

Keeping of chickens.

- 1) The purpose of this article is to provide standards for the keeping of domesticated chickens. It is intended to enable residents to keep a small number of chickens on a non-commercial basis while limiting the potential adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. The town recognizes that adverse neighborhood impacts may result from the keeping of domesticated chickens as a result of noise, odor, unsanitary animal living conditions, unsanitary waste storage and removal, the attraction of predators, rodents, insects, or parasites, and non-confined animals leaving the owner's property. This article is intended to create standards and requirements that ensure that domesticated chickens do not adversely impact the neighborhood surrounding the property on which the chickens are kept. This article shall not apply to commercial farm operations in the Town of Virgil.
- 2) Keeping of chickens is permitted in the Agricultural Residential Conservation District (ARC) and Neighborhood Residential District (NR), subject to the following requirements:
 - a. The maximum number of chickens shall not exceed 6 per half acre of gross lot area in the NR District and ARC District on lots containing less than 5 acres. There shall be no maximum number of chickens per lot on lots that are 5 acres or larger if all conditions of this local law are satisfied.
 - b. Roosters are only permitted on lots which are 5 acres or larger in the ARC District. Roosters are not permitted outside of the ARC district.
 - c. The keeping of chickens shall be for personal use and not for a commercial basis.
 - d. The outdoor slaughtering of chickens is prohibited.
 - e. An enclosed chicken coop shall be provided and shall provide safe and healthy living conditions for chickens while minimizing adverse impacts to neighboring properties. The coop shall be enclosed on all sides and have a roof and doors. Access doors shall be shut and secured at night. Windows and vents shall be covered with predator-and bird-proof wire of less than one-inch openings.
 - f. A chicken pen or run shall be provided and shall consist of wire fencing or other similar material, and shall be covered with wire, aviary netting, or solid roofing. The chicken pen or run must be constructed as an integral part of the chicken coop.
 - g. The keeping of chickens is limited to rear yards. The coop and run must maintain a setback of at least 25 feet from all property lines.
 - h. The chicken coop shall provide adequate ventilation, sun, and shade, and shall be impermeable to rodents and predators, including, but not limited to, birds, dogs, and cats. The property

owner shall take all reasonable steps to eliminate the potential infestation of insects and parasites.

- i. Chickens shall be prohibited from entering adjacent or nearby properties and shall be prohibited from entering upon any road maintained by the Town of Virgil, County of Cortland, or State of New York. Chickens shall be kept in an enclosure at all times. During daylight hours, chickens may be allowed outside chicken coops or runs in a secured fenced yard if supervised. During non-daylight hours, chickens shall be secured within a coop.
 - j. Enclosures shall be clean, dry, odor-free, and kept in a sanitary condition, in a manner that shall not disturb the use and enjoyment of neighboring properties due to noise, odor, or other adverse impact.
 - k. Odors from chickens, chicken manure, or other chicken-related substances shall not be perceptible beyond the property boundary.
 - l. Only fully shielded lighting shall be used to light the exterior of the coop.
 - m. Chickens shall be provided with access to feed and clean water at all times. Such feed and water shall be provided in a manner to ensure that it is unavailable to rodents and predators.
 - n. Provisions shall be made for storing and removing chicken manure in a sanitary manner. All stored manure shall be covered by a fully enclosed structure with a roof or lid over the entire structure. All other manure not used for composting or fertilizing shall be removed. The coop, chicken pen or run, and surrounding area shall be kept free from trash and accumulated droppings. Uneaten feed shall be removed in a timely manner.
- 3) This local law shall be enforced by the zoning and/or code officer in and for the Town of Virgil and shall be enforceable in any court of competent jurisdiction, including but not limited to, the Town Court of the Town of Virgil. A violation of this local law shall be punishable by a fine of up to \$500 for each individual day of violation.