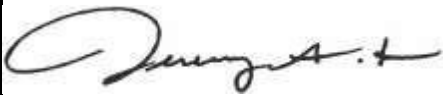
 <div style="text-align: center;"> OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF FAUQUIER COUNTY DIRECTIVE </div>	APPROVED BY:	
		
	JEREMY A. FALLS SHERIFF	
ANIMAL CONTROL	Directive Number: 2.67	
	Effective Date: 18 October 2024	
	Revision Date:	
VLEPSC:		

This order is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should be not construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third-party claims. Violations of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this office, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

POLICY

The Fauquier County Sheriff's Office Animal Control Unit is responsible for properly investigating and enforcing Virginia Laws and local ordinances that pertain to and are for the protection of domestic animals and livestock, as stated in the Code of Virginia, Department of Agriculture Regulations, and the Fauquier County Code.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to set guidelines for field operations of the Fauquier County Sheriff's Office Animal Control Unit. These procedures will aid in our ability to deliver consistent, timely, and efficient service.

PROCEDURES

1. Field Operations – Animal Control Deputy (ACD)

The subsections in this section will provide general procedures for handling calls in the field.

a. Humane Care of Animals

- i. The humane care and handling of all animals is the foundation for Animal Control functions of the Animal Control Unit. Short of

jeopardizing personal safety, each animal deserves the most humane treatment possible. It is the responsibility of each ACD to maintain the dignity of the animal during capture, transport, housing, and euthanasia, as required.

- b. Calls Requiring an Incident Based Reporting Form
 - i. Reports shall be completed in compliance with the Incident Reporting Directive (1.05)
 - ii. Reports shall also be completed in the following circumstances:
 - 1. Dogs Killing/Injuring Livestock or Domestic Animals
 - 2. Picking Up Animals When Assisting Law Enforcement/Fire & Rescue
 - 3. Declaration of Dangerous/Vicious Dogs
- c. Animal Pick Up Paperwork and Procedures
 - i. Every companion/agricultural animal that is picked up must have an Animal Disposition Form completed. This includes animals that are turned over to their owners. Dogs brought to the Animal Control Center (ACC) must be placed in proper enclosures with the Animal Disposition Sheet clipped to the run. The animals are to be provided the appropriate food and water for their species, size, body condition, and age.
 - ii. The Animal Disposition Sheet must be filled out completely. If there are any portions of the sheet that are not applicable, "N/A" should be written in the space provided. All information from the collar must be noted. At least one attempt to contact the owner must be made if a phone number or address is obtained. ACDs must be sure to document if contact was made with the owner, and any other notes that may be helpful to shelter workers.
 - iii. All animals picked up by ACD will be recorded in the CAD call.
 - iv. If an animal must be euthanized, as determined by a licensed vet, the ACD will document the information in his/her report. The ACD is also required to complete the Animal Disposition Sheet along with any other additional information and provide it to the SPCA staff.
 - v. An Animal Disposition Sheet, or any identification, should never be clipped to an empty run or cage.
- d. Animals that Bite a Person
 - i. Companion or agricultural animals that bite or scratch a person must be quarantined for a period of **ten days**. This does not include animals that bite other domestic animals.
 - ii. A VDH bite report must be taken as soon as possible following a biting incident. Complete the bite report with as much information as possible.

- iii. The animal can be quarantined at home, if the animal can be properly quarantined by the owner or caretaker, **EXCEPT** in the case of Dangerous/Vicious Dog investigation in which case the dog must be quarantined at the shelter.
 - iv. Once the animal has been quarantined and a bite report has been taken, the ACD must submit a copy of the bite report to the Health Department.
 - v. While the animal is on quarantine, the owner of the animal shall not be permitted to get the animal vaccinated for rabies, unless otherwise directed by the Health Department.
 - vi. In the event the companion or agricultural animal is euthanized prior to the end of the quarantine, the specimen shall be collected and taken to the Health Department or other suitable location for testing. (Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Animal Health Laboratory Services)
 - vii. In the event a person is bitten by a wild animal, there should be an attempt to confine and/or euthanize the animal. The animal if found must be taken to the Health Department, or other suitable location for testing. A bite report must be completed and submitted to the Health Department.
- e. Wild Animals that Bite a Companion or Agricultural Animal
 - i. An attempt will be made to contain and or euthanize the wild animal. The wild animal if found, must be delivered to the Health Department or other suitable location for testing.
 - ii. Information will be collected for the companion animal and a bite report must be completed and emailed to the Health Department.
 - iii. The owner will be advised that a rabies booster is recommended for the companion animal as soon as possible, as well as follow up with a licensed veterinarian.
- f. Dogs Running at Large
 - i. ACDs will respond to Dogs Running at Large calls while on duty.
 - ii. The ACD must witness the animal off its property to issue a summons.
 - iii. If the ACD does not witness the animal off its property, the ACD will make an effort to investigate the complaint. If the ACD is unable to determine the dog was running at large, the ACD shall provide magistrate advice to the complainant/witness and assist him/her in this process.
- g. Dangerous/Vicious Dogs
 - i. Dangerous Dog: Refer to VA State Code Section 3.2-6540 for the definition.

- ii. Vicious Dog: Refer to the VA State Code Section 3.2-6540.1 for the definition.
- h. Animals Locked in Vehicles
 - i. When the outside temperature is such that the interior of the vehicle is detrimental to the health of the animal, an ACD is permitted to respond appropriately to the call.
 - ii. Upon arrival at the scene, an ACD should assess the condition of the animal and obtain an internal temperature of the vehicle using an infrared thermometer.
 - iii. Assistance from Fire and Rescue may be necessary to safely remove the animal from the vehicle.
 - iv. ACD should attempt to contact the owner if possible.
 - v. An ACD should typically receive approval from a supervisor prior to forcing entry into a vehicle. In extreme emergencies an ACD should use his/her best judgment as to whether or not forced entry is warranted prior to supervisory approval.
- i. Welfare Checks/Seizure of animals/livestock
 - i. When conducting welfare checks, an ACD should be conscious of the type of animal and any related areas of concern for that animal (for example check rabies shots and county license, as well as food, water, and shelter). Also check the general condition of the animal and surrounding area.
 - ii. If an animal appears to be abandoned, a notice must be posted on the main entrance of the residence where the animal is being kept. The residence must be checked in 24 hours to see if the notice was removed and if conditions are the same.
 - iii. Any seizure of animals or livestock will be conducted in accordance with the procedures set forth in section 3.2-6569 of the code of Virginia as amended, as well as in compliance with regulations and reporting requirements of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
- j. Injured Animals
 - i. Sick or Injured Animals picked up by ACDs shall be evaluated and given proper treatment by a licensed veterinarian.
 - ii. Companion animals that are injured may be taken to the Fauquier SPCA Clinic (during regular hours) or to another appropriate treatment facility.
 - iii. If the animal requires extensive treatment, the ACD will notify a supervisor before proceeding with treatment.

- iv. If the animal is gravely injured and no owner can be located, the animal will be humanely euthanized by a veterinarian or SPCA staff at the direction of a veterinarian.
- v. If an animal's owner calls because his or her animal is injured, it is the owner's responsibility to take the animal to the vet. ACDs may be dispatched to assist with this process.
- vi. If the injured animal is critically injured and cannot be moved without causing further suffering and pain, the animal should be humanely euthanized. Euthanasia is a last resort effort. If possible, without causing more suffering and pain, the animal should be euthanized away from public view.
 - 1. Prior to any domesticated animals in the custody of animal control being euthanized, ACDs will document the following:
 - a. Whether the animal can be kept comfortable until the Fauquier SPCA clinic opens (if after hours).
 - b. Thoroughly check for indicators that the animal is owned or has any contact information (i.e., collar with any markings inside and out, microchips – using multiple scanners, and thoroughly checking the lost report).
 - c. If any contact information is located, every attempt will be made to contact the owner.
 - d. If contact information is found and the owner cannot be reached, and euthanasia is necessary as determined by a veterinarian, the animal may be euthanized.
 - e. It is important that all members be trained to accurately assess and determine whether urgent treatment or euthanasia is necessary. Proper handling of injured animals is advantageous for members' safety to ensure comfort of the animal and to create positive public relations.
 - f. An injured animal may bite, therefore the use of safety equipment combined with firm, but gentle handling assures the animal that the ACD is in command.
 - g. Every effort should be made to locate an owner. Owners are responsible for any financial obligations incurred for the care of the animal.

k. Transporting of Animals

- i. When assigned to pick up an animal, it is important to always think of officer safety. The public may have strong feelings about how the animals are handled. Always be professional and handle the animal with respect and be sensitive to the feelings of any citizen who may be on scene. If the situation calls for assistance, call for backup from another Deputy.

- a. Once the animal is loaded into the vehicle, make note of the animal's distinctions, and document them on the Animal Disposition Sheet. Complete as much information as possible.
- b. Transport the animal to the desired location (i.e., the shelter, vet, back to owner) in a safe manner.
- c. All transports will be conducted in a manner consistent with state and local requirements.

I. Trapping

- i. Animal traps used by Animal Control Deputies are "humane traps" which are in no way intended to injure the animal.
- ii. Traps will only be provided to Fauquier County residents.
- iii. Traps will be stored at the Animal Control Center when not in use.
- iv. When a trap is issued to the public, the trap log will be updated by the ACD with location of where the trap will be used, contact person and information, and trap ID number.
- v. When the trap is picked up or returned, the trap log must be updated to reflect it has been returned noting any condition issues.

1. Dogs

- a. In most cases traps are set to control nuisance or stray dogs. Traps will be set by ACDs during normal working hours.
- b. Dogs will be removed from traps during normal working hours whenever possible.
- c. A citizen monitoring trap(s) must be advised not to leave traps set during inclement weather.
- d. Dogs caught after hours will be picked up the next AC working day (unless it is an emergency capture).
- e. If a citizen calls for a trap, the citizen must be at home to receive it.
- f. Traps typically will be delivered on the day of request. (If traps are available and call volume permits).
- g. ACDs are responsible for explaining laws, policies, procedures, and proper use of a trap to the person who requested it.
- h. If at any time an ACD finds a trap is not being cared for properly, is being used to trap animals for improper reasons, or is needed in another location, the trap shall be picked up.
- i. Wildlife caught in dog traps may be released by the person who requested the trap, unless circumstances require an ACD to respond.

2. Cats

- a. There is no law against cats running at large, therefore ACDs will not pick-up cats that are running at large.
- b. Citizens shall be referred to the SPCA for information concerning cat nuisance problems.
- c. Cat traps will be set by ACDs in the event of a bite, the cat is sick, injured, orphaned, or stray when there is a public health concern.
- d. ACDs will only pick-up cats for the following reasons:
 - i. If they are orphaned kittens
 - ii. If they are sick or injured
 - iii. If they have bitten someone
 - iv. In circumstances where there is a public health concern

m. Wildlife

- i. Wildlife issues should be referred to the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR). Nuisance wildlife can be referred to private contractors or companies that are in good standing with DWR and Fauquier County.
- ii. ACDs will respond to the following types of wildlife calls:
 1. Animals suspected of being rabid
 2. Animals that have attacked a human
 3. Animals that have attacked domestic animals
 4. Animals that are critically injured
- iii. Wildlife calls for service will not take priority over domestic or agricultural calls for service unless, there is an immediate public safety concern.
- iv. Wildlife collected for rabies testing will be stored properly at the Health Department or other suitable facility at the direction of VDH.
- v. ACDs may assist in containment of wildlife when,
 1. Such containment is within the scope of the ACDs training or at the direction of and under the supervision of a DWR employee or other verified subject matter expert
 2. As call volume allows
 3. If the citizen is permitted to possess/transport the animal.
- vi. ACDs will not respond if the animal is in the yard of a residence unless it poses a threat to the public.
- vii. ACDs will respond to assist with wildlife located at a school or county facility.
- viii. ACDs may assist with the removal of wildlife from a residence or business if,
 1. The animal is sick or injured

- 2. The animal has attacked a person or domestic animal
 - 3. The animal poses a threat to the public.
- ix. ACDs do not remove nuisance wildlife.
- x. If a citizen catches a wild animal in a trap, the citizen is responsible for releasing the animal.
- xi. ACDs do not handle bees, small rodents, or other pests.
- xii. Bear complaints will be referred to DWR. ACDs will aid a DWR Officer when requested.
- xiii. Snakes and Reptiles: (preferred method refer to professional contractor/removal company)
 - 1. ACDs may respond to service requests reference to snakes/reptiles in a home. ACDs should never put themselves or others at risk to capture or remove these animals from a home.
 - 2. Only ACDs who have received proper training and have the necessary equipment are permitted to attempt to capture or remove these animals.
- xiv. Birds
 - 1. Citizens who call about injured birds should be referred to an appropriate care facility or DWR for assistance and advice. ACDs can assist in containing the animal if call volume allows and if the citizen is permitted to possess/transport the animal.
 - 2. ACDs will assist DWR related to any federally protected bird incidents. ACDs will only transport federally protected birds at the direction of DWR. Wild birds that have gotten into a building or home may be handled at the ACDs discretion.

n. Summons

- i. The goal of the Animal Control Division is compliance with animal laws and ordinances. The ACD should evaluate each situation when determining an effective resolution to achieve compliance.
- ii. Summons for local ordinance violations in which the penalty consists of a civil fine, should be written using the Fauquier County Summons Form (not the VUS). The County Attorney's Office will be notified of the incident and provided with any reports or documentation.

o. Animal Control Deputy On-Call

- i. On-call ACDs must respond to emergency complaints or as requested by a supervisor.
 - 1. Emergency complaints include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Injured Animals
 - b. Animal Mauling (Serious Physical Injury or Death)
 - c. To assist Law Enforcement and Fire/Rescue
 - d. Rabies Exposures

2. Non-Emergency complaints include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Animals running at large (unless there is a safety concern)
 - b. Found strays
 - c. Wildlife outside of residence
 - d. Barking Dogs
 - e. Welfare Checks
- ii. The ECC will contact the on-call ACD for afterhours animal calls at the direction of the on-duty patrol supervisor. It is the responsibility of the on-call ACD to contact the complainant, determine the nature of the call, and to determine what if any response is appropriate. If the call is determined not to be an emergency, the on-call ACD will advise the complainant their call for service will be handled when an ACD is on duty.