

City of St. John's Corporate and Operational Policy Manual

Policy Title: Humane Services Policy	Policy #: 09-01-15
Last Revision Date: N/A	Policy Section: Community Services>Animal Control and Rescue
Policy Sponsor: Deputy City Manager, Community Services	

1. Purpose

This policy provides direction to Employees, Animal Rescue Organizations, and Residents related to services provided by and by-law enforcement activities of the Humane Services Division.

2. Definitions

“Abandoned Animal” means an animal abandoned in any of the following scenarios:

- a) an animal left within a dwelling in which the owner no longer resides for more than 24 hours;
- b) an animal left within a dwelling/enclosure without provision for reasonable and necessary care or supervision for more than 24 hours; or
- c) an animal released at large by owner/owner agent with the intention of no longer providing necessary care or supervision.

“Animal” shall have the same meaning as the definition for “companion animal” in the Animal Health and Protection Act, that is: “(i) a dog, (ii) a cat, or (iii) an animal kept for companionship or bred or raised for sale for companionship and not for an agricultural purpose, and excludes (iv) livestock, (v) wild life and fish as defined in the Wild

Life Act, and (vi) an animal that may be prescribed by regulation as excluded”.

“Animal Rescue Organization” (“the Organization”) means an individual, group of individuals, or organization representing themselves to the public as an animal rescuer, including, but not limited to, an organization registered as federal or provincial charity whose primary purpose involves animal rescue, animal adoption, and/or humane animal care.

“Cat” shall have the same meaning as defined by the St. John's Animal Control Regulation, that is, “a male or female domesticated cat”.

“Dog” shall have the same meaning as defined by the St. John's Animal Control Regulation, that is, “a male or female domesticated dog and includes an animal which is a cross between a wolf and a dog”.

“Employee” means any person employed by the City of St. John's as a permanent, term, part-time, casual, contract, seasonal, temporary, or student worker.

“Found Animal” means any animal reported by a person to be at large without the supervision of an owner and is now in the person's possession.

“Lost Animal” means any animal reported by the owner or owner's agent to be missing from its residence or has escaped supervision.

“Officer” shall have the same meaning as defined by the St. John's Animal Control Regulation, that is, “a Humane Services Officer in the employ of the City of St. John's or other person or persons designated by the City of St. John's to enforce the provisions of this By-Law”.

“Owner” shall have the same meaning as defined by the Animal Health and Protection Act, that is, “owner” when used with reference to an animal includes a person who has custody, charge or possession of that animal or who is the owner of property, a house, premises or part of a premises where an animal is kept or permitted to live or remain”.

“Resident” means a resident of the City of St. John’s.

“Stray Animal” means any animal not under restraint and not in the presence of or within the property of its owner.

3. Policy Requirements

3.1 Animal Licensing for St. John’s Residents

- a) Dog licensing is mandatory for Dogs six months or older under the St. John’s Animal Control Regulation (“the Regulation”). Owners shall follow the process noted in the **Humane Services Procedures** to obtain a license for their Dogs on or before that time.
- b) Cat Owners who wish to obtain a license may follow the same process.
- c) Any unlicensed Dogs that are impounded and reside in St. John’s shall be licensed with the City before being released.

3.2 Lost, Found, Stray, or Abandoned Animals

- a) Reports of Lost, Found, Stray, or Abandoned Animals may be made to the Humane Services Division (“the Division”) as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- b) Employees shall manage reports of Lost, Found, Stray, or Abandoned Animals as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.

3.3 Veterinary Services

- a) The Division may provide veterinary services to Lost, Abandoned, and Stray Animals in their care.

- b) The Division shall not provide veterinary services to privately-owned Animals outside of existing programs.
- c) The Division shall provide veterinary services consistent with the Newfoundland and Labrador College of Veterinarians Clinic Standards.

3.4 Impounded Animals

- a) All Animals impounded at the Division shall receive care as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- b) Owners may have their Animal released from impounding as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- c) The Division shall not accept Animals that, in the sole opinion of the Division, pose a risk to the health and safety of its Employees.
- d) The City shall not be liable for any Animal that may succumb to disease, accidental injury, or illness (including, but not limited to, adverse reaction to treatment) contracted before or after entry to the Division.

3.5 Animal Adoption

- a) Animals that have been impounded under the Regulation or surrendered to the City may be offered for adoption as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- b) The City shall not guarantee any Animal adopted from the Division to be disease-free.
- c) Adoption applicants shall agree to all terms and conditions of the adoption contract. Failure to do so may result in the seizure of the Animal.

3.6 Regulation Enforcement

- a) Alleged violations of the Regulation shall be managed by the Division as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.

3.7 Live Trapping of Animals

- a) When Animals must be apprehended for health or safety reasons but remain evasive and cannot be captured by conventional means, Residents may request the use of a live trap from the Division as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- b) The Division shall evaluate the request as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- c) The Division shall not provide live traps for the purposes of trap, neuter, and release.
- d) Residents provided with live traps by the Division shall follow all requirements detailed in the **Humane Services Procedures**. Violation of any of the policy or procedures governing the use of live traps may result in the immediate suspension of this service to the specific person(s) involved.

3.8 Emergency

- a) The Division shall not provide emergency services to privately-owned Animals. This service shall be for Lost, Abandoned, or Stray Animals only.
- b) Animal emergencies and public safety issues shall only be reported via 311, as alternative methods may not be received or reviewed in a timely manner.
- c) Reports shall be managed as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.

3.9 Surrender of Animals

- a) The Division may accept, at its sole discretion, Animals that are surrendered by Owners, depending on available space and adoptability.
- b) The City shall not guarantee the adoption of any Animal surrendered to the Division by their Owner.

- c) The process for surrendering Animals shall be as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.

3.10 Euthanasia

- a) The Division shall only provide euthanasia and disposal services to Owners who are Residents. Owners seeking these services shall provide proof of residency and pay all applicable fees. Any exceptions to this shall be at the sole discretion of the Division.
- b) The decision to euthanize an Animal in the custody of the Division shall be at the sole discretion of the Division.
- c) Euthanasia of Animals shall be as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- d) The Division may waive the euthanasia/surrender fee for Owners with low income as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.

3.11 Animal Rescue Organizations

- a) The Division may accept, as resources allow and at the sole discretion of the Division, Lost, Abandoned, or Stray Animals found within City boundaries from an Animal Rescue Organization (“the Organization”) as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- b) Management of Animals accepted from an Organization shall be as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- c) If, in the sole opinion of the Division, the Division finds evidence suggesting that the Organization has provided false information (including, but not limited to, the location where an Animal was found) or has purposely misled the Division regarding an Animal, the Division may deny services to the Organization in the future.

3.12 Cat Spay/Neuter Program

- a) The Division may offer a Cat Spay/Neuter Program to Residents who are Owners with low income as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.

3.13 Pet Safekeeping Program

- a) The Division may offer a Pet Safekeeping Program to facilitate temporary accommodations for Animals whose Owners are Residents and are fleeing intimate partner violence, as noted in the **Humane Services Procedures**.
- b) Animals shall only be held by the Division or a foster household for a maximum of 30 days.
- c) The City shall not be liable for any injury, illness, or damage to persons or property, including Animals belonging to a household fostering an Animal, while an Animal is in temporary accommodations under the Program.

3.14 Fees

- a) The Division may review and revise its fee structures as required, with final approval to be provided by Council.

4. Application

- a) The policy shall apply to:
 - i. All Employees and Officers;
 - ii. All Animals under the care and control of the Division;
 - iii. all Residents, Organizations, or other individuals or groups seeking the services of the Division or subject to an investigation by the Division.
- b) The Division shall provide services related to Animal control, Animal programs, and Animal abuse and neglect investigations only within the boundaries of the City of St. John's.
- c) Adoption of Animals impounded by the Division shall not be limited to Residents.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 The Manager, Humane Services Division shall be responsible for:

- a) the overall implementation of the policy and associated procedures;
- b) advising their Employees of the requirements of the policy and its procedures; and
- c) providing information to the public related to Division services and enforcement activities.

5.2 Humane Services Division Employees shall be responsible for:

- a) complying with this policy and any associated procedures; and
- b) providing information to the public related to Division services and enforcement activities.

5.3 Organizations shall be responsible for:

- a) providing accurate and timely information to the City as required.

5.4 Owners and/or Residents shall be responsible for:

- a) providing all required information for Division services; and
- b) reporting Stray Animal emergencies and Animal control concerns to the City.

5.5 Council shall be responsible for:

- a) reviewing and approving all fee structure revisions submitted to Council by the Division.

6. References

- [Animal Health and Protection Act](#)
- City of St. John's Humane Services Division Safe Work Practices Manual
- [Newfoundland and Labrador College of Veterinarians Clinic Standards](#)
- [St. John's Animal Control Regulation](#)

7. Approval

- Policy Sponsor: Deputy City Manager, Community Services
- Policy Writer: Policy Analyst; Manager, Humane Services; Shelter Veterinarian
- Date of Approval from
 - Corporate Policy Committee: March 31, 2022
 - Senior Executive Committee: February 17, 2023
 - Committee of the Whole: February 22, 2023
- Date of Approval from Council: March 6, 2023

8. Monitoring and Contravention

- a) The Humane Services Division shall monitor the application of the policy and procedures.
- b) Any contravention of the policy and/or associated procedures may be brought to the attention of the Humane Services Division, the Department of Finance and Administration (Human Resources Division), the Office of the City Solicitor, and/or the Office of the City Manager for further investigation and appropriate action, which may include, but is not limited to, legal action and/or discipline up to and including dismissal.

9. Review Date

Every five years