

**BYLAW No. 2025-986**

**A BYLAW OF THE VILLAGE OF RYLEY IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA**

**FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING AN  
URBAN HEN KEEPING PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to provisions of the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M- 26 and amendments thereto, Council may pass a bylaw for municipal purposes respecting the safety, health and welfare of people, the protection of people and property, wild and domestic animals, and certain activities in relation to them; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to provisions of the Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M- 26 and amendments thereto, Council has the authority to provide for a system of licences, permits and approvals; and

**WHEREAS**, Council deems it desirable to regulate and licence the keeping of hens in within the Village; and

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Council of the Village of Ryley duly assembled, hereby enact as follows:

**1. SHORT TITLE**

This bylaw may be known as the "Urban Hen Bylaw".

**2. DEFINITIONS**

In this bylaw, unless the context otherwise requires:

- 2.1 **Bylaw Enforcement Officer** means a person, company or another Municipality appointed as such by the Chief Administrative Officer; or the Chief Administrative Officer when there is none other appointed;
- 2.2 **Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)** means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Village appointed by Council, or designate;
- 2.3 **Coop** means a fully enclosed weatherproof structure and attached outdoor enclosure used for the keeping of urban hens, that is no larger than 10m<sup>2</sup> ( 107.6 ft<sup>2</sup>) in floor area, and no more than 2m (6.56 ft.) in height;
- 2.4 **Council** means the Council of the Village of Ryley;
- 2.5 **Development Permit** means a document authorizing a development issued pursuant to a Land Use Bylaw or the land use regulations;



- 2.6 **Hen** means a domesticated female chicken;
- 2.7 **Land Use Bylaw** means the Municipality's Land Use Bylaw, amended or repealed and replaced from time to time;
- 2.8 **License** means a valid license, issued pursuant to this Bylaw by the Village of Ryley to a person that allows the person to keep chickens on a parcel;
- 2.9 **Outdoor enclosure** means a securely enclosed, roofed outdoor area attached to and forming part of a coop having a bare earth or vegetated floor for urban hens to roam;
- 2.10 **Owner** means one or more persons:
- a) Who has care, charge or custody possession or control of a hen;
  - b) Who owns or who claims any proprietary interest in a hen;
  - c) Who harbors, suffers or permits a hen, to be present on any property owned, or occupied or leased by them, or which is otherwise under their control; or
  - d) To whom a License is issued for the hen;
- 2.11 **Privacy Fence** means a solid enclosed fence with a continuous height of no less than 6 feet or the maximum height permitted by the Land Use Bylaw, whichever is lesser, that creates a visual barrier, and which conceals view of the enclosed Parcel and prevents entry by predators;
- 2.12 **Rooster** means a domesticated male chicken and is prohibited within the Village boundaries;
- 2.13 **Sell** means to exchange or deliver for money or its equivalent;
- 2.14 **Subdivision And Development Appeal Board** means a development appeal board appointed pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c M-26.
- 2.15 **Village** means the Village of Ryley, a municipal corporation in the Province of Alberta, and where the context so requires, means the area of land within the corporate boundaries thereof;
- 2.16 **Unightly** means an unsightly condition as defined in the Municipal Government Act RSA 2000 c. M-26 Section 541(c)(ii).
- 2.17 **Urban Hen** means a hen that is at least sixteen (16) weeks of age or older that is kept for non-commercial egg laying for the household;

- 2.18 **Urban Hen Licence** means a licence issued pursuant to this bylaw which authorizes the licence holder to keep urban hens on a specific property within the Village.

### **3. GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- 3.1 Bylaw enables residents to keep licenced backyard hens only. Roosters are prohibited.
- 3.2 Applicants will not be able to obtain their hens until the spring, once they have gone through the application process, and both their development permit and licence have been approved.
- 3.3 Schedules "A", "B", and "C" shall form a part of this Bylaw and may, from time to time, be amended.

### **4. LICENCES**

- 4.1 The initial maximum number of urban hen licences that may be issued in the Village shall be 5 (five).
- 4.2 A person may keep up to 4 (four) urban hens by:
- a) submitting a completed urban hen licence application on forms approved by the CAO or delegate; and
  - a) paying an annual urban hen license fee as determined by the Village of Ryley Master Rates Bylaw.
- 4.3 Urban hen licences are valid for the period of January 1 to December 31 of the year in which it is issued and must be renewed annually prior to January 31 of each subsequent year.
- 4.4 Urban hen licence fees shall not be reduced or prorated no matter the month of purchase.
- 4.5 Urban hen licence fees shall not be refunded or rebated.
- 4.6 An urban hen licence is not transferable from one person to another.
- 4.7 An urban hen licence is not transferable from one property to another except:
- a) when a licence holder has moved to a new property within the Village, then:
    - i. the licence holder may apply to transfer the licence; and
    - ii. an inspection of the new property must be carried out to determine the licence holder is still able to meet all requirements for an urban hen licence as set out in this Bylaw at such property.

- 4.8 A person to whom an urban hen licence has been issued shall produce the licence upon demand by the CAO or delegate.
- 4.9 An urban hen licence may be issued or renewed if the CAO or delegate is satisfied that:
- a) the applicant is the owner of the property on which the urban hens will be kept; or that the owner of the property has provided written consent to the applicant;
  - b) the total area of the property on which the urban hens will be kept is a minimum of 7000 ft<sup>2</sup>.
  - c) the applicant resides on the property on which the urban hens will be kept;
  - d) all required information has been provided;
  - e) the applicant has taken a course on the safe handling of hens and eggs;
  - f) the applicable licence fee has been paid; and
  - g) the applicant has complied with all other Provincial and Federal Regulations for the keeping of hens.
- 4.10 An urban hen licence may be revoked or may not be renewed by the CAO if:
- a) the applicant or licence holder does not meet or no longer meets the requirements for an urban hen licence as set out in this Bylaw;
  - b) the applicant or licence holder furnishes false information or misrepresents any fact or circumstance required pursuant to this Bylaw;
  - c) the applicant or licence holder has, in the opinion of the CAO, based on reasonable grounds, contravened any part of this Bylaw whether or not the contravention has been prosecuted;
  - d) the applicant or licence holder fails to pay a fine imposed by a court for a contravention of this Bylaw or any other applicable Bylaw related to the keeping of livestock;
  - e) the applicant or licence holder fails to pay any fee required by this Bylaw or any other applicable legislation; or
  - f) in the opinion of the CAO, based on reasonable grounds, it is in the public interest to do so.
- 4.11 If the CAO revokes or refuses to issue or renew an urban hen licence, the applicant may appeal the decision to Council, in accordance with Village Bylaws.

## **5. APPLICATION PROCESS**

To ensure consistency, all applicants will:

- 5.1 Read the Village of Ryley's online Urban Hen Keeping Bylaw.
- 5.2 Prior to submitting an application, every hen keeping applicant must notify their neighbours. Neighbours are defined as those living in

adjacent properties abutting to the applicant's property or those they share a property line with. In the case where neighbouring properties are a business, business owners are to receive the notification letter. This requirement is a notification to neighbours, not a request for permission. Your neighbours have two weeks to respond to the Village of Ryley with any concerns after receiving the letter.

- o Please print off the required number of copies of neighbour notification letters as found in Schedule B.
- o Please note the date and addresses on copies of the letters that were given out in your application. We do not require that the letters be signed.
- o Please do not submit your online application until you have given your neighbours two weeks to respond to the letter from the date it was sent.

If you do not submit all required notification letters as a part of your online application, those who did not receive the letter will be given a further two weeks to respond. Please double check that you have notified all the required properties.

- 5.3 Obtain a Provincial Premise ID (PID). The Province of Alberta requires all owners of poultry (including small urban flocks) to register their flocks into the provincial database and obtain a PID.
- 5.4 Apply for your hen keeping licence. Applicants will be required to submit a site plan showing the actual dimensions of the rear yard of the property and the proposed location and dimensions of the chicken coop and run.
- 5.5 After an applicant's hen keeping application has been processed and is complete, their application will be sent to development review.
- 5.6 Applicants will be issued a licence after they have received development approval to build their coop.
- 5.7 Set up the site in accordance with the submitted site plan and the Urban Hen Keeping Procedures and Guidelines.

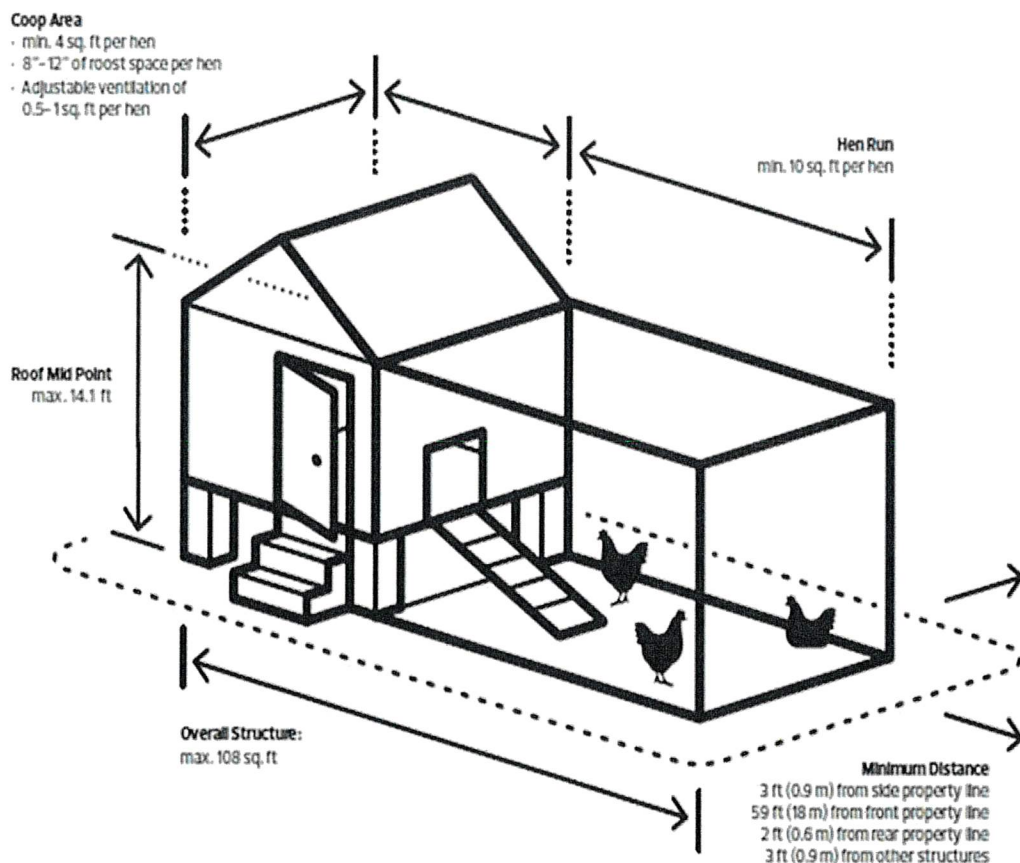
## **6. HEN ENCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES**

Site Requirements for Hen Coop and Run:

- 6.1 Hen enclosures may only be located in backyards of properties that are completely fenced and secure. Some properties, due to the smaller size of a backyard or other situational factors, may not be deemed suitable for urban hen keeping through the application process.

- 6.2 Proposed sites should minimize impacts to adjacent neighbours (away from bedroom windows, the furthest point from building).
- 6.3 If applicants plan on hardwiring electrical into their coop, they will need to apply for a Residential Electrical Permit.
- 6.4 An approved site may house only one coop and run, and they must be in compliance with program guidelines. Consultation with the CAO or delegate is recommended before purchasing or installing an accessory structure. Standard setback requirements are as follows:
- a) a minimum 3.0m (9.84 ft.) from a dwelling;
  - b) a minimum 1m (3.28 ft.) from any lot line; and,
  - c) a minimum 3.6m (11.81 ft.) from any street adjacent to the property; and
  - d) meets height restrictions [roof midpoint less than 4.3m (14.1 feet)]

6.5



- 6.6 Coop area must be a minimum of 4 ft<sup>2</sup> per hen (0.37 m<sup>2</sup>) with direct access to the run. (Coop area is permitted to overlap or be raised above run area)
- 6.7 Outdoor run area must be a minimum of 10 ft<sup>2</sup> within the coop. (0.93 m<sup>2</sup>)

- 6.8 Adjustable ventilation of 0.5-1 ft<sup>2</sup> per hen (0.046-0.093 m<sup>2</sup>). Adequate ventilation in the run and coop area is important to reduce moisture and mitigate the conditions that contribute to frostbite. Pre-made coops and runs may need to be modified to ensure proper ventilation and insulation.
- 6.9 A minimum of 1 nest box per 4 hens (12 x 12 inches in size)
- 6.10 8 - 12 inches of roost space per hen is required. Roosts must be 2.5 - 3.5 inches wide and have smooth, rounded edges.
- 6.11 All coops must be fully insulated, and draft free.
- 6.12 All runs must provide shade, be full roofed and enclosed.
- 6.13 In winter, runs must be wrapped with a wind- and snow-resistant material.
- 6.14 All hen enclosures must be rodent and predator resistant.

## **7. HEN REQUIREMENTS**

- 7.1 Approved sites must keep a minimum of three hens and shall not exceed four hens per site.
- 7.2 Roosters are not permitted.
- 7.3 Hen numbers shall be indicated in the application process.
- 7.4 Young hens (also called pullets) shall not be younger than 16 weeks old.
- 7.5 All hens must remain in a properly secured coop, or run, at all times. Hens must not be housed in a cage, kennel or any shelter other than an approved coop.
- 7.6 Slaughtering of hens is not permitted within village limits. Within village limits hens may only be euthanized at a veterinary practice.
- 7.7 Removal methods include humane euthanasia by a veterinarian, relocation to a farm, or taking hens to a licensed abattoir.

## **8. STANDARD OF CARE**

- 8.1 Hen sites shall adhere to good management and husbandry practices, maintain hens in such a condition so as to prevent distress, disease, and welfare issues.
- 8.2 Hens require appropriate food, liquid (unfrozen) water, shelter, light, warmth, ventilation, veterinary care and opportunities for essential behaviours such as



scratching, pecking, dust-bathing and roosting, in order to be comfortable and healthy.

- 8.3 The Village Office must be notified immediately of any disease or welfare issues that arise that may affect the public and the steps taken to rectify the situation.

## **9. NUISANCE & WASTE**

- 9.1 The site and coop must be properly maintained to prevent negative impacts, including but not limited to: attracting nuisance animals, the spread of food over the property, and excessive smells or noise. Access food storage must be contained in solid and sealed containers.
- 9.2 Manure must be removed, discarded, and/or properly composted in a timely manner to prevent nuisance odours.
- 9.3 Deceased birds should be double-bagged and taken directly to the appropriate waste facility or taken to a veterinarian for disposal.

## **10. PROVINCIAL REGISTRATION & DISEASE PREVENTION**

- 10.1 The Licensee must comply with all Provincial regulations around the keeping of hens as outlined by the Animal Health Act.
- 10.2 The Province of Alberta requires all owners of poultry (including small urban flocks) to register their flocks into the provincial database and obtain a Premise Identification (PID) Number. The PID enables the province to keep track of livestock site locations in case of potential disease outbreak.
- 10.3 The Province will maintain communication with site owners should any information or incidents occur that would require site owners to take action. Additionally, if any disease outbreaks occur which may be deemed a biosecurity risk, applicants must immediately notify the Village of Ryley and provide the details of the outbreak and the steps taken to rectify the issue.

## **11. APPEALS**

- 11.1 The applicant or any persons who claims to be affected by the decision of the Development Authority to grant a License may appeal the decision to the Subdivision And Development Appeal Board. The appeal shall be made in writing and shall be delivered either in person or by mail to the Secretary of the Development Appeal Board not later than 14 days after the date of Issue of Notice of Decision.
- 11.2 Should an appeal be made against the decision, the development permit shall not come into effect until the appeal has been determined by the Development Appeal Board. Should the Development Appeal Board approve the issue of the

License, the License shall be considered valid from the date of the Subdivision And Development Appeal Board decision and subject to any Subdivision And Development Appeal Board conditions.

## **12. ENFORCEMENT**

- 12.1 Without restricting any other power, duty, or function granted by the Urban Hen Bylaw, the Chief Administrative Officer or delegate may:
- a) carry out any inspections to determine compliance with the Urban Hen Bylaw;
  - b) take any steps or carry out any actions required to enforce the Urban Hen Bylaw;
  - c) take any steps or carry out any actions required to remedy a contravention of the Urban Hen Bylaw;
  - d) establish forms for the purposes of the Urban Hen Bylaw; and
  - e) delegate any powers, duties, or functions under the Urban Hen Bylaw to a Village employee.
- 12.2 Slaughtering or euthanizing hens is not permitted on an applicant's site or within Village limits.
- 12.3 Removal methods include (but are not limited to) humane euthanasia by a veterinarian, relocation to a farm, or taking hens to a licensed abattoir.
- 12.4 The Village Office will respond to all complaints and initiate investigations when warranted.
- 12.5 When enforcement or other animal husbandry issues arise, Village administration will work with the licensee(s), neighbours, and other external stakeholders to ensure they are addressed and resolved in a timely manner.
- 12.6 Failing to comply with the terms and conditions of an Urban Hen Keeping Licence may result in a fine set out in Schedule A, or a licence being revoked. If a licence is revoked, the licensee(s) will be required to relocate the hens to a location outside the Village of Ryley at their own expense.
- 12.7 Keeping hens without a licence will result in a fine as set in Schedule A.
- 12.8 Egg production is for personal use/self-consumption. No sale of eggs, or any products derived from keeping hens, is permitted.
- 12.9 All public complaints shall be directed through the Ryley Municipal Office; this reporting approach is consistent with the Village of Ryley complaint process.
- 12.10 The Licensee(s) shall make themselves and the coops available for inspection on reasonable request from the Village Office.

12. 11 If the Coop shows signs of serious disregard for general maintenance or upkeep, it is enforceable by Section 546 of the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c. M-26

**13. SUNSET PROVISION**

Any person keeping urban hens on a property prior to the effective date of this Bylaw shall have 90 days after this Bylaw comes into force to obtain the required License and comply with all provisions of this Bylaw.

**13. ENACTMENT**

This bylaw shall come into force and have effect from the date of third reading by Council.

READ a first time this 16 day of June, 2026

READ a second time this 16 day of June, 2026

READ a third time and finally passed this 16 day of June, 2026

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Glen Hamilton-Brown  
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
Village of Ryley

## SCHEDULE "A"

### Offence Penalty

| Section | OFFENCE                                                     | PENALTY        | PENALTY             |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
|         |                                                             | 1st<br>Offence | 2nd &<br>Subsequent |
| 3.1     | Keep a rooster                                              | \$250          | \$500               |
| 3.1     | Keep an unlicensed urban hen                                | \$250          | \$500               |
| 4.3     | Fail to renew urban hen licence                             | \$250          | \$500               |
| 4.7     | Transfer urban hen licence to another individual            | \$250          | \$500               |
| 4.8     | Fail to produce urban hen licence upon demand               | \$250          | \$500               |
| 6.1     | Fail to provide appropriate perch per number of hens        | \$250          | \$500               |
| 6.14    | Fail to prevent rodents/predators from entering coop        | \$250          | \$500               |
| 6.4     | Coop improperly located                                     | \$250          | \$500               |
| 6.6     | Fail to provide adequate coop space for number of hens      | \$250          | \$500               |
| 6.9     | Fail to provide appropriate nest box for hens               | \$250          | \$500               |
| 7.5     | Allow urban hen to be outside of coop or run                | \$250          | \$500               |
| 7.5     | Fail to keep coop secured                                   | \$250          | \$500               |
| 7.5     | Keep urban hen in any other form of shelter other than coop | \$250          | \$500               |
| 7.6     | Slaughter urban hen on property                             | \$250          | \$500               |
| 8.2     | Fail to adequately provide for essential hen behaviour      | \$250          | \$500               |
| 8.2     | Fail to keep food and water in coop                         | \$250          | \$500               |
| 9.1     | Fail to properly store feed                                 | \$250          | \$500               |
| 9.2     | Fail to maintain coop to prevent odours                     | \$250          | \$500               |
| 9.2     | Fail to remove waste in a timely manner                     | \$250          | \$500               |
| 9.2     | Fail to properly store manure                               | \$250          | \$500               |
| 9.2     | Fail to properly dispose of manure                          | \$250          | \$500               |
| 9.3     | Unlawfully dispose of urban hen                             | \$250          | \$500               |
| 10.3    | Fail to follow biosecurity procedures                       | \$250          | \$500               |
| 11.8    | Keep urban hens for anything other than personal use        | \$250          | \$500               |
| 11.8    | Sell any products derived from urban hens                   | \$250          | \$500               |

**SCHEDULE "B"**  
**Neighbor Notification Letter**

[DATE]

Attention:

[NEIGHBOUR FIRST AND LAST NAME]

[NEIGHBOUR ADDRESS]

Hello,

I am applying to the Village of Ryley for a license to keep [#] hens on my property. A requirement of the application is to demonstrate that I have notified my neighbours of my intention to keep hens. In addition to the notification there are a number of requirements that will be on my license and are as follows:

- The site and coop must be properly maintained to prevent (but not limited to) attracting nuisance animals, the spread of food over the property, and excessive smells or noise.
- Manure must be removed, discarded, and /or properly composted to prevent nuisance odors.
- The Province of Alberta requires all owners of poultry (including small urban flocks) to register their flocks into the provincial database and obtain a Premise Identification (PID) Number. The PID enables the province to keep track of livestock site locations in case of potential disease outbreak.

This letter is to inform you of my intention to keep hens, not to ask for permission. If you have any concerns that I am not able to address, please contact the Village of Ryley. You have two weeks to respond to this letter with any concerns you may have before my licence is processed.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR ADDRESS]



## SCHEDULE "C"

### Urban Hen Keeping Application Form

All the following information is necessary to facilitate the processing of your request. All materials submitted must be clear, legible, and precise. Only fully completed requests can be processed. Bold or asterisk (\*) fields are mandatory.

☐ New Application - \$150

☐ License Renewal - \$50

\* Last Name:

\* First Name:

\* Email address:

\* Phone Number:

\* As the applicant, I confirm (check one):

☐ I am the registered owner of the property.

☐ I have permission of the registered owner to make an application (attach copy)

#### Site Information

\* Property Address:

\* Number of Hens:

\* Description of Coop Location: (please attach drawings or photos that help describe where on the property the coop will be located.)

Coop Width (m):

Coop Depth (m):

- ☐ I have read and agree to follow the Village's Urban Hen Keeping procedures and guidelines.
- ☐ I have informed my neighbors, whose properties are immediately adjacent or attached to my property, that I will be applying for an urban hen coop to be located on my property. (Failure to inform your neighbors that a coop will be located on your property may result in revocation of your license.) Copy attached.
- ☐ I have a plan to manage organic waste from my hens. Copy attached.
- ☐ I agree to notify the Village of Ryley of any changes in flock size, or if any hens are replaced.
- ☐ I know how to keep urban hens. Please describe how you know how to keep hens. Attach any certifications, details of courses taken or mentorship details to support your application.
- ☐ I have read and understood the Raising Chickens in Alberta guide for small flock owners <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/ef3fef3e-69b0-418d-8231-2441320cc045/resource/7e2f3133-a2e6-40e7-94ec-55f2f78a0688/download/2015-raising-chickens-alberta-06-2015.pdf>
- ☐ I agree to notify the Village of Ryley of any disease or welfare issues that arise that may affect the public and the steps taken to rectify the situation.
- ☐ I understand that any failure to follow procedures or maintain proper hen keeping protocol as set out in the Urban Hen Keeping Bylaw may result in fines established in Schedule A.



The Province of Alberta requires all owners of poultry (including small urban flocks) to register their flocks in the provincial database and obtain a Premises Identification (PID) Number.

☐ Premises Identification (PID) Number

Please attach any further information not already requested you feel would help support your application.

☐ I certify that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that providing false or misleading statements may disqualify my application.

\* Signed:

\* Date:

This personal information is collected by the Village under the authority of ATIA and POPA (Alberta). It will be used for the operation of the Urban Hen License Program by internal Village departments and for Bylaw Enforcement purposes and shared with outside organizations for the purpose of managing urban hen keeping.

If you have questions about this collection please contact the Village of Ryley, Box 230, 5005-50 Street, Ryley, AB, T0B 4A0, by phone at 780-663-3653 or by email at [admin@ryley.ca](mailto:admin@ryley.ca).