

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

Procedure Title: Humane Services Procedures	
Authorizing Policy: Humane Services Policy	
Procedure #: 09-01-15-01	
Last Revision Date: N/A	Procedure Sponsor: Deputy City Manager, Community Services

1. Procedure Statement

These procedures provide 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”.

“Distress” shall have the same meaning as the definition for “distress” in the Animal Health and Protection Act, that is, “the state of being in need of proper care, water, food or shelter, being sick, injured, abused or in pain or of suffering undue or unnecessary hardship, privation or neglect.”

“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”.

“Place” shall have the same meaning as the definition for “place” in the Animal Health and Protection Act, that is “includes commercial or private premises, land, a container, vehicle, vessel, or aircraft”.

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

“Shelter Veterinarian” means a person employed in the position of veterinarian by 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. Procedure Requirements

3.1 Animal Licensing for St. John’s Residents

As noted in Section 3.1(a) of the policy:

- a) Owners seeking a new license or seeking to renew the existing license for their Animal may obtain a license online via [License Your Pet](#), by email by contacting humaneservices@stjohns.ca, or in person at one of the following locations:
 - i. Access St. John's, City Hall, 10 New Gower Street
 - ii. Humane Services, 81 Higgins Line

- iii. H.G.R. Mews Community Centre, 40 Mundy Pond Road
- iv. Paul Reynolds Community Center, 35 Carrick Drive.
- b) Owners applying by email or in-person shall complete the Animal Licensing Application.

3.2 Lost, Found, Stray, or Abandoned Animals

As noted in Section 3.2 of the policy:

- a) Reports of Lost, Found, Stray, or Abandoned Animals may be made to the Humane Services Division (“the Division”) by email (humaneservices@stjohns.ca) or by phoning 311 or 754-CITY.
- b) If an Animal is not found within 60 days of the original report, the Owner shall be responsible for contacting the Division with a renewed report of the lost Animal.
- c) Employees shall keep records for 60 days from the date of report, describing Animals that have been reported lost or found using the Lost Form or Found Form, as appropriate.
- d) Employees shall cross reference these records with records of Animals that have been impounded or found dead or injured.
- e) Employees shall advise Owners to check the “[Lost and Found](#)” page of the City’s website to determine whether their Animal has been impounded.
- f) Owners or others reporting Lost, Found, Stray, or Abandoned Animals shall be asked for permission to share their contact information. Owner and Animal information shall only be given to a third party for the sole purpose of reuniting a lost Animal with its Owner.
- g) Residents shall make advance arrangements by contacting the City before bringing Stray or Abandoned Animals to the Division. Residents may contact via email (humaneservices@stjohns.ca), via the Access St. John’s web or app, or by phone (311 or 754-CITY). During 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Residents may contact the Humane Services Division directly by phone at 576-6126.
- h) Abandoned Animals shall be treated by the Division as impounded Animals and may include those that have been left with the following

for more than the agreed upon timeframe, and the Owner either cannot be contacted within five days or has no plans to retrieve the Animal:

- i. a friend;
 - ii. a veterinarian/veterinary clinic; or
 - iii. an Animal boarding facility.
- i) Animals abandoned in rental units may be transported to the Division by the landlord or agent. The Division may provide kennels and/or live traps, if requested. The Division shall require that the landlord or agent provide contact information for the tenant upon transfer of the Animal.

3.3 Impounded Animals

As detailed in Section 3.4 of the policy:

- a) All impounded Animals shall be checked for obvious signs of disease, illness, or injury and if required, treated by the Shelter Veterinarian.
- b) When licensed Dogs have been impounded, Employees shall contact Owners using the information provided when licensing the Animal.
- c) Animals shall be held for five days and if not claimed by the Owner within this period shall then be owned by the City.
- d) Prior to release of any Animal, Owners shall pay all applicable impounding fees plus any veterinary or other related costs incurred by the City while the Animal is impounded.

3.3.1 Care of Impounded Animals

- a) While at the Division, all Animals shall be cared for as detailed in the **Humane Services Safe Work Standard Operating Procedure** and consistent with all applicable legislation.
- b) All Animals in the Division shall have basic preventative veterinarian care upon intake, including but not limited to, vaccination, deworming, or flea treatment, at the direction of the Shelter Veterinarian.

3.4 Animal Adoption

As noted in Section 3.5 of the policy:

- a) As part of the adoption process, the adoption applicant shall complete either a Cat Adoption Questionnaire or a Dog Adoption Questionnaire.
- b) Animals shall be matched with the best suited applicant at the sole discretion of the Division. The Division may, in its sole discretion, decline Adoption applications, considering such issues as, but not limited to, questionnaire answers, interviews, previous Animal history, and/or St. John's Animal Control Regulation ("Regulation") complaints.
- c) Residents of St. John's shall be required to pay an extra applicable registration fee to have a Dog registered, in addition to the adoption fee.
- d) The Division shall only consider a refund of the adoption fee if, within 30 days from the date of adoption, the Animal is returned to the Division due to a medical condition (with the exception of Feline Upper Respiratory Disease complex) or aggression noted by an external veterinarian. The original receipt and a veterinary medical record indicating the nature of the condition or cause of death shall be required to qualify for a refund.

3.5 Regulation Enforcement

As detailed in Section 3.6 of the policy:

- a) Owners alleged to be in violation of a Regulation may be subject to investigation.
- b) An investigation may include a phone interview, home visit, and/or written correspondence depending on the nature of the alleged violation.
- c) If a violation is noted by the Officers, written notice, tickets, or court action may result, at the discretion of the Officer.
- d) In the case of an Animal residing at a rental property, where appropriate in the discretion of the Division, the property owner may also be given written notice or tickets, or court action may result.

- e) Information such as statements of complainants, Officer reports, and/or electronic records shall be kept on file and may be submitted as evidence in any court action.
- f) Complainants shall not be provided with details of how a case was resolved, only whether it is still under investigation or closed.
- g) The City shall not enforce pet policies of rental properties unless the issue is in violation of the Regulation.

3.5.1 Animals Under Mandated Quarantine

- a) Animals that are known to have bitten people shall be managed and/or quarantined as required by Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's [Rabies Policy Manual for Newfoundland and Labrador](#).
- b) The Owner may request that the Division house the Animal during quarantine. The Division shall not quarantine any Animal that is deemed by the Division to be a safety hazard to Employees.
- c) If the request is approved by the Division, the Owner shall be responsible for transporting the Animal to the Division.
- d) At that time, the Owner may give consent to have the Animal euthanized at the expiration of the quarantine period. If consent is provided, there shall be no cost to the Owner for the quarantine, but the Owner shall pay all applicable euthanasia services fees.
- e) If the Owner wishes to take possession of the Animal after the quarantine period has expired, ward fees shall be charged to the Owner for the entire quarantine period.
- f) For Animals being held for quarantine at the Division, if the Animal is observed to be extremely aggressive during the quarantine period, the Division may determine that its release would endanger the safety of the general public. Based on the history of aggressiveness and complaints against the Owner, the Animal may be euthanized at the end of the quarantine period. The Division shall make reasonable attempts during the quarantine period, as determined solely by the Division, to notify the Owner if such action is deemed necessary.

3.6 Live Trapping of Animals

As noted in Section 3.7 of the policy:

- a) Residents making a request for a live trap from the Division shall provide a complete explanation of the circumstances.
- b) A live trap may be assigned to the property if the circumstances meet any or all of the following criteria:
 - i. the Animal is presumed homeless or abandoned and is in evident Distress;
 - ii. the Animal is injured, diseased, or Distressed and remains fearful and elusive; or
 - iii. private or public property is being repeatedly damaged by any Animal not being kept in accordance the Regulation, and there are no alternative means of correcting the problem within a reasonable period of time, as determined solely by the Division.
- c) The Division shall provide the Resident with Live Trap Instructions and Residents shall agree to follow the instructions.
- d) The property owner or agent shall return the live traps to the Division immediately upon request.
- e) If Residents using their own live traps wish the Division to accept a trapped Animal, the Residents shall make prior arrangements with the Division. The Division may accept Stray Animals and/or may refuse to accept Animals that are known to be owned.

3.7 Emergency

As noted in Section 3.8 of the policy:

- a) Officers shall determine whether a call received by the Division should be considered an emergency.
- b) Stray Animals found to be in Distress as the result of an investigation of an emergency call shall be rescued and, if necessary, taken to the nearest veterinary hospital for examination.
- c) 311 shall contact Employees or Officers, and they shall be dispatched to the area.

- d) The Division may decide, at its sole discretion, not to dispatch Employees or Officers to respond to a Call outside of the operational hours of the Division (normally 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday) without the name and telephone number of the complainant.
- e) Depending on their condition, injured Animals may be taken to the nearest veterinary clinic and released back to the custody of the Division after examination. They shall then be held at the Division for the required impound time, during which their Owner may reclaim them.
- f) At times, the nature of injuries sustained by unidentified Animals may be so severe that the attending veterinarian may be required to make the ethical decision to have the Animal immediately euthanized.
- g) If an Animal bearing identification is found in this condition, the Division shall make reasonable attempts, as determined solely by the Division, to locate the Owner. If these attempts are unsuccessful, and the Animal's condition is rapidly worsening, the ethical decision to euthanize may be made by the veterinarian.
- h) The Division shall continue to attempt to locate the Owner as soon as possible thereafter and provide details of the incident.
- i) All associated costs shall be the responsibility of the Owner of the Animal.

3.8 Surrender of Animals

As noted in Section 3.9 of the policy:

- a) When surrendering Animal litters or any unwanted Animal to the Division, the Owner shall provide their name and address, as well as the reason(s) why the Animal is no longer wanted or cannot be cared for.
- b) Owners shall sign a Surrender Form and once admitted, the Animals shall be owned by the City.
- c) Animals being surrendered shall be transported to the Division by the Owner.

- d) Anyone wishing to reclaim their Animal(s) after surrendering them shall follow the requirements for impounded Animals.

3.9 Euthanasia

As noted in Section 3.10 of the policy:

- a) Euthanasia of Animals at the Division shall be performed by a licensed veterinarian or veterinary clinic in routine and/or emergency situations. The decision to euthanize may be health-related or may concern the safety of the general public, Division Employees, or the Animals themselves.
- b) The Owner and/or Owner's agent surrendering Animals for euthanasia shall sign the Surrender Form. Animals shall not be accepted by the Division until the form is completed.
- c) For Animals surrendered by their Owners and/or their agent, all costs associated with euthanasia shall be paid for in advance.
- d) The Division shall provide euthanasia as a drop off service only. If the Owner wishes to be present, they shall book the service at a private veterinary clinic.
- e) Animals shall be surrendered for euthanasia by scheduled appointment. Transportation to the Division shall be the responsibility of the Owner.
- f) The Division reserves the right to refuse euthanasia of an Animal considered adoptable in the sole opinion of the Division.

3.9.1 Waiver of Euthanasia/Surrender Fee

- a) Owners who are Residents living with low income may seek a waiver of the euthanasia/surrender fees by submitting the Waiver of Euthanasia/Surrender Fee Application Form, if they are:
 - i. individuals with net income of \$25,000 or less;
 - ii. families with net income of \$40,000 or less; or
 - iii. 65 years of age or older and receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement.
- b) The following documentation shall be provided with the form:

- i. photo identification to provide identity and proof of residency in St. John's;
 - ii. proof of income via copies of Proof of Income Statement from CRA for all family members living in the household (T4s and pay stubs shall not be accepted); and
 - iii. for seniors receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement, a letter of confirmation from the Government of Canada.
- c) All documentation shall be sent via mail or hand delivered to the City, as email is not a secure medium for the transmission of documents containing personal information.

3.10 Animal Rescue Organizations

As noted in Section 3.11 of the policy:

- a) An Animal Rescue Organization ("the Organization") seeking the Division's services for Animals in their care shall submit the Animal Rescue Admittance Form, which transfers Animal ownership to the City, subject to review and acceptance by the Division. Once ownership of the Animal is accepted by the City, the Animal shall become the property of the City and shall be cared for in accordance with Humane Services policy and procedures.
- b) The Division shall not provide medical services to an Organization, including, but not limited to, verbal consultations.
- c) The Division shall not provide care to an Animal until ownership has been signed over to the City and the Organization has provided all available history.
- d) Animals housed in the same Place as those with known infectious disease may be refused transfer.
- e) If the Organization uses live trapping for multiple Cats in one area, the Division shall not accept the Animals unless prior arrangements have been made with the Division for transfer.
- f) The Division has limited capacity for feral or semi-feral Cats or kittens and shall not accept them for rehoming. The determination of whether

a Cat or kitten is feral or semi-feral shall be at the sole discretion of the Division.

- g) The Division shall not accept Animals presented by the Organization on behalf of a Resident without first being provided with the complete contact information of the Resident. Owned Animals surrendered to the care of the Organization may not be accepted by the Division.
- h) Any Animal deemed to be unadoptable after examination by a veterinarian shall be euthanized without further consultation with the Organization.
- i) Any Animal deemed to be an unreasonable risk to Employee safety at any point shall be euthanized without further consultation with the Organization.
- j) The Organization shall not be consulted about ongoing care or treatment plans once the Animal is in care of the Division, nor shall the Division accept any direction from the Organization in the care and/or treatment of the Animal.
- k) The Organization shall not be consulted about adoption and/or return to Owner plans once the Animal is in care of the Division. The Organization may not be provided with outcome details on individual Animals in the care of the Division.
- l) Should the Organization wish to have an Animal returned to their care, the Organization shall be responsible for paying the cost of any services provided by while in the Division's care.

3.11 Cat Spay/Neuter Program

As noted in Section 3.12 of the policy:

- a) Residents shall only be eligible for the Cat Spay/Neuter Program if their income is below the following thresholds:
 - i. Individuals with net income of \$25,000 or less; or
 - ii. Families with net income of \$40,000 or less.
- b) Cats shall be six months of age or older to qualify for this program. Applications may be accepted once the Cat has reached four months of age.

- c) Those seeking to apply for the program shall complete the appropriate form (Cat Neuter Assistance – Male Only or Cat Spay Assistance – Female Only)
- d) The following documentation shall be provided with the form:
 - i. photo identification to provide identity and proof of residency in St. John's;
 - ii. proof of income via copies of a Proof of Income Statement from CRA for all family members living in the household (T4s and pay stubs shall not be accepted); and
 - iii. for seniors receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement, a letter of confirmation from the Government of Canada.
- e) All documentation shall be sent via mail or hand delivered to the City, as email is not a secure medium for the transmission of documents containing personal information.
- f) The Division shall contact successful applicants with the surgical appointment date, time, and instructions. Any required payments shall be paid in advance of the appointment.

3.12 Pet Safekeeping Program

As noted in Section 3.13 of the policy:

- a) To be eligible for the Pet Safekeeping Program, the person seeking temporary pet accommodations shall be a Resident of St. John's.
- b) Requests for the Pet Safekeeping Program shall only be received by the Division from partner organizations, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, and Iris Kirby House.
- c) The Division shall arrange to admit and secure the Animal(s) in accordance with the Pet Safekeeping Program Admittance Form completed by the Animal's Owner or agent.
- d) Households interested in fostering an Animal under the program shall complete the Pet Safekeeping Program Foster Form. All Animals to be fostered shall be matched with foster households according to information provided. Foster households shall agree to all requirements of the form.

- e) The Division shall make all decisions with respect to Animals being fostered in foster households in the event the Owner cannot be reached.
- f) Animals not picked up within 30 days by their Owners shall be considered abandoned and shall be considered owned by the City.

4. Application

- a) The policy and procedures 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 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 of St. John's.

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 by phoning 311.

6. References

- [Animal Health and Protection Act](#)
- City of St. John's Animal Care and Adoption Center Safe Work Practices Manual
- [Rabies Policy Manual for Newfoundland and Labrador](#)
- [St. John's Animal Control Regulation](#)

Division Forms:

- Animal Licensing Application
- Animal Rescue Admittance Form
- Cat Adoption Questionnaire
- Cat Neuter Assistance – Male Only
- Cat Spay Assistance – Female Only
- Dog Adoption Questionnaire
- Live Trap Instructions
- Pet Safekeeping Program Admittance Form
- Pet Safekeeping Program Foster Form
- Surrender Form
- Waiver of Euthanasia/Surrender Fee Application

7. Approval

- Procedure Sponsor: Manager, Humane Services
- Procedure Writer: Policy Analyst; Manager, Humane Services;
Shelter Veterinarian
- Date of Approval from:
 - Corporate Policy Committee: March 31, 2022
 - Senior Executive Committee: February 17, 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

Initial Review: 3 years; Subsequent Reviews: Concurrent with policy