

**POLICY
1111**

**EFFECTIVE
DATE
3-2-15**

Eugene Police Department



Animal Welfare

1111.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for Animal Welfare Officers (AWO) and Eugene Police Department personnel in dealing with animal control related calls for service and to set forth procedures regarding animal control services, the handling of injured animals, and the abatement of animal nuisances.

1111.2 ANIMAL WELFARE OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY

The AWO shall be responsible for enforcing city and state ordinances relating to animals, and for appropriately resolving or referring animal problems as outlined in this policy. The AWO shall be under the operational control of the Patrol Division. The AWO's assigned working hours will be scheduled by the Animal Services manager.

1111.3 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY

During hours when the AWO is off duty, or if the AWO is otherwise unavailable, the following animal-related calls for service will be handled by the appropriate on-duty officer.

An officer may be dispatched to animal-related calls and should take appropriate actions to control the situation. Due to the hazards of handling animals without proper equipment, a responding officer generally should not attempt to capture and pick up any animal but should keep the animal under observation until the arrival of an AWO, if an AWO is readily available. The following are examples of when an officer may consider acting before the arrival of the AWO:

- a. When there is a threat to the public safety;
- b. When an animal has bitten someone, officers should take measures to confine the animal and prevent further injury;
- c. When an animal is creating a traffic hazard;
- d. When the owner/handler has been arrested and there is no other alternative placement for the animal;
- e. When the animal is seriously injured, or in imminent danger.

1111.3.1 ANIMAL WELFARE COMPLAINTS

The AWO shall respond promptly and professionally to assist citizens' complaints of the following:

- a. To rescue animals in distress;
- b. To enforce state and city animal-related ordinances;
- c. To protect animals from neglect, mistreatment, and abuse;

- d. To respond to emergency situations in which an animal is in danger or in proximity of creating danger to others;
- e. To educate the public about animals and responsible pet care.

State law requires that a sworn law enforcement officer investigate and take enforcement action in incidents of alleged abuse of animals that rise to a felony crime. An AWO who becomes aware of an animal complaint that may rise, or rises to a felony crime shall request an officer to respond and assume the investigation. An AWO may be requested to assist with the investigation when appropriate for the purpose of handling the disposition of any animal(s) associated with the case (*Oregon Revised Statutes 133.379*).

1111.3.2 LOST/STRAY DOGS/ANIMAL IMPOUNDS

Attempts should be made to contact the owner of the animal. If the owner is contacted, the animal should be released to the owner and a citation may be issued if appropriate. If the animal is not released, it shall be transported to the Animal Shelter. The transporting employee shall ensure the animal has sufficient food, water, and bedding. If a sworn officer transports, a copy of the report should be routed to Animal Services. The report should be titled: Animal Impound/*(type of animal.)*

Once an animal has been impounded, all releases will be handled by the Animal Shelter.

1111.3.3 ANIMAL BITE REPORTS

Under normal circumstances, an AWO will be dispatched to handle bite complaints when on duty. When an AWO is off duty, a sworn officer shall take the report and fax it within one day to Lane County Environmental Health Department. The sworn officer may forward their report to Animal Services if follow-up is needed. The report shall be titled: "*Animal Info.*"

If the owner of a biting animal is contacted, officers will instruct the owner to keep their animal confined on their property until contacted by Lane County Environmental Health. If there is no home in which to confine the animal, the animal must be impounded at the Animal Shelter. If the animal is a stray, then every effort shall be made to capture and impound the animal immediately at the Animal Shelter.

1111.3.4 HEAT EMERGENCIES

Because the temperature in a closed vehicle during hot weather (70 degrees or more) can quickly kill or seriously injure an animal, all complaints of this nature will be handled as an emergency. Personnel must evaluate each situation quickly and carefully to determine if the animal is in immediate danger of dying.

Signs of extreme danger for animals in closed vehicles in hot weather include excessive panting, frantic behavior, unresponsiveness, and convulsions.

AWO's, community service officers and sworn officers have the authority to forcibly enter a vehicle to perform animal rescue. If a vehicle is entered forcibly, a report must be generated and a supervisor summoned to the scene.

1111.3.5 INVESTIGATIONS

State and city code provide protection to animals from acts of abuse, neglect, and abandonment. All investigations by an AWO must be performed objectively and in accordance with city and state laws and this policy.

1111.4 DECEASED ANIMALS

Unless the animal presents a health or sanitary hazard, it may be left at the scene until Public Works can dispose of it.

Large, freshly killed animals such as deer, bear, elk, etc. may be disposed of by calling the Eugene Mission. If the animal no longer presents a hazard the officer may clear the scene after informing dispatch of its location for pick up. If the Eugene Mission declines to respond, Public Works should be advised of the animal's location for later disposal.

1111.5 INJURED ANIMALS

When any injured domesticated animal is brought to the attention of a member of the Eugene Police Department, reasonable attempts shall be made to contact the owner or responsible handler. When the owner or responsible handler cannot be located, it shall be taken to a doctor of veterinary medicine as described below.

- a. The animal should be taken to an Emergency Veterinary Hospital;
- b. The only exception to the above is when the animal is an immediate danger to the community or the owner of the animal is identified and takes responsibility for the injured animal;
 1. The decision to euthanize a seriously injured animal will rest with the responding sworn officer.
- c. Injured wildlife should be referred to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife or the Oregon State Police, as applicable;
- d. When handling dead or injured animals police department employees shall attempt to identify and notify the owner of the final disposition of the animal.

1111.6 CITATIONS

It will be at the discretion of the AWO or the field supervisor as to the need for, or advisability of, the issuance of a citation for a violation.

1111.7 POST-ARREST PROCEDURES

The arresting officer should make a reasonable effort to ensure that animals or pets under a person's care will be provided with adequate care when that person is arrested. This is only required when there is no person to provide care and the arrestee is expected to be in custody for a time period longer than would reasonably allow him/her to properly care for the animals. If no persons can be found the animal may be lodged at the Animal Shelter.