

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE



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Director's Interpretation Memo 2025-01

DATE: June 11, 2025

TO: Landye Bennett Blumstein LLP, Attn: Alexander J. Kubitz

FROM: Lance R. Wilber, Planning, Development and Public Works Director *LW*

SUBJECT: Interpretation of AMC 21.05.070D.13.b.vi. Commercial Activity Associated with Large Domestic Animal Facilities as an Accessory Use.

Question: Does commercial activity associated with large domestic animal facilities include the retail sale of hay and feed?

Short Answer: Yes, with limitations

Interpretation:

AMC 21.05.070D.13 defines a Large Domestic Animal Facility (4 or more animals), accessory use, as: "The keeping, harboring, riding, boarding, stabling, training, exercising, breeding, or related use of four or more large domestic animals regardless of animal ownership, and the associated structure(s) such as a paddock, stable, or barn. Operation of a large domestic animal facility is not a home occupation." AMC 21.05.070D.13.b. details the use specific standards for an accessory use Large Domestic Animal Facility. Subsection vi. of that section states "Commercial activity associated with large domestic animal facilities, such as boarding or riding lessons, is permitted."

The Director's interpretation of this code section is that "associated" means any commercial activity must be directly related to animals kept on the lot as part of the Large Domestic Animal Facility. Examples of associated commercial activity may include charging rent or fees for boarding animals at the facility, charging for riding lessons for students using animals kept at the large domestic animal facility, renting or selling tack or safety equipment for students taking riding lessons utilizing animals kept at the facility, or selling hay or feed to the owners of animals kept at the facility for those animals' consumption on-site¹.

¹ Selling a de minimis amount of hay, feed, or supplies for off-site usage or consumption by animals that have been kept, boarded, exercised, or trained at the Large Domestic Animal Facility would be permissible. For example, it would be permissible for a horse owner who has been boarding his horse at the large domestic animal facility for a month to purchase two bales of hay to take home when he picks up his horse from the facility.

Permissible commercial activity is activity that directly involves or serves the animals kept at the large domestic animal facility. This commercial activity is intentionally limited, because the accessory use Large Domestic Animal Facility is permitted in the R-5, R-6, R-7, R-8, R-9 and R-10 zoning districts. The large domestic animal facility usage itself and any associated commercial activity is accessory to the principal use, which in all relevant zones is residential living. As stated in AMC 21.05.070A an accessory use must be "incidental and customarily subordinate" to the principal use. Limiting commercial activity in residential districts is in keeping with the intent of zoning.

The limited commercial activity permitted with a Large Domestic Animal Facility as an accessory use does not include the retail sale of equipment, tack, gear, hay, feed, or other products for use by any person that does not have an animal kept, harbored, boarded or stabled at the large domestic animal facility on the site.