



Offered by Councilor Ed Flynn

**AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE OFFICE OF PEST CONTROL
IN THE CITY OF BOSTON**

- WHEREAS:** The issue of pest control is an important quality of life issue, as it impacts public health, as well as the cleanliness and sanitization of our streets and neighborhoods; *and*,
- WHEREAS:** There has been a dramatic rise in rodent and pest activities in our neighborhoods in the past years as a result of the pandemic, with residents and businesses reporting to 311 about the increase of rats and other rodents on our streets and homes; *and*,
- WHEREAS:** It is important that the city has measures in place to adequately deal with the increase in rodent activities, including increase in inspections, baitings, public awareness campaigns and public outreach; *and*,
- WHEREAS:** We also need to address illegal dumping as we look to address pest control and sanitation issues, as trash that is not properly disposed of will attract rodents and cause other public health issues; *and*,
- WHEREAS:** Currently, pest control is cross-departmental effort in the City of Boston, with Inspectional Services, Public Works, Boston Water and Sewer Commission being the main points of contact on this issue, and 14 inspectors covering the city; *and*,
- WHEREAS:** Having a dedicated city department on pest control would allow us to better focus on the issue, provide a more streamlined and coordinated process in reducing pests, and come up with more innovative ways in prevent pest infestations; *and*,
- WHEREAS:** It is critical that the City of Boston devotes the necessary resource and attention to this significant quality of life and public health issue, and an Office of Pest Control will not only allow the City to better address concerns with rodents, but will also signal the City's commitment in curbing rodent population; **AND NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

Be it ordained by the City Council of Boston as follows:

That the City of Boston Code, Ordinances, is hereby amended in Chapter XI by inserting the following new section after existing Section 11-11:

Ordinance creating the Office of Pest Control in the City of Boston

SECTION 1: Purpose

The purpose of this ordinance is to create an Office of Pest Control in the City of Boston. Pest control is an important quality of life and public health issue for the residents of Boston, and there needs to be adequate resources to address this issue, including a dedicated office to coordinate multi-departmental efforts to reducing rat and pest population, develop overall pest control strategy, and conduct outreach to residents on rodent mitigation methods.

SECTION 2: The Office of Pest Control

1. Establishment of the Office of Pest Control.

There shall be established in the City of Boston the Office of Pest Control, hereafter referred to as the Office, which shall be under the charge of an Officer known as the Director of Pest Control (hereafter called the Director), who shall be appointed by the Mayor.

2. Definitions

“Pest” means a living animal or insect that negatively impacts the quality of life of humans, particularly ones that cause damage to property, create chronic nuisance, or harm public health. Pests include, but are not limited to: rats, mice, bedbugs, mites, fleas, ticks, and cockroaches.

“Pest control” means duties as defined in Director Responsibilities.

3. Director Responsibilities.

The Director shall have direct responsibility for the organization, administration, and operation of the Office. The Director shall also have the ability to hire staff or contract out services as required in order to carry out its purpose. The duties of the Director, or designee, of the Office shall include, but not limited to:

- a. Act as the central point and dedicated person in developing and implementing long term and short term strategies in reducing the population of rats and pests;
- b. Respond to constituent pest control requests and perform routine services to address infestations and to prevent future infestations, such as performing onsite inspections, placing baits, issuing citations for improper trash disposal, and other related actions;
- c. Promulgate a cohesive and streamlined response for pest control in the City of Boston and coordinate with relevant city departments to carry out pest control strategies;

- d. Conduct outreach and awareness campaigns to educate residents on pest control and mitigation methods, including how to properly dispose of trash, containing food sources, sealing openings, and other preventative measures;
- e. Work with city agencies, the private sector, and community organizations to identify model practices and innovative strategies in reducing rat and pest populations;
- f. Advising city agencies and departments on issues pertaining to pest control; and
- g. Perform such other duties and functions as may be appropriate to pursue the policies set forth in this section.

3. Enforcement Powers.

- a. The Director, or designees of the Office shall have the power, along with Inspectional Services Department and Public Works Department, to enforce existing City of Boston ordinances related to trash and refuse disposal that are necessary in carrying out the duties of the Office.
- b. The Director, or designees of the Office are authorized to enter into agreements necessary to effectuate programs and projects related to its purpose, and, in connection with agreements entered into under this Ordinance, to enter into and execute all such other instruments and to perform any and all acts, including the allocation and expenditure of duly appropriated funds, as shall be necessary or advisable in connection with the implementation of such agreements and any renewals thereto.

SECTION 3: Severability

The provisions of this ordinance are severable, and if any provision, or portion thereof, should be held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality or invalidity will not affect the remaining provisions, which will remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 4: Effective Date

This ordinance shall be effective within six months of passage.

Filed in City Council: January 24, 2024