

CHAPTER 62 RESPONSE GUIDELINES FOR ANIMAL COMPLAINTS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this police is to establish uniform procedures and guidelines for the response to animal complaints in Cecil County by the Law Enforcement Officers of the Cecil County Sheriff's Office. Additionally, this policy will aid and assist with the proper handling of animals that are dangerous, vicious, attacking and/or otherwise a health or safety issue.

POLICY

When an animal complain is received for animals, domestic or otherwise, a Deputy shall respond and take the necessary action to render the situation safe. In addition, the Deputy shall refer the complaint to the appropriate agency for action and/or disposition. This referral does not relieve the Deputy of taking action to render the situation safe and complete any required actions.

PROCEDURES

- When a report of dangerous or vicious animal or an animal displaying signs that it may be rabid is received, the Deputy will be dispatched to the scene of the complaint. Upon arrival at the scene, the Deputy shall determine the following:
 - *Has a person been attacked or bitten?
 - *Is the animal still on the scene?
 - *Is the animal domestic or wild?
 - *Is the animal dead or alive?
 - *Does the animal have an owner?

Establishing these factors will assist in guiding the Deputy to make the proper decision to restore the situation back to an orderly and safe condition. These circumstances are all critical to insure that the situation will be resolved properly.

WHEN AN ANIMAL ATTACKS OR HAS BITTEN

In all circumstances where a person has been attacked, bitten or otherwise exposed to a possible rabid animal, the Deputy shall make a recommendation to seek medical treatment. The Deputy will assist the victim in obtaining medical treatment when necessary.

- In the case of domestic cats, dogs, and other animals that have bitten a person, the following circumstances shall dictate the response. For domestic cats and dogs where the owner is known, the Deputy shall compile, and serve an Animal Bite Report (ABR). Service shall be made before leaving the area. If the ABR is not served within 48 hours, notification to the Cecil County Health Department will be made immediately. Forward all copies of the ABR except the pink copy. A detailed Incident Report outlining the circumstances of the bite and documenting attempts at service of the ABR.
- For domestic cats and dogs where the animal has bitten someone and is a stray, the Deputy shall compile and serve an Animal Bite Report (ABR). All copies of the ABR except the pink copy will be forwarded to the Cecil County Health Department. The Deputy shall also make notification to the Cecil County SPCA and advise them of the situation, requesting that they respond. An investigation will be conducted in an attempt to identify the ownership of the animal and to locate the animal. An Incident Report shall be written detailing the circumstances of the incident and what attempts have been made to locate the biting animal. A thorough description of the animal shall be noted in the report and this report shall be forwarded to all law enforcement agencies in the county as well as the Health Department. A press release shall be prepared and disseminated in order to alert the public concerning this animal. These actions are to be accomplished immediately.

- In the circumstance where a domestic animal has attacked or bitten another domestic animal, the Deputy shall immediately contact the SPCA to coordinate a response. The Deputy shall provide the complainant owner with quarantine information and telephone numbers for the SPCA and the Cecil County Health Department. The circumstances of the attack will be documented in an incident report. The incident report will be transmitted by facsimile to the Cecil County Health Department immediately.

- In the event that the attacking animal is wild, the response shall be immediate. An attempt shall be made to locate the animal. If located, the Deputy shall destroy the animal, consistent with the Policies and Procedures of the Cecil County Sheriff's Office. An incident report shall be written and transmitted by facsimile to the Cecil County Health Department. The Deputy shall package the animal and notify the Cecil County Health Department for pick-up. In the event that the wild animal is not located, an incident report will be prepared and forwarded immediately to the Cecil County Health Department.

- If a pet or other domestic animal is bitten or attacked, the following circumstances will dictate the response by the Deputy:
 - A. If the attacking animal is a domestic animal, contact will immediately be made with the SPCA, in an effort to coordinate a response. The Deputy shall provide the complaint owner with quarantine information and telephone number for the SPCA and the Cecil County Health Department. The circumstances of the incident will be documented in an Incident Report. The Incident Report will be transmitted to the Cecil County Health Department by facsimile immediately.

B. In the event that the attacking animal is wild, the response shall be immediate. Contact will be made with the SPCA in effort to coordinate a response. An attempt will be made to locate the animal. If located, the Deputy, consistent with CCSO Policies and Procedures will destroy the animal. An Incident Report will be written and transmitted to the Cecil County Health Department by facsimile. The SPCA or Deputy will package the animal, and the Health Department will pick-up. In the event that the wild animal is not located, an Incident Report will be prepared and forwarded immediately to the Cecil County Health Department.

VICIOUS AND/OR DANGEROUS ANIMALS

In the event that a wild animal is a danger, the response shall be immediate. An attempt will be made to locate the animal. If the located animal presents itself as aggressive, vicious, or appears to be sick or diseased, the Deputy will destroy it consistent with Cecil County Sheriff's Office Policies and Procedures. An incident report will be prepared and transmitted to the Cecil County Health Department by facsimile. The animal carcass will be packaged for pick-up and the Cecil County Health Department will be notified. In the event that the animal is not located, an incident report will be prepared and forwarded to the Cecil County Health Department immediately.

In the event that the report is received that an animal is aggressive, threatening, sick or diseased and a person or pet has not been bitten, a Deputy shall respond. If the animal is located and is found to be a domestic animal, the SPCA shall be notified. The deputy shall make a determination concerning whether the animal presents an apparent threat to public safety. If the Deputy makes a determination that a danger exists, the animal will be destroyed, consistent with CCSO Policies and Procedures. An Incident Report will be prepared and transmitted by facsimile to the Cecil County Health Department. The animal will be packaged for pick-up by the Cecil County Health Department.

In the event that a domestic or wild animal, which displayed aggressive or threatening behavior, or appears to be sick or diseased in rendered dead through some other means, the facts shall be gathered and documented in an incident report. A copy of the incident report shall be transmitted to the Cecil County Health Department by facsimile. The Deputy shall assist the citizen on packaging the animal carcass for pick-up by the Health Department. This section does not mean that there is a requirement to respond to all reports of dead animals, domestic or otherwise.

PACKAGING ANIMALS FOR PICK-UP AND DISPOSAL

In the event that an animal carcass needs to be packaged, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Take precautionary measures by donning the issued heavy-duty plastic gloves to both hands.
2. Grasp the bottom of the plastic bag and turn it inside out on your arm.
3. Grab the animal by the tail or the rear leg, lift and carcass and reverse the bag down over the animal carcass.
4. Carefully remove gloves by stripping them off each hand by the cuff and placing them into the bag with the animal carcass.
5. Use a twist tie to securely close the bag.
6. Place the enclosed animal into a second bag for better containment.
7. Never touch the animal's carcass with bare hands or cloth gloves.
8. Wash your hands with soap and water or a germicidal cleanser.

In any unusual circumstances, contact should be made immediately with the Cecil County Health Department or SPCA for guidance or assistance

Contact Telephone Number's

Cecil County Health Department

Telephone number: 410-996-5160

Fax: 410-996-5153

After Hours: See Animal Complaint Guideline in
Communications for Cell Numbers

Cecil County SPCA

Telephone number 410-398-9555

Fax: 410-398-4050

After Hours: See Animal Complaint Guideline in
Communications for Cell Numbers

Rodney E. Kennedy, Sheriff

Date