
To report chicken keeping nuisances and violations, you should contact Animal Control at 303-450-8886.
- **Where can I get more information about proper care and best practices for keeping backyard chickens?**
We have several links and information at www.northglenn.org/chickens. You can reference this handout for tips to keeping chickens or reference the following link: <http://www.denverext.colostate.edu/chickeninfo.html>

Document Sources:

- BackYardChickens.com
- Colorado State University Extension



Chicken Care Essentials

Once hens have been adopted, proper care and housing are vital. In addition to regular daily attention, feed, clean water and securing them in their shelter at night, the following care principles are also essential:

- **Chickens are heat- and cold-sensitive.** Like dogs and cats, chickens must have shelter to protect them from temperature extremes. Hens and roosters with large single combs are prone to frostbite in cooler climates, and all chickens need shade during intense heat. The shelter should be both insulated and well-ventilated. Straw bedding will add comfort and warmth to a shelter's floor space, but it should be replaced regularly with new, clean straw.

- **Predator protection is vital.** Chickens need absolutely secure shelter at night or they can easily fall prey to urban wildlife like raccoons and opossums. Dogs may also attack chickens. Chickens must be completely enclosed in a safe henhouse, with four solid walls and a sturdy roof, every night. Predators can also dig under fences and walls, so this should be considered when planning the chickens' home.

During the day, chickens should be kept in a fully-fenced enclosure or yard with proper protection from aerial day-time predators, dogs and, in the case of small bantam hens, free-roaming cats.

- **Hens need an appropriate environment.** Hens need an enclosed nesting space (a "nestbox") in which to lay their eggs. They also need an elevated roost on which to perch at night; this is where they prefer to sleep. Hens enjoy dirt, sand, or peat for dustbathing, and they should also have free access to grass and other vegetation to engage in natural pecking, scratching, and foraging behaviors.

Often-used areas may become barren, and it is important to provide plenty of space, giving them as much room as possible to express natural behavior outdoors.

Hen houses, coops, and runs must be kept very clean at all times, for the health of the chickens and the food safety of the eggs.

- **Chickens will require veterinary care.** While it may be tempting to think of a backyard flock as a source of inexpensive eggs, hens, like cats and dogs, require periodic veterinary care. Chickens can become ill or get injured, and vet exams and treatment can easily cost over \$100 per visit. These expenses should be carefully considered before deciding to keep backyard chickens. Not all avian veterinarians are experienced with chickens, so be sure to locate a trusted poultry vet in your area ahead of time. In some cases, books or online message

boards can help with minor injuries or problems. Fowl in Colorado do not require preventative vaccinations in order to remain healthy.

- **Vacation help is a must.** Since chickens require daily care, a designated caretaker must be arranged for vacations and other periods away from the house. Someone must be present to feed and water the hens and to put them inside their secure shelter every evening.

- **Chicken nutrition is important.** It is a common misconception that chickens can be fed on corn kernels or kitchen scraps alone. Chickens need a balanced diet, like one of the commercially available feeds that have been carefully formulated by nutritionists specifically for adult hens. The protein requirements of chickens change with the birds' age, so it's important to feed an age-appropriate diet. Laying hens also need access to a supplemental source of course calcium, such as limestone (available at livestock supply stores) if their feed ration does not already contain enough. In addition to calcium, hard insoluble granite grit should be offered two or three days per month.

Chickens enjoy fresh fruits, grains and vegetables in addition to their regular feed, but some plants can be toxic. Avoid raw green potato peels, dried or undercooked beans, and avocados. Chickens should receive fresh feed and water daily. Discard any old, moldy or stale feed.

The Colorado State University Extension system has listed several chicken information resources on their website, including "Principles of Feeding Small Flocks of Chickens at Home" (http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/AG_Poultry_2008-02pr.pdf).

- **Prevent disease.** Chickens can carry and become ill from a variety of infectious diseases. It is important to keep the hens' environment clean with regular manure removal, and by washing the feed and water containers. You should also avoid mixing birds from different flocks. Temporarily quarantine any new birds for two weeks and watch them closely for signs of illness or parasites before introducing them into an already established group. Don't share equipment with neighbors (each chicken house should have dedicated tools, wheelbarrows, buckets, etc.), because pathogenic organisms can travel on these items.

- **Give your birds plenty of attention.** If you spend time watching and interacting with your chickens, you will find that each one has a unique personality, and they are friendly and curious when treated kindly. They display interesting behavior patterns such as dustbathing and foraging, and their complex social interactions are entertaining to observe. Enjoy their antics, and remember that your hens are completely dependent on you for responsible, committed care for their entire lives.