

# Ramsey County Sheriff's Office

## ANIMAL CONTROL ENFORCEMENT AND PROCEDURES

### OVERVIEW

It is the duty and responsibility of this department to provide animal control services to the citizens of the seven contract cities. This includes enforcing animal violations and assisting citizens with animal control issues.

### PURPOSE

To set forth procedures and guidelines for the enforcement of and assistance with animal control issues; to clarify responsibilities of deputies vs. responsibilities of animal control.

### SCOPE

This General Order is applicable to all department members.

### STANDARDS

#### 1. Services Provided

Complaints regarding domestic animals are the greatest part of animal control services. Animal control handles complaint calls in the following areas:

- A. Dogs/cats at large;
- B. Barking dogs;
- C. Animal feces clean-up on public or private property;
- D. Animal abuse, neglect and abandonment;
- E. Animal bites and Dangerous/Potentially Dangerous Dogs; and
- F. Wild animals that are sick or threatening humans.

#### 2. Equipment

- A. A camera.
- B. Binoculars.

- C. Dog cages and cat carriers
- D. A shovel.
- E. Stretcher.
- F. Catch pole.
- G. Net.
- H. Gloves.
- I. Door hanger cards explaining nature of call or when an officer will return.
- J. Microchip scanner.

Additional Equipment Locations:

- A. Live traps sized for cats and dogs are in located at the Patrol Station and Gem Lake Substation. Deputies should use good judgment as to weather and safety conditions if placing a trap, and provides animal control with the trap's location for follow up.
- B. Extra catchpoles, pet carriers, and a microchip scanner are located at the Patrol Station.
- C. The animal control CSO has a supply of leashes, animal handling gloves, and bat containers for deputy use.
- D. Most squads are equipped with a catchpole and slip leashes.

3. Animal Impounds

- A. Check for I.D. first. This includes city license tags, rabies vaccination tags, and personalized tags. If the animal is wearing a collar, it should be checked for placard tags or information written on the collar itself. Any I.D. should be noted on the impound form.

When feasible, all animals need to be scanned for a microchip implant. Scanners are located at the Patrol Station, in both the cat and dog impound areas of the shelter and in the animal control van. To scan an animal, hold down the button on the scanner until it beeps. Continue to hold the button down as you pass the scanner over the animal's back. Microchips are generally implanted under the skin between an animal's shoulder blades. If there is no chip, the scanner will read "no chip found". If a chip is

detected, the I.D. number will appear. The I.D. number should be noted on the impound form.

- B. If there is a contract city dog license, the number can be looked up through the database on the squad room computers.
- C. Try taking the animal home.
- D. Write a warning ticket or write a citation. Give 10 days for any required action.
- E. Take the animal to the Hillcrest Animal Hospital if unable to locate the owner. Leave a yellow card advising owner that their animal is in the pound.
- F. If the Hillcrest Animal Hospital is closed, use the lock box.
- G. Request a case file number, and write it on the Impound Report. Please note in CAD that the number is for impound only, no report. Make sure you leave the white report on the animal's cage. Bring the yellow/pink copies back to the city to be placed in the file in reception.
- H. Dead animals located on city streets will be picked up by public works. If an officer has occasion to pick up a dead domestic pet, the animal can be disposed of at the Hillcrest Animal Hospital if it is less than 20 pounds. For larger animals call them first to insure they have room. An impound form should be completed for dead animals taken there.

4. Impound Reports and Animal Releases

- A. Impound reports shall be maintained for all animals in the city impound.
  - 1. All animals placed in County custody (Hospital or Emergency Vet Clinic) must have an impound report.
  - 2. A copy of the report is to be left with the animal, and another copy will be placed in the Animal Control CSO's mailbox in the squad room.

B. Animal Releases

- 1. Pet owners must come to pay impound fees at the Patrol Station before picking the animal up at the Hillcrest Animal Hospital. During the week, reception will collect fees and release animals. On weekends, officers will be dispatched to reception to assist pet owners. Make sure the owner gets one completed copy of the Animal Impound Report (these can be found in

the file in reception). They need to present the receipt to the Hillcrest Animal Hospital or the animal will not be released. Pet owners need to be at the Hillcrest Animal Hospital before 1700 on weekends.

2. Owners will need to provide I.D. and pay impound and boarding fees in order for their pet to be released. Dog owners are required to obtain a valid Dog License within 3 business days. Cat owners must provide rabies vaccination information within 3 business days.
3. Pet owner's information and payment records should be documented on the animal impound form; one copy should be placed in the animal control CSO's mailbox for any follow up, the second goes with the pet owner. The Animal Impound Form has instructions for staff and officers releasing animals, current fees, and directions to the Hillcrest Animal Hospital and shelter hours.
4. If the owner of an animal does not want their animal back, they must first come to the Patrol Station and pay all applicable kennel and pick-up fees. They will then need to go to the Hillcrest Animal Hospital and sign the animal over to them, as well as pay a surrender fee. Failure to reclaim an animal is considered abandonment and can result in a citation.

5. Daily Follow-Up for Animal Complaints

Animal Control will review CAD calls daily for follow up.

- A. Preliminary reports should be checked for lost and found animals and looked at for possibilities of matches with impound reports.
- B. Bite reports should be a priority. Look for the following information:
  1. Current rabies vaccinations.
  2. Determine if a notice of Potentially Dangerous Dog was given.
  3. Whether or not a quarantine notice was given.
- C. Complaints on preliminary reports should be checked to make sure a contact was made to correct the problem or if any follow-up is necessary.

Animal Control/CSO Follow-Up for Impounds

- A. The impound reports are kept in the folder by reception, and print outs of lost/found reports should be kept on the clipboard by the mailboxes.

- B. Each morning collect any impound reports and run a computer printout for lost and found. Check the impound forms against the computer list.
- C. On the fifth full day of impound (this may be 6 calendar days), after you've checked the last two weeks of lost animals, the Hillcrest Animal Hospital should be notified by phone (651) 484-7211 or by e-mail that the animal can be put up for adoption.
- D. If the person who has turned in the cat or dog to us wants the animal, they may contact the Hillcrest Animal Hospital regarding their adoption procedures.

6. Wildlife

- A. Animal Control is not responsible for nuisance wildlife calls. Callers should be directed to "fee for service" agencies, listed in the yellow pages.
- B. Sick or threatening wildlife will be dealt with by animal control and/or police officers. Sick or threatening wildlife should be dealt with in the following manner:
  1. Animals should be shot at the location they are found only if it is reasonable and prudent to discharge a firearm at the location. Deputies must consider background, type of surface animal is lying on, proximity to homes, businesses and bystanders before discharging their firearm.
  2. If necessary, capture and remove the animal to a location where it is safe to destroy by discharging a firearm.
  3. After the animal has been shot, they should be taken to the contracted disposal location.
- C. Bat Exposures: Due to the high incidence of rabies in bat populations, whenever there is a possibility that a bat has come into contact with a person or domestic pet, and can be captured, it should be tested for rabies.
  1. An incident report should be written (similar to an animal bite report) and a case number assigned.
  2. The bat should be contained in a secure box or other container. Containers are available in the Animal Control Office.
  3. Live bats in secure containers can be left in the Animal Control Office for delivery the next day to the Minnesota Department of Health. Deceased bats should be placed in the evidence refrigerator, and be labeled as a biohazard.

4. Leave a message or e-mail for Animal Control so they are aware that the bat needs to be delivered.
5. Inform the shift supervisor about bats that need to be delivered on weekends.

7.

Animal Bites

- A. Please make sure all reports and documentation are forwarded to Animal Control for follow-up.
- B. For any animal bite, a full incident report must be written and given a case file number. Reports should include:
  - Complete ID for the pet owner.
  - Complete description of the biting animal.
  - Circumstances of bite and where the incident occurred.
  - Photos of the bite wound and of the biting animal.
- C. Rabies control requires every owner of a dog, cat, or ferret over six months of age to have a certificate of inoculation that is current. Whenever a dog or cat has bitten a person, the owner must provide a certificate of current rabies inoculation.
- D. Home Quarantine
  1. Animals with a current rabies vaccination certificate may be quarantined at home. Do not quarantine animals that have bitten another animal--do a report and the Animal Control Officer will follow-up.
  2. Dogs, cats and ferrets must be placed under quarantine for a period of 10 days (the date of the bite is day -0-). A quarantine notice must be filled out with one copy given to the owner and one copy brought back to the police department and given to Animal Control (document in the report where the notice was placed).
  3. Information regarding quarantine restrictions can be found on the back of the quarantine form. If the dog, cat or ferret escapes, dies or shows signs of illness during the quarantine period, the animal control officer or Sheriff's Department must be notified immediately.
- E. Supervised Quarantine
  1. In the event that a certificate of current rabies inoculation is not provided or upon a reasonable suspicion that the animal may be rabid, the dog, cat,

or ferret shall be seized and placed with a veterinarian or at the city's contracted kennel for 10 days. All costs are paid by the owner.

2. Depending on the circumstances, the owner may wish to have the animal euthanized immediately. If so, an officer should accompany them to the veterinary clinic. All euthanasia costs are paid by the owner. Once the animal has been euthanized, the officer must transport the carcass to the Minnesota Department of Health (call 612-676-5254 for directions).

- F. Depending on the nature of the bite, and the dog's past history, Animal Control will follow up with a Notice of Potentially Dangerous Dog or Dangerous Dog issued to the owner. (Refer to the "Potentially Dangerous Dog Notice" form which is located in the squad room.)

8. Potentially Dangerous Dog/Dangerous Dog Declarations

Animal Control will follow up on dog bites and aggressive incidents to determine if the dog should be declared Dangerous or Potentially Dangerous under state statute and/or city ordinance.

A. Potentially Dangerous Dogs

1. If a dog is determined to be Potentially Dangerous, the animal control authority will issue the owner a "Notice of Potentially Dangerous Dog". Potentially Dangerous dogs must be microchipped within 14 days of notification. The owner is entitled to appeal the declaration.
2. A copy of the notice will be filed with the report. When the report is completed, clerical staff will flag the address in CAD as needed.

B. Dangerous Dogs

If a dog is declared "dangerous" by the animal control authority, the owner must register the dog with the City. The owner of a Dangerous Dog must obtain a surety bond or policy of liability issued by authorized companies in the amount of at least \$300,000 insuring the owner for any personal injuries inflicted by the dog. The Contract City shall issue a certificate of registration to the owner of a dangerous dog if the owner presents sufficient evidence that:

1. The dog has been microchipped;
2. A "proper enclosure" exists for the dog;

3. If the dog is outside of the enclosure, it must be muzzled and on a sturdy leash or chain, controlled by an adult. If the dog is in any building off the owner's property, it must be muzzled;
4. The premises are posted with a clearly visible warning sign, including a warning symbol to inform children, that there is a dangerous dog on the property. This sign is provided by the city as part of the dog's registration fee;
5. The owner must provide proof of insurance in the amount of at least \$300,000, payable to any person injured by the dangerous dog;
6. A dangerous dog must have a standardized, easily identifiable tag affixed to the dog's collar at all times. These tags are available from animal control;
7. The County will charge the owner a Dangerous Dog Registration Fee, in addition to the regular dog licensing fees;
8. Exemption: Dogs may not be declared dangerous if the threat, injury, or damage was sustained by a person who:
  - Was committing, at the time, a willful trespass or other tort upon the premises occupied by the owner of the dog;
  - Was provoking, tormenting, abusing, or assaulting the dog or who can be shown to have done so repeatedly in the past; or
  - Was committing or attempting to commit a crime.

9. Seizure of Animals

There are several circumstances under which an animal can be seized either for its own protection, or for the protection of others.

A. Seizure Procedure

1. Whenever an officer has cause to remove an animal from private property without a warrant, an Animal Seizure and Impoundment Notice should be completed.
2. One copy of the notice should be posted at the place of seizure, and the second copy delivered to Animal Control.

3. A full incident report should be written and given a case number.
4. The animal should be delivered to the humane society, or contract veterinarian if required, and an Impound Report should be completed.
5. The seizure notice contains all instructions pet owners need to follow to reclaim their animal. Depending on circumstances, they may need to post a security deposit and request a hearing before the animal will be returned.

B. Statutes Applying to Seizure Conditions:

1. Minnesota Statutes Chapter 343 (Cruelty to Animals) requires that the owner or keeper of any animal must provide it with proper care and attention. Section 343.29, subdivision (1) provides authority for peace officers or animal control officers to impound certain animals not properly sheltered from cold, hot, or inclement weather; not properly fed or watered, or provided with suitable food and drink.
2. Section 343.12 provides authority for peace officers to take possession of any animals that have been treated cruelly, as part of an investigation of said cruelty, and to deliver them for care.
3. Section 343.22 allows any person to apply to the court for a warrant and investigation if they have reason to believe that a violation of Chapter 343 has taken place or is taking place (Similar to a Citizen's Arrest).
4. Statute 343.22, Subd. 3 allows a licensed veterinarian to determine if an animal taken into custody pursuant to this section may be immediately euthanized when the animal is suffering and is beyond reasonable care and treatment.
5. Section 343.31 refers to animal fights and possession of fighting animals. Subdivision (4) provides authority for peace officers to remove, shelter and care for an animal found in these circumstances.
6. Minnesota State Statute 346.57 provides authority for peace officers to remove unattended dogs and cats from a motor vehicle if the animal's health or safety is endangered. This statute does not require security payment or a hearing for the pet owner.

10. Injured Stray Domestic Animals

When a stray domestic animal (generally only dogs and cats) is injured and the owner cannot be located, the following shall be the emergency care policy:

- A. Weekdays during normal business hours and Saturday mornings from 0800-1200 hours, injured stray domestic animals should be taken to Hillcrest Animal Clinic, located at 1320 County Rd D Circle, Maplewood, MN. The phone number is 651-484-7211.
- B. After 1800 hours on weeknights and on the remaining weekend hours, animals will be taken to the Affiliated Emergency Veterinary Clinic located at 301 University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55103. The evening telephone number is 651-293-1800 and the daytime number is 651-293-1998. Dispatch should call ahead and let the clinic know that we will be en route with an injured animal.
- C. Injured domestic animals that have been placed in the Animal Emergency Clinic must be removed prior to 0800 hours the following business day. The officer or CSO who transports an animal to the clinic should notify the shift supervisor that the animal is at the clinic, so arrangements can be made for pick up.

APPROVED BY:

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