

RESOLUTION #12—2025
Regular Annual Session

Submitted by
Board of Directors

Declawing of Domestic Cats

RESOLVED, that the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) House of Delegates adopt the revised policy on Declawing of Domestic Cats as noted in the [attachment](#) (additions are underlined; deletions are ~~struck through~~).

Statement about the Resolution

The Animal Welfare Committee (AWC) evaluated the policy on Declawing of Domestic Cats. As part of the review process, numerous member comments were considered. The AWC also used the increase in scientific literature related to the short- and long-term consequences of onychectomy to inform their recommended revisions. As a result, additional focus was put on the importance of being able to express the highly motivated behavior of scratching and the negative impacts of surgical procedures intended to prevent the normal use of cats' claws. This approach is similar to that taken toward the current AVMA policy on [Canine Devocalization](#).

The AWC concluded that the AVMA could strongly discourage the routine use of declawing to manage undesirable scratching and support member veterinarians' implementation of effective alternatives to surgery, while continuing to advocate against legislation that attempts to ban certain veterinary procedures. Decisions as to whether to perform, or not, certain veterinary procedures are patient- and client-specific and should respect the veterinarian's professional judgement. Additional information about the surgery, potential complications, alternatives, and related scientific articles are available as resources at avma.org/declaw.

The language of the proposed revision is more consistent with existing policies of the [American Animal Hospital Association](#) and the [Feline Veterinary Medical Association](#) without indicating outright opposition to the procedure. Representatives of both groups were members of the AWC's assigned topical subcommittee that comprehensively reviewed the policy, with the Feline Veterinary Medical Association representative serving as the lead for that topical subcommittee. The topical subcommittee's recommendations were supported by the full AWC.

Financial Impact: None

	Board of Directors	House Advisory Committee	Reference Committee #5	House of Delegates
Recommend Approval	X (as amended)	X (as amended)		
Recommend Disapproval				
Recommend Referral to...				
No Recommendation				
Recommend Postpone Indefinitely				
(use this space for additional narrative, if needed)				