

**§ 51001. Definitions.**

The following definitions apply throughout this chapter unless the context indicates otherwise:

- (a) “Animal control agency” means any agency designated by a Mayor to enforce laws and ordinances regulating the care, control, licensing, or treatment of animals. Such agency also may euthanize or destroy animals and sedate animals prior to euthanasia.
- (b) “Approved legend drugs” means any legend drug approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association for use on animals for the purpose of sedating animals prior to euthanasia or for use in chemical capture programs.
- (c) “Controlled substances” means a drug, substance, or chemical as defined by the federal Drug Enforcement Agency and used to anesthetize or euthanize animals using methods in accordance with the American Veterinary Medical Association.
- (d) “Humane society” a nonprofit organization, association, or corporation, the primary purpose of which is to prevent cruelty to animals, place unwanted animals in homes, provide other services relating to lost and found pets, and provide animal care education to the public, as well as sponsoring a neutering program to control the animal population.
- (e) “Legend drugs” means any drugs which are required by federal law to be dispensed by prescription only or are restricted to use by practitioners only.

**Source:** PL 23-22, § 2 (July 18, 2019).

**Commission Comment:** In addition to severability and savings clauses, PL 23-22, included the following Findings and Purpose section:

Section 1. Findings and Purposes. The Legislature finds that there is a need for a modern, uniform law addressing how animals in CNMI are euthanized. The purpose of this bill is to relieve animals of unnecessary suffering from disease, illness or injury and provide appropriate trained personnel with a painless method for handling this difficult task.

Typically, issues regarding animal control, including the control of dogs, are decided by local laws. 1 CMC section 1402(a)(13) (including “licensing and control of animals” in list of subjects for local bills). Indeed, Saipan, Rota and Tinian have local animal control laws focused on dogs. 10 CMC Div. 1, Ch. 1, Art. 2 (Rota Dog Control Act), 10 CMC Div. 2, Ch. 8 (Tinian and Aguiguan Islands Dog Control Act), & 10 CMC Div. 3, Ch. 7, Art. 1 (Saipan and Northern Islands Dog Control Act). However, these laws all lack a uniform, modern process for handling animal euthanasia. For example, Rota local law only provides that dogs shall be euthanized “using the most humane procedure or means reasonable available.” 10

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CMC section 1125. Tinian and Saipan local laws authorize the Mayors to enact rules and regulations “for the regulation, licensing, control and disposal of dogs . . .” 10 CMC section 2802; 10 CMC section 3702(a). However, those rules and regulations do not address specific methods for euthanizing a dog.

The best method for euthanizing an animal involves the use of appropriate controlled substances or drugs. The use of such controlled substances or drugs requires express legal authorization and supervision and compliance with CNMI and federal laws. The bill establishes a legal framework for the use of this best method.

The Legislature finds that there is a need to relieve animals from unnecessary suffering that comes from disease, illness or injury. The Legislature further finds that people of CNMI have a responsibility to ensure that any method used to euthanize an animal be quick and painless and in accordance with best animal care and control practices and methods, as established by the American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals. The purpose of this Act is to authorize appropriately trained personnel working with animal control agencies and humane to acquire and administer medications necessary to euthanize animals.

In codifying PL 23-22, the Commission did not use the assigned code 2 CMC § 6001, but renumbered the section to 2 CMC § 51001, pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(a).