

R E S O L U T I O N

Approval of Policies and Procedures Manual and
Priority and Sorting of Complaints - Animal Control

WHEREAS, The Human Resources Committee met in regular session on October 25, 1994 and reviewed polices and procedures manual for animal control department; and,

WHEREAS, Animal Control Director, and Health Director have initiated procedures manual and priority and sorting of complaints for the benefit of all employees involved with animal control incidents; and,

WHEREAS, It is the determination of the Human Resources Committee that attached policies and procedures manual be adopted,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THIS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, THAT attached policies and procedures manual and priority and sorting of complaints is hereby adopted.

Dated: November 30, 1994

Grand Traverse County Animal Control Policies and Procedures Manual

The purpose of this manual is to establish the goals and missions of the Office of Animal Control and Protection and to define the operations and procedures the department utilizes in achieving these functions.

The Mission of the Animal Control Office is to provide the citizens of Grand Traverse County with the following services:

1. Public Safety

- A. Pick up stray dogs running at large.
- B. Pick up loose and/or stray dogs from residence of person who found and is holding a dog to be picked up by Animal Control.
- C. Investigate and/or seize dogs showing vicious behavior such as dogs chasing people, dogs attacking a person or other animals, dog bites, etc.
- D. Dogs in traffic. Rescue and seize dogs or other animals in traffic causing a hazard.
- E. Investigate dogs involved with damage such as dog killed chickens, torn screen doors, etc.
- F. Remove trapped or injured wildlife from school yards, roadways, etc. which pose a threat to public safety. Example: children handling a raccoon in school yard.
- G. Remove sick or injured animals from public places which may cause an immediate public health concern.
- H. Remove livestock from roadways or other areas which cause major safety hazards, etc.

2. Public Assistance

- A. Pick up dogs from vehicles involved in accident or driver/owner being arrested.
- B. Pick up dogs and other animals at residence where owner is being arrested, etc. by law enforcement and has no one else to take care of animals in their absence.
- C. Pick up or take charge of (arrange for care of) animals at residence faced with emergency situation, such as a house fire, etc., until a permanent solution is available.
- D. Assist Law Enforcement, Fire, and EMS in gaining access to owner, if animals present a problem.
- E. Provide assistance to other agencies on animal related issues.
- F. Assist other agencies and/or citizens in the location of owners and/or the capturing of livestock such as loose cattle, horses, etc.
- G. Handle barking dog complaints.

3. Public Health

- A. Enforce licensing laws/ordinances and rabies vaccinations.
- B. Quarantine and/or capture dogs/cats at large which have bitten someone or another animal to observe the animal for ten (10) days and obtain a rabies vaccination history, owner history, etc.
- C. Investigate dog bite cases.
- D. Enforce laws/ordinances for dogs running at large and/or attacking people.
- E. Report to Public Health Department severe unsanitary conditions of kennels and/or where animals are being kept that could threaten the health of citizens in the immediate area.
- F. Coordinate with Public Health any cases where there could be a disease spread to humans or other animals coming in contact with a particular animal. Example: dog suspected of having rabies.
- G. Making sure citizens in Grand Traverse County dispose of dead animals properly so as not to produce a health hazard. Includes picking up dead animals on roadway, lakes, etc.
- H. Maintain the County Animal Shelter and assure proper sanitary procedures are being followed to eliminate disease spread, etc.
- I. Assist in locating and trapping wildlife which has bitten a person.

4. Animal Welfare

- A. Rescue sick and injured animals from roadway, etc.
- B. Rescue animals in distress such as dogs tangled up on chain, pets left in vehicles with windows up on hot days, drowning, breaking thru ice on lakes and waterways, trapped animals, etc.
- C. Investigate neglect cases such as no shelter, lack of food, abandonment, poor health, etc.
- D. Investigate cruelty cases such as beating, kicking, sacrificing, poisoning, etc.; and, take appropriate actions.
- E. Assist thru public education, explaining to public the proper care of animals when asked over the telephone, during investigations, public speaking engagements, etc.
- F. Act as information center to attempt to connect owners who have lost their pets with persons who have found them.
- G. Provide shelter, food and water to stray dogs either seized by Animal Control or found by the public and brought to the shelter.
- H. Provide assistance with other agencies to assure the proper protection and welfare of animals that are victim to emergency situations such as disasters, fires, etc. .
- I. Inspect dog kennels and other animal housing facilities to assure compliance with Michigan Department of Agriculture Housing Regulations, health (sanitary) conditions and welfare/protection of the animals kept at the facility and to report to the proper agencies any gross violations observed which require immediate attention in order to safeguard the animals housed or kept at the facility.

5. Administrative/Misc.

- A. Provide statistics as to number of licensed dogs in Grand Traverse County, number of animal complaints, type of animal complaints, shelter operations, etc.
- B. House, clean and feed stray dogs.
- C. Attempt to locate owners of stray dogs.
- D. Provide live traps to citizens of Grand Traverse County for catching cats, wildlife, etc. and maintain traps.
- E. Adopt stray dogs not reclaimed after one (1) week/five (5) days and dispose of dogs not reclaimed by owner, adopted or given to Humane Society.
- F. Handle telephone calls from public, register complaints, answer questions and refer callers to proper agency.
- G. Provide 24 hour emergency coverage (on-call) for sick and injured animals, attacking dogs, dog bite, dog still at large and public assistance complaints involving law enforcement, EMS, fire, etc.
- H. Maintain Animal Control building and vehicles.
- I. Keep current on existing and new laws, ordinances and regulations which affect the Grand Traverse County animal population and recommend amendments and changes as they become necessary.

The Goals of this department are to provide Grand Traverse County with a professional agency which will assure the best possible services available in order to achieve a humane and safe environment for the citizens and animals which this Department serves.

DEFINITIONS

Department of Agriculture: Shall mean the Michigan Department of Agriculture to which regulates the Michigan Animal Control Laws and other functions related to Animal Regulations and Laws.

Department of Health or Health Department: Shall mean the Grand Traverse County Health Department, unless otherwise noted.

Health Officer: Shall mean the Director of the Grand Traverse County Health Department to which the Animal Control Department is currently assigned.

Animal Control Officer: Shall mean a person employed by the County to enforce Animal Control and protection laws/ordinances, to impound animals in violation of established laws and ordinances and to perform other animal control functions as established by job description and/or duties assigned by the Animal Control Manager.

Animal Control Staff:

Shall include all those persons who have supportive functions and/or duties which relate to the Animal Control operations; but are not Animal Control Officers. These persons include trustees, summer help, clerks, etc.

Animal Control Manager:

Shall mean the person responsible for the administrative and functional operations of the Department. Along with the supervision and support of the Animal Control Officers and staff. The Animal Control Manager shall be under the supervision of the Health Officer and report directly to him and/or the County Administrator in the Health Officers's absence.

Department:

Shall mean the Grand Traverse County Animal Control Office.

Shall:

Implies "will do", "required", "mandatory".

Should:

Implies "recommended", "strongly suggested".

May:

Implies "should, but not necessarily", "suggested but not required".

Discretion:

Implies Officer's choice or best alternative.

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Animal Control Officers and Staff

CC: All Others Concerned or Affected By This Policy

FROM: Steve DeWalt, Animal Control Manager

SUBJECT: Priority and Sorting of Complaints Received by the Animal Control Office on a Daily Basis

DATE: September 27, 1994

The following Priority Assignments and list of Type of Complaints should be observed as to the order of handling of complaints.

NOTE: Complaints may be upgraded or downgraded if complainant calls back with updated status. EXAMPLE: Original call of "Dog in Traffic". Then, a few minutes later caller calls back stating dog ran off into woods, no longer can be seen. Downgraded from Priority #1 to Priority #2.

PRIORITY #1: (Emergency Response -- Requires IMMEDIATE ATTENTION WITHOUT DELAY.)

- Severely injured or sick animal (still alive) on roadway or public area. Includes animals in traffic on heavy traffic volume roads.
- Loose attacking dogs (attack in progress at time of call).
- Animals that have bitten -- still at large, need to be seized, still in area.
- Animals in Distress (trapped, drowning, thru ice, tangled, etc.) Includes dogs in hot vehicles where confirmed life and death situation exists.
- Loose livestock on roadway or threatening public safety.
- Assist to other agencies in emergency situations where animals need to be restrained in order to gain access to victim or suspect, or removed from vehicle, etc.
- Any emergency situation which involves immediate attention from Animal Control.

PRIORITY #2: (Requires response as soon as possible -- when Officer becomes available.)

- Dogs running loose. (In progress at present time.)
- Animal bite cases -- see victim at medical treatment center.
- Animal damage complaints. Includes dog vs. dog complaints, killing of poultry, etc.
- Location of suspect animals involved with biting a victim and initiating proper actions. (EXAMPLE: Quarantine, capture wildlife for testing, etc.)
- Animals in vehicles -- not in immediate danger, but needs to be investigated as soon as possible. Includes animals tangled, trapped, etc. that need attention as soon as possible, but are not struggling or causing harm to themselves at present and do not appear injured.
- Cruelty and neglect complaints which involve situations where the animal may be in immediate danger of life or limb. (EXAMPLE: Dog that has just been shot -- hearsay, unconfirmed and/or third hand information, animal that has been poisoned, suspect beating animal excessively at present time, animal tied out in severe weather conditions with no shelter -- in progress. These are examples, the list is not inclusive of all situations, but should reflect the type of situations which require Priority #2 rating.)
- Injured or sick animals to be picked up, where a caller has taken custody of the injured animal and it is out of "Harms Way".
- Any complaint which is of immediate concern and requires immediate attention but does not constitute a true emergency situation.

PRIORITY #3: (Requires response within end of shift.)

- Dogs at large. Officer knows dog owner or has been on complaint before and cannot catch dog, deliver live trap, etc. Dog reported to be at large, but is reported as having left the area, lost sight of according to caller -- delayed report.
- Dead animals on roadway -- pickup.
- Neglect Complaints -- no food, water, shelter, etc.
- Animal Bite Complaints -- Sheriff's reports, etc., delayed reports.
- Owner Reclamation -- where owner of dog is located, we have the dog and they want to come in and reclaim the dog.
- Attempts to locate owner of animal which has bitten someone or is injured where previous attempts at time of incident have failed.
- Any type of incident which should be investigated as soon as possible, where follow-up is necessary and waiting until the next day could cause undue hardships or delays in completing the assignment.

PRIORITY #4: (Requires response within 72 hours or when Officer has time to follow-up and/or is in area of complaint for other reasons -- within one work week.)

- Barking Complaints.
- Anonymous complaints involving neighbors complaining about other neighbors dogs loose; but not loose at the time of call.
- Complaints where neighbors are complaining about other neighbors who complained about them (civil disputes). **EXAMPLE:** Go to neighbor on his dog barking, then that neighbor calls on his neighbor for his dog being loose.
- Cruelty or neglect complaints where concern is on condition of animal only, which is a long term condition. **EXAMPLE:** Check on horse/cattle that look thin, check pasture conditions, etc. (See Animal Control Manager if in doubt of priority or detailed definition is needed.)

PRIORITY #5: (Officer follow-up on dog bites, cruelty investigations, etc.)

- Arranged appointments for Kennel Inspections.
- Dog/cat bite follow-up. (Expiration date of quarantines.)
- Neglect follow-up. Set deadline dates to get shelter, etc.
- Court dates, hearings, meetings, etc.
- Training sessions.
- Any situation requiring the Officers participation on a specific date and/or time.

PRIORITY #6: (Proactive activities, misc.)

- Routine patrols.
- Public relations activities.
- Humane Education meetings, etc.
- Any spontaneous events which do not require Officer's participation if that Officer is committed to other activities; but, if that Officer can find the time, he may fit it into his schedule.

NOTE: These priorities and listing of complaints do not reflect all that this office may become involved with, but rather serves as a guideline as to how and when these types of complaints can be expected to be resolved.