

# Virginia Beach Police Department



## Special Operations/Animal Control Animal Enforcement Unit Field Guide

*This Field Guide is Prepared and Updated by the Virginia Beach  
Police Department Special Operations and Animal Control,  
Under the Approval of the Chief of Police \_\_\_\_\_*

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## Purpose

**This Field Guide is designed to define the authority and training standards for Animal Control Officers. It is also designed to help guide and direct the efforts of the members of the Animal Enforcement Unit (AEU). In the pursuit of our daily endeavors we will model behaviors consistent with the mission of the City of Virginia Beach, the mission of the Police Department, and the mission of Special Operations. Each mission cascades to support the other.**

**First and Foremost, we support and reflect the City’s mission.**

### City of Virginia Beach - Mission Statement

The City of Virginia Beach exists to enhance the economic, educational, social and physical quality of the community; and provide services that are valued by its citizens. The City of Virginia Beach Police Department Mission Statement

The Virginia Beach Police Department (VBPD) is committed to providing a safe community and improving the quality of life for all people. We accomplish this by delivering quality police services and enforcing laws with equity and impartiality. In partnership with the community, we reduce crime through public education, prevention, and awareness. In meeting this objective, we demand of ourselves the highest professional standards and dedication to our core values.

The mission of the **Special Operations** command is to provide for a safe community and improve the quality of life for all people within city boundaries. In support of the mission of the Virginia Beach Police Department and the Operations Division, we will enforce the law with equity and impartiality by conducting thorough investigations of traffic collisions, enforcing traffic laws to enhance highway safety by utilizing traffic accident statistical data, assist the Operations commands in reducing crime through the deployment of specialty resources during planned and directed patrols, provide trained personnel and specialized equipment to address tactical situations beyond the patrol officers capabilities. Special Operations will provide quality police services by responding to requests from the community, cooperating with other public service agencies to enhance the effectiveness of collective service delivery, and prioritizing effort, resources and mission accomplishment based on the needs of the entire city. Special Operations will accomplish this mission by implementing operational, administrative, and logistical processes designed to achieve specific and measurable goals in accordance with our core values.

### **Mission Statement for Animal Enforcement Unit**

The mission of the Virginia Beach Animal Enforcement Unit is to balance the health, safety and welfare needs of the people and animals in our City. Through our mission we will educate the public about responsible companion animal ownership, aggressively investigate animal cruelty cases, provide compassion and humane care for unwanted, stray, abused, and abandoned animals in our City, give adoptable animals a second chance at a forever home, and humanely euthanize animals when necessary and appropriate.

**Nothing herein should be seen as a barrier to innovation as we are a learning organization always open to process improvement. Everything herein is a guide and can be modified at the direction of a supervisor or for reasons that align closely with our mission and values.**

### **How we Accomplish our Mission**

1. We patrol for and respond to instances where we can enhance the public's safety and quality of life focusing on threats posed by animals. We also patrol for and respond to instances where the safety and wellbeing of animals are threatened by the behavior of people, the elements, or unforeseen circumstances.
2. We seek out areas where the efforts of Animal Control Officers (ACOs) can augment and support the efforts of Police Officers and other public servants in accomplishing the City's mission.
3. We enforce the relevant laws in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the City Code and the relevant sections in Chapter 3 of the State Code.
4. We provide education, outreach and support to the community focusing on the welfare of animals and the conditions that enhance good animal husbandry.
5. We support the efforts of the Virginia Beach Animal Care and Adoption Center (VBACAC) and other agencies in the shared goals of increasing the rate of successful animal adoptions.

### **Definitions**

Animal Control Officers are appointed as provided in § 3.2-6555 of the Code of Virginia.

**Animal Control Officer I** - Performs a variety of assignments in the enforcement of state and municipal animal control ordinances; does related work as required.

**Animal Control Officer II** - Trains entry level Animal Control Officers in proper procedures; performs a variety of assignments in the enforcement of state and municipal animal control ordinances; does related work as required.

**Animal Control Supervisor** - Supervises animal control personnel engaged in the enforcement of Animal Control Ordinances, both City and state; oversees the care of animals, equipment, vehicles and maintenance of Animal Control Unit facilities; does related work as required.

### **Authority of Animal Control Officers**

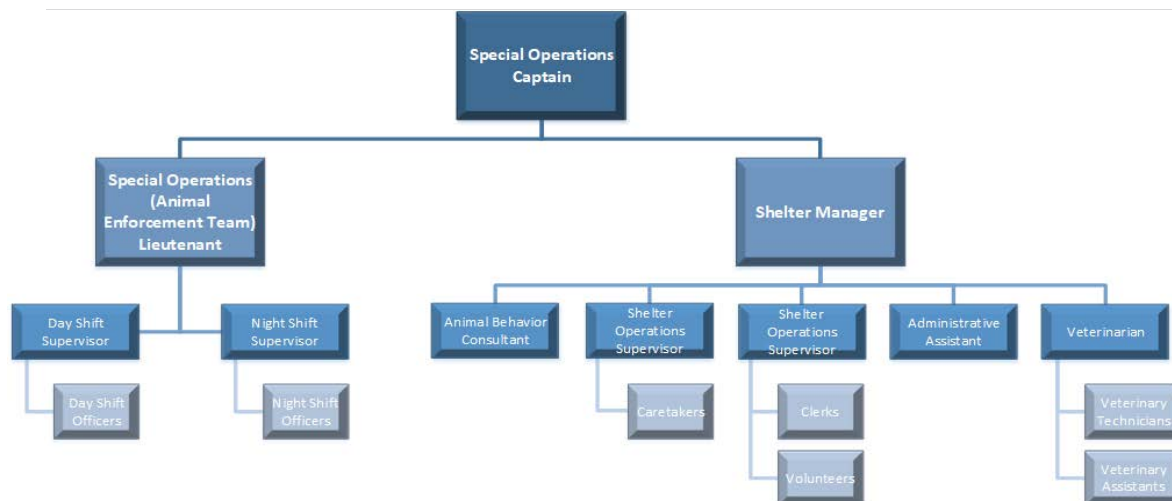
As provided by § 3.2-6555 of the Code of Virginia, Animal Control Officers shall have the power to enforce all ordinances enacted pursuant to this Code and all laws and city ordinances for the protection of domestic animals. Animal Control Officers have the authority to issue a misdemeanor summons for violations of statutes or city ordinances in accordance with § 19.2-74 and § 19.2-81 of the Virginia State Code and to apply to a Magistrate for a felony warrant or search warrant. The service of both felony and search warrants will be performed by a Police Officer with the assistance of an Animal Control Officer.

### **Training of Animal Control Officers**

Every Animal Control Officer appointed after 1998 and before July 1, 2017 shall, within two years of appointment, complete a basic animal control course approved by the State Veterinarian. Every Animal Control Officer appointed after July 1, 2017 shall within one year of appointment, complete a basic animal control course approved by the State Veterinarian. Every three years, each Animal Control Officer will receive additional training approved by the state veterinarian, 15 hours of which will include training in animal control and protection. Animal Control Officers will attend Police Officer in-service training classes as determined by the Commanding Officer, Bureau of Animal Control. All Animal Control employees will be state certified prior to performing animal euthanasia.

### **Animal Control Organizational Chart**

The Animal Control Unit is under the command of the Special Operations as delineated by General Order 1.03, (Organization and Administration.) The Animal Enforcement Unit is supervised by the Special Operations Lieutenant as depicted in the organizational chart below:



### Roles and Responsibilities

Animal Enforcement is staffed with ACOs, supervisors, administrative support staff and a Police Lieutenant. Supervisors will meet with the subordinates as necessary to discuss expectations, performance measurements, career planning, and process improvement.. The product of these consultations will be recorded in MakeNOTE.

### PATROL OPERATIONS

An Animal Control Officer (ACO) can expect to receive a wide variety of cases including stray and/or injured animals, cruelty, and inadequate care complaints, exposure cases, as well as a variety of other unusual cases. ACOs are given discretion when handling cases and are expected to reflect good judgment, our values, and the direction of supervisors in all of their actions.

### Guidelines and Practical Considerations

While there is no way a guide can predict and address every contingency an officer in the field may face; this section will offer a series of decision charts to help guide the efforts of officers facing circumstances that are relatively common in our experience.

**Standby Duty:** Officers will sign up for standby duty upon release from training and approved by the department. When doing standby duty, officers will sign in as 920X in the MDT. They will check with the dispatcher to see if the AEU channel is monitored. If not, they will switch to the appropriate police channel the call is in. On the overtime slip for standby duty, officers will mark in the comment section what case(s) they responded to overnight. The slip must be in the turn in box no later than 0700 the next morning.

### Animals Locked in Vehicles

The ACO will evaluate the condition of animal, length of time in vehicle, and the temperature in making a determination on how to proceed.

- If the animal is not in immediate distress, and the car is parked in a location where an owner can be reasonably located (i.e. in front of a store or restaurant), the ACO will make every effort to contact the owner.
- In an effort to determine the severity of the threat and gather evidence relevant to a prosecution, the ACO will collect and record evidence of air temperature/heat index/cabin temperature/and other factors as deemed necessary.
- If the animal's health/condition is life-threatening the ACO shall notify an AEU supervisor and remove the animal immediately (check all doors and if necessary, force entry). If the condition is not immediately life-threatening but, the animal still needs to be removed from the vehicle, the ACO shall obtain approval for the seizure from an AEU supervisor then request assistance from a police officer/fire department via the A/C dispatcher.
- If a window is broken or if any other damage is caused to the vehicle, the ACO shall submit a memo to his/her supervisor detailing the situation and damage. The ACO will consult with the on duty supervisor to ensure all relevant evidence is collected and the damage is accounted for following standard operating procedures (SOP). Photographs of any damage done to personal property must accompany risk management paperwork. The AEU supervisor will be responsible for completing related paperwork and submission to Risk Management.
- The ACO shall provide necessary care for the distressed animal immediately upon removal. This may include wetting the animal down with water, providing drinking water, and/or putting the animal in air conditioning to lower body temperature. If the animal needs transporting to the veterinarian, the ACO is to call for another ACO or a police officer to stay on the scene with the vehicle until an AEU supervisor or police sergeant arrives.
- If the animal needs to be evaluated or treated by a veterinarian, the City veterinarian will be consulted. If it is practical, the City veterinarian will make decisions regarding the care of the animal. If circumstances (outside of business hours, immediate need, distance, etc.) dictate that the animal should be seen by an emergency veterinarian, the City veterinarian will be consulted as soon as possible.
- As part of the initial assessment in any case involving a heat emergency, the ACO will make every effort to obtain a body temperature from the animal. Body temperature will be recorded in animal injuries or death where heat is the primary or could be considered as a contributing factor.
- Once an animal is removed, the ACO shall leave a violation/impoundment notice with the vehicle. The initial ACO is responsible for the follow up associated with the investigation of any criminal violations, including but not limited to completing an IBR report (PD-18), issuing summonses, or obtaining magistrate summonses. See section regarding cruelty to animals for further instruction.

## Barking Dogs

ACOs will respond to barking dog cases and assess the situation to determine if a violation exists.

- Attempt to contact the dog owner or other responsible party to advise them of the complaint and/or to discuss the noted violation, using PISTOL, Pet Access, WebCad, etc. If the owner cannot be located, a notice should be posted.
- If a violation has occurred, a warning or summons may be issued at the ACOs discretion. In making this determination, prior complaints should be considered, as well as the severity of the situation. In general ACOs will issue warnings only when their evaluation of the circumstances

leads them to the reasonable belief that the warning will have the same likelihood of achieving lasting compliance as the issuing of a summons or more substantial enforcement action.

- Prior to deciding whether the dog(s) should be impounded, the ACO should consider the severity of the disturbance, whether there are any reasonable alternatives and the risk of injury to the animal during its apprehension. A supervisor should be consulted with to determine whether or not a search warrant is necessary and to approve the planned course of action.

## Beach Violations

ACOs should be familiar with the City of Virginia Beach ordinances relevant to the beach, and be prepared to explain/enforce these laws to any citizen who is concerned.

## Bears

- Respond to the area of reported sighting and assess the situation. If the bear is spotted or if there is evidence of one, the ACO shall advise the AET Supervisor, the AET supervisor shall contact the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries at 1-804-367-1258 (24 hours) to have a representative notified.
- If practical utilize resources needed to monitor the activity of the bear until the State Biologist arrives.

## Cell Phones

City cell phones are available to be checked out and used during the course of the officers' shifts for work related phone calls only. Texting is unavailable on these phones. Proper logging procedures should be followed prior to taking a phone for the shift and when returning the phone at the end of the shift. ACOs who use the phones are responsible for its use as well as any damage that occurred during the shift the officer possessed the phone. Officers will not take phones home with them unless they are the on duty ACO that night. If officers are going to use technology devices (like Google Phones) on their personal cell phone to make phone calls, they are to provide the department that number. Do not text a citizen. Only make a phone call, email, or have a conversation in person.

## Citizen Expresses Interest in Adopting an Animal (in field)

We do not take names of interest on the street. If a citizen is interested in the animal we pick up, the ACO will give the citizen the animals sticker ID number and instruct the citizen to call the Animal Care and Adoption Center (ACAC). If asked how long an animal is held, the ACO is to advise the citizen that the ACAC is mandated by state laws of 5/10 days, however the animals health and/or behavior also play a factor in the time, and to contact the ACAC if they have any further questions. An ACO may provide the citizen with the shelter's contact information if the citizen is interested in adopting an animal. The ACO is not to write any information on the intake sheet regarding adopter interest.



## Court

### Court Orders

- Court Order request forms (PD-967) should be completed by the ACO after restrictions/stipulations are placed by the courts, and submitted to the AEU Supervisor. This should be done as soon as possible after the court hearing.
- The guidelines for handling and executing criminal and civil processes received from the courts, will adhere to standards set forth and delineated in VBPD General Order 16.01.
- When serving a court order a copy will be provided to the defendant, the court copy and the second copy will be completed and turned into the supervisor for entering into the court order spreadsheet, filed, and the original submitted to the courts.
- If the defendant is uncooperative, then the ACO is to call for a police officer to assist the ACO in serving the court order.
- If the court order requires impoundment of an animal and the animal is not located on the property, the ACO will gather as much information as possible and forward it to an AET supervisor for further action.
- Court Orders that prohibit the ownership of animals will be recorded in CADS and PISTOL. The ACO shall submit a PD-139 to the AET Supervisor for submission.
- A regular schedule for compliance checks with Court Orders that prohibit animal ownership will be maintained.

### Animals on Court Holds

- Care of Live Animals
  - Animals on a court hold and animals in the intake areas are not to be removed from their kennels without prior approval from AEU supervisors. ACO's are not to ask kennel staff if they are able to remove animals. ACO's shall email a request to the AEU supervisors and await approval.
  - Procedure for Deceased Animals
    - 1.) Place animal in appropriate bag
    - 2.) Place pink "HOLD FOR COURT" sticker on bag with the following information:
      - a. Intake Number
      - b. Intake Date
      - c. Officer Code
    - 3.) Place animal in designated holding area in freezer.
    - 4.) Once case is adjudicated and a determination is made regarding the remains of the animal, the ACO who placed the hold on the deceased animal is responsible for disposing of the animal. The ACO will mark through the sticker with a black permanent marker or by advising the AEU and shelter supervisors that an owner or service will be picking up the deceased animal's remains.
  - If the City Veterinarian is required for testimony in a particular case, the ACO will send an email to both AEU supervisors articulating the details of the case as well as specific reasons the veterinarian is needed to testify. The supervisors will determine if there is

the need for the veterinarian. The ACO will also submit a subpoena request for the Veterinarian once approved.

## Cruelty / Inadequate Care

One of the primary roles of an ACO is to prevent animal cruelty through a variety of tools including education, detection, investigation, and prosecution.

### Minor Infractions

- If the case involves minor offenses (i.e. no shelter on a nice day), the ACO may leave a notice for the caregiver or owner to comply, if medical assessment or care is needed the ACO may use an action agreement to gain compliance.
- It will be the ACO's responsibility to follow-up on his/her cases to ensure compliance.
- While no set timeline exists for follow-ups, the ACO is expected to follow-up on cases in a reasonable time frame and use sound judgment in working with people to gain compliance.
- An IBR report shall be completed.
- Action Agreement Directions

If an ACO believes that an animal is suffering from the lack of Veterinarian care, and there is not an immediate need to impound the animal, an Action Agreement will be used for tracking the warning and instruction to seek Veterinary assistance. This is designed for those circumstances where we need to rule out "innocent" ignorance and we want to encourage good ownership practices more than we want to remove the animal from the home.

- You will complete the form while on scene; both you and the owner will sign the form. The citizen is given the yellow copy and you keep the white. You will also fill out a yellow animal custody record and include an intake sticker on it. There is no need for an intake date/time, you only need the record date and time. **In how acquired you will write in Action agreement (or AA) in the other section. For Classification you will fill in Vet Referral in the other section.** Leave the pick- up location blank. Make sure you include the owner SSN or DL number when filling out the owner information. For the Impound Status you will list NA in the other section. An example has been attached below.
- All cases and forms are tracked through PISTOL. When an ACO returns to the shelter they will scan both the yellow animal intake form and the action agreement form together to the intake address and their supervisor. It is imperative that the two forms are scanned together. Once scanned the forms should be stapled together and placed in the turn in box for your supervisor.

On your follow up case, if the citizen was successful, you will collect the completed yellow copy and turn it into your supervisor so the case may be cleared out of pistol. If the citizen was unsuccessful, the form should be included in your evidence presented to the courts (see your supervisor for the white copy). Once your case is completed, the form should be submitted to your supervisor with the courts findings for filing.

Arrival at Date: _____		Kennel: _____		Time: _____	
Place Sticker Here			Virginia Beach Animal Shelter – Animal Custody Record		
Collar#	Animal Name: <u>Fluffy</u>	System #	Court Date:	Available Date:	
Intake Date/Time:	Record Date/Time: <u>8-8-12</u> <u>1200</u>	How: Seized Stray Surrender Wildlife Bite Case DOA	Intake Officer: <u>2445</u>		Transfer from _____ Other: <u>Action Agreement</u>
Classification: Abandon Barking Brought In Cruelty Danger Feral			Pick-Up Location:		
Foster Court Hold Picked Up Quarantine Other: <u>Vet Referral</u>					
Microchip: Scanned		Species: <u>Dog</u> Cat	Gender:	Breed: <u>Mixed</u> Purebreed	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes # _____		Other: _____	Male Neuter <u>Female</u> Spay	Type: <u>Jap. Chin</u>	
Age: <u>2</u>	Weight: <u>15 lbs</u>	Coat Color: <u>white</u>	Temper: <u>Good</u> Fair Unpredictable Aggressive	Coat: Wirey Curly	
Ears: Clipped Droopy		Tail: Bushy Curled	Health: Good Fair Poor	City License: Tag # <u>1234</u>	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Erect	<input type="radio"/> Semi-Erect	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Long <input type="radio"/> Short <input type="radio"/> Cropped	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Needs Medical <input type="radio"/> DOA	Year <u>12</u>	City <u>VaBch</u>
Impound Status: 5 Day 10 Day Court		Collar: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Pet ID Tag: Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Add. Info: _____		
Quarantine Other: <u>N/A</u>		Color/Type: <u>red nylon</u>	Rabies Tag: Tag # _____ Vet _____		
Final Disposition: Adopted Reclaimed Euthanized			Owner Information:		
Date/Time: _____ Other: _____			Name: <u>John Smith</u> <u>VADL# T161234567</u>		
Release To: _____			Address: <u>123 Happy St. VaBch</u>		
Address: _____			Phone #: <u>757-222-1111</u>		
Phone #: _____			Owner Notified:		
Receipt # _____ Amount: _____ Type: _____			Date/Time Notified: <u>8/8/12 1200</u> How: <u>AA</u>		

### More serious infractions

- If the act of cruelty involves a more serious offense (i.e. no shelter in foul weather, or severe malnourishment) and requires impoundment of the animal; the ACO will contact a supervisor or Lieutenant, discuss the results of their investigation, describing the need to impound the animal, and the plan to accomplish that end.
- The ACO is expected to collect all relevant evidence including taking pictures and vouchering evidence for court preparation prior to removal of the animal.
- An IBR report shall be completed and submitted prior to the end of shift.
- In cases when there is an immediate threat to the animal's safety, health, or life, the ACO should seize the animal as provided for in Virginia Code 3.2-6569, after notifying an AET Supervisor. A "petition for ownership" (PD965-3) indicating the seizure and a prospective court appearance date must be served when an animal is seized under these circumstances. In most cases in which an animal has been seized a criminal charge of cruelty to animals (3.2-6570) or inadequate care (3.2-6503) should be made in accordance with the Code.
- In cases where we seize an animal to resolve an immediate threat to its health, the lead ACO involved in the seizure shall insure that immediate first aid and relief is provided to the animal. In cases where the animal's body temperature may be relevant as evidence or in the administration of first aid, a body temperature will be obtained in the field as soon as possible. The City Vet shall be advised on when an animal that is seized requires medical attention. If the animal is impounded with the intention of holding it for court, the ACO shall follow proper "hold for court" impoundment procedures.

- If an animal suffers an unexpected death while in our custody, and there is any possibility that heat played a role, a body temperature will be collected as soon as possible.

### **Dangerous/Vicious Dog Investigations**

ACOs will thoroughly investigate every incident in which a person or companion animal has been attacked, bitten or otherwise injured by a dog.

- ACOs need to familiarize themselves with State Code 3.2-6540 and 3.2-6540.1 and administrative code 2 VAC-5-620 when investigating complaints of this nature.
- Once probable cause is established the ACO will notify their supervisor of the facts and proceed with impounding the dog with the supervisor's approval pending the court hearing. The supervisor will have final say if the dog is not to be impounded.
- ACOs shall notify all parties involved of the provisions of the dangerous dog ordinance.
- Complete the dangerous dog affidavit for review by a supervisor prior to going to the magistrate.
- Serve summons once it is obtained from the magistrate providing the owner with an owner's packet from the DDOG/VDOG packet.
- The officer shall also advise dispatch to change the nature code of the originating case to DDOG.
- A copy of both the DDOG/VDOG affidavit and summons will be turned in to an AEU Supervisor.

The following procedures apply once the Court has deemed the dog dangerous:

- Serve the court order on the dangerous dog owner.
- Follow the guidelines in the administrative code 2 VAC-5-620-40 which outlines the ACO's responsibility.
- Provide the dangerous dog owner with registration requirements in accordance with administrative code 2 VAC 5-620-30.
- Paperwork is located on the X drive
- ACOs can find a detailed checklist of procedures in the Dangerous Dog packet located in the forms credenza.
- The ACO responsible for the investigation will follow all direction listed in the DDOG packet for registration process.
- It will be the responsibility of the ACO handling the case to euthanize any dog that is deemed dangerous or vicious when ordered by the courts or requested by the owner and the animal is at the shelter.

### **Deceased Animals**

ACOs will pick-up deceased animals, both on public streets and on private property, including owner's deceased pets (see flowchart on page 21).

- If the deceased animal is located in a roadway, the ACO will park behind the deceased animal to provide protection between the officer and any traffic approaching from behind. ACOs will wear a traffic vest and activate all emergency equipment prior to entering the roadway.
- The ACO will scan all deceased companion animals for a microchip and make notification to the owner, if possible, making notes on the intake sheet.
- Deceased animals on beaches are picked up by the Beach Beautification division of Public Works, by notifying dispatch.

- Deceased sea turtles or other marine animals on beaches shall be referred to the Virginia Aquarium stranding team who will mark the animal. If the animal is already marked (obviously marked with paint), “Beach Beautification” Department can be notified via the AC dispatcher.
- Owner’s deceased animals will be picked up by ACO. The officer will log in the owner’s name, OL/SSN number, address, and phone numbers in case comments. The ACO will ensure the case is set as an ODOA and the information necessary for billing has been collected and that the owner understands they will be receiving a litter/bill for the service. \*Billing will be processed by the Administrative Assistant.

## Exposure to Animal Bodily Fluids

1. ACOs will complete an Exposure Report (PD998-3) when any break in the skin of a human, due to a bite or scratch, by a mammal has occurred.
2. ACOs will also respond to complaints of bites between companion animals (i.e. 2 dogs that are in a fight and bit each other). In these cases complete the exposure report form for record keeping purposes only. Since these are not considered actual exposures, no animal will need to be quarantined and the exposure report will not be forwarded to the Health Department.
3. The following procedures will apply when completing exposure reports:
  - Gather as much information as possible on the humans and animals involved.
  - Fill the exposure report out as completely as possible. The victim will be provided an “After the bite” form.
  - Include the assigned IBR# on the report.
  - When the report is involving a companion animal verses a wild animal the wild animal will be listed as the victim with the companion animal listed on the lower half of the report.
  - Quarantine domestic animals when located. It is the ACO’s discretion whether the animal is quarantined at the residence or at the shelter. Ensure signing party is aware of the rules.
  - A summons should be issued to owners of unvaccinated animals and/or unlicensed animals.
  - Wildlife and severely sick or injured animals that have caused an exposure shall be humanely euthanized by the ACO and prepared for testing.
  - If the animal can’t be immediately located, the incomplete exposure report will be forwarded to the Health Department within 24 hours of initial report being taken. If the exposure is from a high risk animal, regardless of availability for testing, the Health Department will be notified immediately via phone, utilizing the on call Health Department representative on weekends. The officer separating the report will sign the bottom of the report regardless of whether the animal was placed in quarantine or not, as an alternate way of identifying which officer(s) was involved.
  - In addition to sending the incomplete exposure report to the Health Department, make a copy of the original report and place it in the corresponding zone box. The copy in the zone box will remain for approximately 10 days after the incident.
  - An Exposure Worksheet (998W) will be attached and completed for every report. Victim follow up will be completed by the completing officer no sooner than 24 hours after initial contact by an officer and once the exposure report is sent to the Health Department
  - Comments regarding what occurred will be added to the case in CAD by the ACO.
  - Blank VBAC exposure reports should not be left at veterinarians’ or doctors’ offices. Doing so creates risks on several levels. Aside from Animal Control and the Health Department, the only other agency authorized to complete exposure reports and quarantine animals is the VBSPCA, in

respects to animals in their care. Currently, there are no veterinarians' offices that are authorized to complete the quarantine process without consulting AEU or the Health Department.

**Follow-ups are required in the below circumstances:**

Dog VS Dog: when dogs are owned by different people

Dog VS Human: when victim is not owner (this includes strays and impounded dogs)

Cat VS Human: when victim is not owner (this includes strays and impounded cats)

The protocols for handling an exposure to the bodily fluids of an animal are relatively complex and vary depending on various circumstances. ACOs are expected to provide immediate assistance to anyone affected by an animal exposure including protecting against further exposure, rendering first aid, and conducting the necessary steps to report and follow up on the exposure.

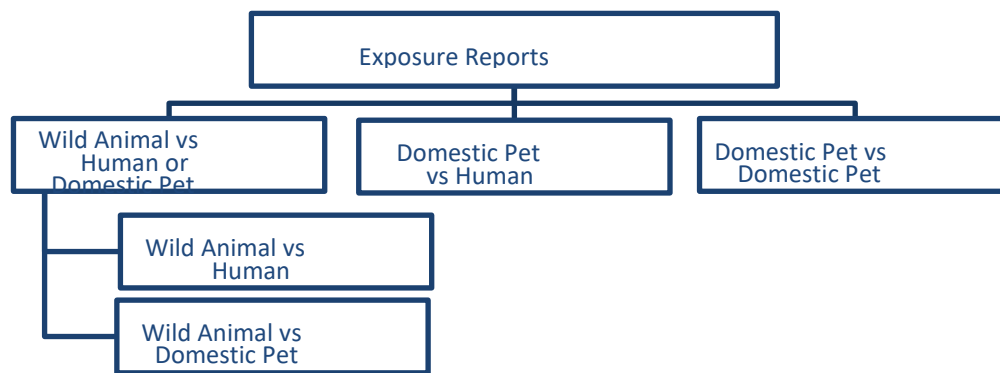
**Exposure (Employee):**

Below is the procedure for addressing an employee exposure to an animal bite, scratch or bodily fluids which occurs during the performance of job-related duties for the City.

1. The member must immediately notify his supervisor of the exposure and when feasible complete a memo prior to the end of the shift. .
2. The supervisor must immediately provide the member with the City's Workers' Compensation Physician Panel Form (DF159) and shall make certain the member knows that they must select a doctor from the panel should they require medical attention as a result of the incident.
3. Prior to sending a member to the panel physician he/she has selected, the member's supervisor shall issue the member a properly completed Authorization for Physician Panel Form (DF159) . The member shall sign the certification and shall present this form to the attending physician, who shall complete the bottom portion of the form. The member shall then return this form to his supervisor immediately after seeing the doctor and follow up with a visit to Occupational Health. This form shall be forwarded to the Department of Finance, Risk Management Division along with a PD-300.
4. All claim information for an exposure, - shall be completed online at the CorVel reporting site. The DF75WC may be used internally by departments to capture all information needed for input into the CorVel system.
5. A Health Hazard Exposure Form (DF156) must be filled out by the member and reviewed by the supervisor. Notify and send the form to Occupational Health Services (385-4851) as soon as possible after incident.
6. An Animal Exposure Report (PD98-3) will also be completed by the member.
7. All documented exposure events are to be maintained in a confidential manner.
8. Employees are to keep exposure information in confidence to protect patient privacy and reduce the opportunity for rumors or other problems in the work place.
9. Blank VBAC exposure reports should not be left at veterinarians' offices or doctors' offices. Doing so creates risks on several levels. Neither the email nor fax machine they have been told to send the reports to are monitored daily. Some exposures cannot wait to be handled. Also, the reports cannot be immediately checked for accuracy and legibility at an unmonitored email/fax. Aside from Animal Control and the Health Department, the only other agency authorized to complete exposure reports and quarantine animals is the VBSPCA. Currently, there are no veterinarians' offices that are authorized to complete the quarantine process without consulting AEU or the Health Department.

### Notification of Positive Test:

The AEU will work closely with the Virginia Department of Health and OHS to ensure the animal is tested or quarantined if possible. Whether the animal can be tested or not, the employee will consult with their physician, OHS, and the Health Department to ensure the proper course of post exposure treatment is followed. The details of the various exposure protocols are presented in the flowchart provided at right. A second flowchart, provided on page 22, details the unique procedures to be employed if the person exposed is a City employee engaged in the performance of their duties.



### Euthanasia Guidelines

It is the obligation of all officers to ensure that every animal euthanized be handled in a humane, compassionate, and caring manner so as to minimize the physical pain and psychological impact to both the animals and the personnel performing the procedure. All euthanasia shall be conducted in accordance with Directive number 79-1 of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Division of Animal Health. Only those officers certified to conduct euthanasia shall be permitted to do so.

- All dogs and cats shall be administered pre-sedation drug cocktail of Xylazine and Ketamine in accordance with posted veterinary dosage recommendations.
- All animals are to be held until unconscious. Any animal being injected is to be properly and humanely restrained so as to prevent injury to the animal and to the employees. No animal shall be allowed to roam free after sodium pentobarbital has been administered. If intraperitoneal euthanasia is used, the animal shall be placed in a secure cage until unconsciousness develops.
- Needles are single-use and then disposed of.
  - Needles should be checked for burrs or imperfections prior to use and discarded if found.
  - Dispose of any syringe that does not function properly
  - Syringes should be thoroughly rinsed with water after use
  - Needles and syringes being disposed of shall be destroyed so that they can no longer be used for any purpose.
- Death shall be positively confirmed before disposal of the carcass therefore each animal shall be carefully examined for:
  - Lack of heartbeat
  - Lack of respiration
  - Lack of corneal or toe-pinch reflexes

## Drug Logs

- Definitions:
  - **Stock Drug Locker:** The large locker located in the euthanasia room where the stock supply of all euthanasia drugs will be maintained.
  - **Working Drug Locker:** The individual drug lockers for the Shelter and Enforcement personnel where a small supply of euthanasia drugs are kept for use.
- The stock supply of the euthanasia drugs Fatal-Plus, Ketamine and Xylazine will be maintained in the Stock Drug Locker. A logbook will be maintained for each drug showing the amount of each drug that is currently in the locker and the date and number of any bottle that was moved to the working drug lockers.
- When a shipment of a particular drug is added to the Stock Drug Locker, one entry will be made by the receiving Supervisor in that drug's logbook showing the date the drug bottles were received, how many bottles were received and the assigned numbers for the bottles (i.e. 80-100). The amount of the drug will then be added to the supply already in the locker, and the Supervisor will initial the entry.
- An individual entry will be made in the logbooks for each bottle when it is subtracted from the Stock Drug Locker and moved to one of the working drug lockers including the bottle number; again initialed by the Supervisor. This gives any person inspecting the Stock Drug Locker log book to know which bottle numbers of each drug should be present and in use in either Working Drug Locker.
- The working drug lockers shall have in them the bottles of each drug that is currently being used and a logbook showing the bottle number and an entry for each animal euthanized and the corresponding drug dosage amount.
- In the event a written error occurs on a line in a drug log book, the officer shall line through the entire entry and initial the error. All errors will be inspected at the time of routine audits. A new line entry shall be made with the correct information.
- When a bottle is emptied, the officer finishing the bottle will apply a pre-printed label or stamp at the bottom of that particular bottle's page (example of label is highlighted below) and fill in the blanks before starting the entries for the next bottle on the following page. The empty bottle will remain in the working locker until removed by a Supervisor
  - On Date \_\_\_\_\_ Bottle # \_\_\_\_\_ was completed by Officer Code \_\_\_\_\_, Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ (Name, Code) confirmed \_\_\_\_\_ CCs were used from Bottle # \_\_\_\_\_ Bottle# \_\_\_\_\_ begins on the next page.
- After a bottle is emptied, a Supervisor (either Shelter or Enforcement) will confirm and document via the label, all the entries for a particular bottle to ensure the content of the bottle was properly accounted for. The Supervisor will then remove the discarded bottle(s) from the working locker and place them in locked tool box located in the supply room for bulk disposal.
- All discarded bottles will be accounted for and destroyed in accordance with the following procedures:



- All empty drug bottles will be stored and disposed of in bulk for accountability purposes. This will enable accountability for each bottle, ensure there are no residual contents, and dispose of all in a safe and appropriate manner.
- Monthly or sooner as necessary, the bottles will be disposed in bulk after each sequential bottle number of each drug is accounted for and signed off of by two Supervisors. The bottles will then be incinerated.

ACO Drug logs will be inspected on a quarterly basis (unless otherwise needed) by an AEU Supervisor. The following guidelines will be utilized:

- The supervisor will run a history intake/euthanized report for all animals impounded by the officer that were euthanized. Until the report is created in a printable version, the supervisor will list all animals by intake number, and identify those euthanized by the shelter staff and those euthanized by an ACO's.
- The supervisor will then verify that each animal euthanized by the officer was listed in the officers' book by checking each intake number, species, and weight.
- Any discrepancies found should be investigated further by looking at the intake sheet and attachments in the animals' pistol record to identify where there error is. Discrepancies should be noted on the history intake/euthanized report.
- The Supervisor will then verify the amounts used of each drug, and how much of each drug remains. The bottle of the respective drug will be visually examined to determine if the estimated amount appears to remain in the bottle. If there is any concern that the amounts are not remaining, the supervisor will draw up and measure the amount of remaining drug, then replace it back into the bottle. The amounts used and remaining will be listed on the history intake/euthanized report and on the drug log inspection sticker.
- The supervisor will complete a drug log inspection sticker and place it in the respective drug logs. The history intake/euthanized report will be kept on file for the life of the drug bottle.
- If errors are found, at their discretion, Supervisors may require the officer to utilize a check off verification sticker on all animals euthanized. This can include the required signature of a witness.

## Evidence Procedures

Appropriate procedures will be followed to ensure the integrity of physical evidence through proper storage, return, and disposal of property. ACOs collecting evidence shall refer to the VBPD Evidence Collection and Handling Field Guide. This is to include photographic evidence.

## Found Animals

In those cases where a citizen finds a stray animal and wants to keep the found animal in their care during the hold period, the ACO shall ensure the following is done:

1. Strongly encourage the citizen to allow the animal to be impounded, as the shelter is where most owners do look for their pets. Explain that the law does not allow or describe ownership rights to found pets that are not surrendered to the local shelter.
2. Check for the presence of a collar, identifying marks, or a microchip.
3. If the owner can be clearly determined, the ACO will make an effort to return the animal without impounding it.

4. Take the appropriate steps to gather information and conduct necessary follow up with microchip registries. File a Found report with the information you have gathered before the end of shift. The ACO will provide instructions to the Finder regarding the mandates in Virginia Code § 3.2-6551: Notification by individuals finding companion animals; penalty and encourage citizens to turn the animal over to VBAC.

## Freezers

### Leroy Freezer

- ACOs should NOT place large animals into the bins in the Leroy freezer as they are extremely difficult to remove. If an ACO needs to use the bin to move the animal from their truck to the freezer, they may do so, but should tip then bin over and then place the animal on the floor. For large animals placed on the floor, every effort should be made to bag the animal. At times, it does take multiple bags to cover an entire animal. At the very least, a bag should be placed over the animal's head as well as one underneath the animal so that it is not lying directly on the floor. Do not lay them directly onto the mats as they are very difficult to move and clean.

### ACAC Freezer

- Holds for Potential Owners Procedure: applies for microchipped and/or collared dogs and cats they pick up deceased with no owner present.
  - Place animal in an appropriate bag
  - Place tallow "HOLD FOR OWNER" sticker on bag with the following information:
    - Intake Number
    - Intake Date
    - Officer Code
    - Disposal Date
  - Only animals with a collar and/or microchip (or any other sign of ownership) should be placed on a "Hold for Potential Owner" status.
  - The hold time for the animal will be 48 hours (two calendar days) for any animal that has signs of ownership but was not picked up from the owner as deceased.
  - Only animals that were picked up from an owner who is undecided on private cremation or disposal should be held longer than 48 hours, but no longer than necessary for a decision to be made. In such circumstances that the holding time for a deceased animal with a known owner exceeds 48 hours, ACOs should email the supervisors of the AEU.
  - Animal should be placed in the designated holding area of the freezer.
  - The ACO will notate on the notes section of the custody record that the animal is being held for a potential owner.
  - An ACO will be assigned to check Hold for Potential Owner status animals daily. When the holding period is over, the ACO will mark through the sticker with a permanent marker and move the animal from the holding area to the appropriate bin.

## Incident Based Reports (IBRs)

IBRs are necessary for the AEU to track Cruelty and Inadequate Care cases. These reports are an official document of the offense. ACOs will fill out incident reports in compliance with the instructions detailed in the VBPD Field Reporting Field Guide.

- An IBR report is required to be completed on any case regarding:
  - Inadequate Care
  - Animal Cruelty
  - Dog Fighting
  - Rooster Fighting
  
- IBR #s are obtained by utilizing an MDT or via request through the dispatcher. These unique numbers are utilized for identifying Animal Exposure Reports, summonses and warrants in addition to being utilized in IBR reports as well. The correct format for IBR numbers is; Year-xxxxxx. All IBR numbers are to be recorded using the full calendar year followed by a six digit number.
- IBR's are to be completed electronically and submitted to both supervisors by the end of the officer's shift.

## Injured / Sick Animals

It is the responsibility of the ACO to minimize the pain and stress of the animal found to be sick or injured.

- Assuming that no criminal violation is evident, ACOs will consult with a sick or injured animal's owner to ensure that the necessary care is provided. If the ACO determines that the care required cannot be delayed, the ACO will provide the level of assistance necessary to see that care is given immediately. ACOs may provide emergency transportation to an appropriate medical care provider within the City. In these circumstances, the owner remains responsible for the costs of veterinary care and in consultation with the veterinarian, the best course of treatment.
- Domestic animals with unknown owners that are picked up sick or injured should be taken immediately to a veterinarian. Veterinarian recommendations concerning the treatment or euthanasia of an animal will be followed. The shelter veterinarian shall be used if on duty, a PD949-2 shall be used with all other veterinarians.
- There will be occasions when ACOs will pick up a companion animal that is critically injured/ill beyond recovery. When practical, seek the opinion or recommendation from a veterinarian prior to euthanasia. If the officer believes euthanasia is the best option for the domestic animal, and the domestic animal is not one that is released by its owner, the officer will complete the disposition witness form on the animal custody card with a witness signature.
- Nothing herein precludes an ACO from euthanizing a critically injured wildlife animal for humane purposes.
- ALL euthanasia will be performed in accordance with department training, state law, and best practices.
- Injured deer will be euthanized humanely via duty weapon when practical. The following procedures will apply when euthanizing an injured deer:

- Secure the area ensuring a safe back-drop for euthanasia requesting the assistance from a police officer as needed.
  - Once the area is secure advise the dispatcher of the impending gunshot and euthanize an animal in accordance with Department of Agriculture standards.
  - Once the euthanasia is complete, the ACO shall confirm death and remove the animal for disposal.
  - Obtain an IBR number for the case; complete the Department Use of Force Report via Blue team for supervisory review prior to end of shift.
- Where there is evidence to suggest a criminal violation, such as inadequate care or cruelty which is related to the injury an ACO is evaluating, the ACO must use judgment to determine whether or not the animal should be seized. Assuming the animal's owner is known and can be consulted with, the ACO may determine that a seizure is not necessary to assure the animal is properly treated. If the owner is not known or, for any other reason it is determined that a seizure is deemed to be the best way to assure the animal is properly cared for; careful records must be maintained so that the owner can be later billed appropriately. All specific procedures for handling medical records and billing paperwork for animals in our care/custody are provided in the AEU training manual.
  - As a last resort, owners who are clearly incapable of providing necessary care will be allowed to surrender their animals to ACOs so that proper care can be given to them. Surrendering an animal will not in any way influence whether or not an owner is charged with a criminal violation. Suspects of cruel or inadequate treatment surrendering an animal should be told that the City reserves the right to seek redress for the cost of treatment at a later date.
  - Injured wildlife that does not require euthanasia can be transferred to the care of a certified wildlife rehabilitator, in accordance with the DGIF laws, and is in compliance with city zoning. Information on wildlife rehabbers can be located at: [www.dgif.state.va.us/wildlife/injured/rehabilitators.asp?location=Virginia+Beach](http://www.dgif.state.va.us/wildlife/injured/rehabilitators.asp?location=Virginia+Beach).
  - If the animal in need of emergency veterinary care is in the custody of the VB Animal Services Unit (ACO or ACAC staff) and the care needed must be provided by an outside veterinarian (not the City vet), the transfer of that animal to the outside veterinarian will be documented on a PD 149-2 (Transfer of Animal for Evaluation/Care). Any medications from outside veterinarians should only be obtained in a quantity needed until the shelter veterinarian works next.
  - If the animal in question appears to be in need of veterinarian care or evaluation but, the condition does not constitute an emergency, the ACO can consult with the owner to address the matter at hand. ACOs are expected to provide education and support to pet owners in basic animal husbandry when appropriate. ACOs are not expected to make veterinary diagnoses or to give medical advice. When the ACO believes an animal should be seen by a veterinarian but, the circumstances do not justify a seizure, the ACO will utilize a PD 126-2 (Action Agreement).

## Intake Procedure

ACOs impounding an animal will follow the following procedures:

- Complete an Animal Custody Record (PD 906) in its entirety. Assign an animal ID # (sticker #).
  - When writing the pickup location, ACOs will write a street and block number. Do not use an intersection as PISTOL does not recognize intersections when clerks are entering

data. Intersections may only be used if a block number is included for both roads listed (i.e. 100 block S. Birdneck Rd. /1000 block Norfolk Ave.).

- When scanning the PD-906, ACOs will ensure both sides of the sheet are scanned if the back of the sheet has been utilized.
- After scanning, ACOs will need to remove the numeric part of the address where the animal was picked up (i.e. 123 Smith Street should appear as ■■■ Smith Street on the record).
- For dogs, retrieve a nylon collar (if available) and log the collar number on the Animal Custody Record. Place collar on dog.
- Animals should be placed in an appropriate / designated area taking into account various factors including animal size, condition, and demeanor.
- If an animal is left at a veterinarian's office, this should be noted on the top registry card. If the animal is picked up from the veterinarian, and brought into the kennel, the ACO returning the animal must ensure the animal's file is updated.
- If a final disposition of the animal is determined before the ACO responds to the kennel (i.e. returned to owner in the field or animal is deceased), this information is to be included in the "Animal Disposition Status" field. If the animal is returned to its owner, add owner information to the Final Disposition "Released to" field on the registry card.
- If the animal is in quarantine, is likely to bite, or is a "hold for court" animal, the ACO will place a placard on the cage door. Placards that state "Quarantine," "Hold for Court" or "Will Bite" are beneficial in notifying caretaker staff as well as citizens of animals that may require a cautionary approach.
- The animal's intake number should be listed on every record. Scan all custody records, vet records, signed releases, and any other relevant paperwork to the intake email.
- Place original Animal Custody Record on the cage or in the bin next to the printer if the animal is not in the shelter, any vaccinations or treatments (i.e. flea medication) given need to be annotated on the Animal Custody Record.
- All citizen information shall be redacted from the intake sheets after it has been scanned to intake and prior to being hung on the animal's cage.

## Medical Attention List

For animals with minor medical needs, ACOs will place them on the Medical Attention dry erase board in the vet suite regardless of whether the vet staff is working or not. ACOs will place a purple medical attention card on the animal's kennel along with the animal's intake sheet.

If an ACO wishes to follow up with an animal's medical status and that animal is no longer listed on the Medical Attention Board, the ACO should utilize PISTOL to check for updated notes. It should be noted that there is about a 1 day delay in the entry of notes reflecting in PISTOL. The ACO should only inquire to the vet staff about the animal if the request is of high importance.

## Necropsy

There will be circumstances where a necropsy is required to develop evidence in a criminal investigation. Once an ACO has determined that a necropsy may be necessary, a supervisor shall be consulted. The City veterinarian shall be consulted as soon as possible in these cases, which will be done by the AEU Supervisor.

*Prepared and updated by the City of Virginia Beach Police Department – Special Operations and Animal Control Original: 08-29-2012 - Effective: 08-29-2020 - Amends: 10-23-2019 - Review: 2020*

When submitting an animal for necropsy the following procedures will be followed:

- When an ACO feels a necropsy is needed, the ACO shall place the animal in a bag and in the HD fridge, including the appropriate label on the bag. The ACO shall then send an email to the AEU Supervisors indicating the reason they feel the animal needs to be necropsied and a copy of the PD-18 report. The AEU Supervisor will then determine if a necropsy is in fact critical to the prosecution of the case and relay the need to the shelter veterinarian via email and necropsy log in the vet suite.
- If the animal is not going to be immediately delivered for necropsy, then the ACO shall consult with an AEU supervisor regarding containment.
- Animals needing to be held as evidence after necropsy shall be secured after consulting with an AEU supervisor.

## Pet Shops

ACO's will inspect pet shops. The follow process is followed:

- 1) Inspection is done by a ACO
- 2) The Unit's Police LT. will verify the shop has a valid business license through the Commissioner of the Revenue.
- 3) The owner/or manager of the shop will need to request documentation from the VA. Department of Taxation which states the business is in good standing.
- 4) The tax documentation will be emailed to the Unit's Police LT.
- 5) After all the above is complete, the manager/owner is responsible to go to services and complete the Pet Shop License Application and background investigation request. Both of these require a payment.
- 6) Once the Unit's Police LT. reviews the background investigation and there are no issues, a Pet Shop License will be issued and delivered to the business.
  - a. If the shop sells dogs, they require a second inspection mid-year.

## Rabies

An obligation of the Animal Enforcement Unit is mitigating the risks to the general public in regards to the spread of rabies through outbreaks and exposures.

- The following species found in Virginia Beach have been classified as “High-Risk Rabies Carriers.”
  - Raccoons
  - Foxes
  - Bats
  - Feral cats, (though not considered wildlife they are a significant rabies vector.)
- The Virginia Department of Health provides regular training to members of the AEU to enhance our ability to properly recognize the signs of rabies and to respond appropriately to evidence an animal is rabid.

More information can be found at: <http://www.vdh.state.va.us/epidemiology/DEE/Rabies/>

- Exposure protocols are more clearly described elsewhere in this Field Guide (p.22)
- ACOs at times will be required to take animals into custody subsequent to an exposure. These animals will either be quarantined or humanly euthanized in accordance with City Code 5-206 and §3.2-6562.1 in the Code of Virginia.
- ACOs will at times be required to prepare an animal for rabies testing by the Health Department.

*Prepared and updated by the City of Virginia Beach Police Department – Special Operations and Animal Control Original: 08-29-2012 - Effective: 08-29-2020 - Amends: 10-23-2019 - Review: 2020*

- Appropriate PPE will be worn when preparing a specimen for testing. The specimen will be placed in a red biohazard bag for testing.

## Release by Owner

ACOs investigating circumstances where a citizen wishes to relinquish ownership will determine if any practical alternatives can be offered. The safety of owners, the public and the animal will be evaluated when determining the best course to follow.

- If the owner is certain that the surrender is the best course, the ACO will facilitate that process filling out the owner release form (PD 933-2) and provide a copy to the owner.
- The ACO will be responsible for ensuring reasonable steps were taken to confirm the surrendering party is the sole owner (city license check, CADS and PISTOL checks)
- The ACO will complete the owner turn-in portion of the animal custody record and follow impound procedures.
- Proof of ownership is required prior to surrendering an animal and shall be noted on the release form by the ACO. ACOs will check for the following two types of ownership:
  - 1.) Proof that the owner resides in Virginia Beach:
    - a. Bill or lease with a Virginia Beach address
    - b. Driver's license or ID card with a Virginia Beach address
  - 2.) Proof of ownership:
    - a. City Animal License
    - b. Rabies Vaccine
    - c. Veterinarian paperwork
    - d. Pictures of the animal
    - e. Other evidence in the home supporting that the animal does in fact belong to the owner (when no other proof is available) and can be articulated by the ACO at the scene.
- A flow chart is located on **Page 32** of this Directive to better detail the procedures involved.

## Safety Procedures

Safety equipment shall be used at all necessary times and its use is not optional. Seatbelts, protective gear, and best practices are to be employed consistent with existing training and policies. All members are expected to be vigilant for unsafe procedures and to make suggestions regarding improving practices. All unsafe practices and all injuries are to be reported immediately to a supervisor.

## Search Warrants

ACOs and supervisors will follow all directions found in the VBPD Search Warrant Execution Field Guide. The following will outline specific procedures ACOs are to follow when situations arise that may require a search warrant.

- Promptly advise a supervisor or lieutenant when you are working a case or investigation that may require a search warrant. When a 24 hour notice has been placed at a residence, the ACO placing the notice will send both AEU supervisors as well as the AEU assigned Police Lieutenant assigned to ACAC an email regarding the case. Doing so will ensure that a supervisor is available for the pending search warrant.

- When placing yellow door seals, the self-adhesive side of the seal should be used to place the seal onto the door. No other adhesive should be used. The information on the seal should be written legibly with a permanent marker. The seal should be placed halfway on the door and halfway onto the frame.
- Search Warrant Checklist will be completed by ACO and turned into Supervisor, prior to affidavit being written.
- When probable cause has been established to obtain a search warrant, provide that information to the on duty supervisor. The supervisor will evaluate the information and if needed assist in drafting the affidavit.
- An affidavit must be reviewed/approved by a supervisor prior to submitting to the magistrate.
- The ACO may proceed to the magistrate with the approved affidavit to obtain a search warrant.
- The ACOs and supervisors will follow all directions found in the VBPD Search Warrant Execution Field Guide.
- AEU Supervisor will update the Lt.
- Once the search warrant is obtained, either an AC or Police supervisor will review the search warrant, and coordinate with a police supervisor who will assist in managing the execution of the search warrant. The AC supervisor will also respond to the location.
- ACOs and supervisors will follow the guidance of the police supervisor on scene in executing the warrant. The police officer who executes the warrant will be responsible for filing the document in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.
- All items seized shall be listed on the warrant seizure inventory. A copy of the warrant and the inventory will be left at the search location. Items seized with the animal should be listed on the animal intake form also (this is done too for a search without a search warrant form).
- After the search has been executed and completed, a copy of the affidavit, the search warrant and the initial ICS report will be provided to the lieutenant by the supervisor on-scene.
- Following the search warrant being certified by the Clerk of Circuit Court, the ACO will need to obtain a certified copy of the search warrant.

## Seizure of Animals for Court Hearings

Animals may be seized by an ACO and held for court at the Animal Care and Adoption Center for the following violations:

- Control of Dangerous or Vicious Dog
- Inadequate Care
- Animal Cruelty
- Dog Fighting
- Rooster fighting

Once an ACO has established an animal seizure is needed they are to advise the on duty Animal Control Supervisor.

The seizure form, PD965-3, shall be filled out by the ACO and include the animals name, if known, the color of the animal, breed, sex (if female and unknown if it's spayed or not spayed),



any unborn offspring should be included also for female animals, and the intake number. This form is provided to the owner or posted at the address the animal is seized from.

- The ACO shall submit an email to the AEU and Shelter Supervisors, with the following information:
  - Owner's name
  - Animal's Identification Number
  - Reason for Seizure (Holding on Show Cause or Dangerous/Vicious charges )
  - Court Date
  - The email should include the involved animal (s) Animal Intake ID# in the subject line
- A copy of the show cause and/or criminal charges should be placed in the turn in box.
- It will be the responsibility of the ACO to inform the AEU supervisors of any changes in the status of the case (i.e. owner signed a release, appeals, final disposition, etc.) as soon as they occur. The AEU Supervisors shall notify shelter staff with relevant updates and the final court disposition.
- A Court Order Request form (PD-967) shall be completed for the following:
  - Dangerous Dog
  - Vicious Dog
  - Violations of Dangerous Dog
  - Nuisance Animal
  - Animal Cruelty
  - Inadequate Care

(See section on Court Orders for further instruction pg. 8)

- In the matter of Petition for Show Cause cases an AEU Supervisor will obtain a certified copy of the show cause.
- Court cases for animals awarded to VBAC by the courts will be verified (by phone call to the clerk of GDC and by court website) by the ACO on day 11 and send notification to the AEU Supervisors. An AEU Supervisor will then verify the case status on day 15, by email confirmation from the GDC clerk and by printing a copy of the court case from the courts website. All of this will be tracked on the Court Hold Tracking form and sent to the VBAC Shelter Director at the time of completion.

## Stray or At-Large Animals

The following steps are to be followed in the event an ACO takes a stray domestic animal into custody. Per State code 3.2-6546 owners should be notified within 48 hours of impound; however, it is the AEU's practice to notify owners immediately or as soon as possible after pickup or impoundment.

- ACOs are to take reasonable steps to identify and notify the owners of stray animals in our custody. These methods include the canvassing of citizens, examining for microchips, tags, tattoos, and or other markings. ACOs are expected to document on the intake sheet (PD 906) their efforts to identify animals and notify the owners. If the animal and its owner can be identified, ACOs are also expected to take reasonable steps to determine if the animal has a current city license, a current rabies vaccine, and whether there is any relevant history of bites or previous violations associated with the animal or the owners.
- Whether the animal is returned before or after impoundment, the ACO taking initial custody is responsible for ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to investigate and appropriately address any violations. While other ACOs may be enlisted to assist with follow up investigation, the initial ACO will be the "lead" officer responsible for taking out appropriate charges. A Animal Custody Record will be completed with all of the animal and owners information if the animal is placed on the ACO's truck.

- When the identity of an owner can be established in the field, ACOs are expected to take reasonable steps to return the animal without impounding it, if practical
- Where practical, ACOs will post an “Impound Notice” advising the owner of the status of the animal taken into custody when notice cannot be given personally. If the animal is removed from a vehicle, a residence, or a hotel room, notice will be placed in a prominent location the owner is likely to see. A copy of this notice shall be scanned along with the custody record. Relevant updates regarding communication or attempts to communicate with the owner will be noted on the animal’s electronic record.
- In some instances it may be necessary to provide a written “Impound Notice” to an owner when notification is made in person, this is most likely to happen in cases of arrest of the owner.
- Allowing livestock to run at large is also a criminal offense. These cases pose unique challenges in that capturing and impounding livestock requires unique skills and facilities. ACOs receive training in these skills and can call upon additional resources to conduct large or technical rescues. The new Animal Care and Adoption Center contains facilities to hold livestock. If livestock must be impounded, a supervisor should be consulted.
- Case notes that are attached to the custody record should indicate clearly what follow up is required for the animal’s well-being and for the progress of any pending investigation.

## Summonses

When issuing a Virginia Uniform Summons, ACOs will follow all related Police Department Directives; specifically the instructions provided in Chapter 3 of the VBPD Field Reporting Manual.

1. The following are the procedures for misdemeanor offenses not occurring in the presence of the ACO, if the ACO locates witnesses to a violation the following procedure shall be followed:
  - The ACO will explain the process of obtaining a magistrate summons and assist them if needed; or,
  - If the ACO has established probable cause exists for the violation, then the ACO will seek to obtain the magistrate summons and subpoena the appropriate witness(es) to testify.

## Summonses, Warrants, and Magistrate Summons

Once charges are secured through a magistrate, special procedures apply in serving the summons or warrant to the accused.

- In cases of non-permitted arrest warrants (those requiring physical arrest), ACOs will leave the paperwork with the magistrate for service by a police officer.
- For permitted arrest warrants and summons (those for which physical arrest is not necessary), the ACO will serve the summons unless extenuating circumstances exist such as a safety concern. In these cases the paperwork shall be served by a police officer.

The ACO shall write their IBR number on the top of all copies of the summons/warrant prior to leaving them with the Magistrate. **The ACO should request a copy of the summons from the Magistrate and placed in the turn in box in the AEU office.**

### Sending Magistrate Summons/Warrant to services:

- Ask Magistrate for 4 copies of the summons/warrant (3 will go to services, 1 will come back with you and be placed in the turn in box)

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- When reviewing the paperwork, write the related IBR number on the top of all 4 copies

#### **ACO serving Magistrate Summons/Warrant:**

- Write the IBR number on the top of all copies of the summons/warrant.
- Check summons/warrants in with:
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> precinct PDO
  - OR
  - Services at the 1<sup>st</sup> precinct
- Serve warrant/summonses
- Complete the worksheet provided at check in
- Complete PD-180 on each person (up to 5 charges to the same person can be entered on 1 PD-180)
- Return summonses/warrants and worksheet to :
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> precinct PDO
  - OR
  - Services at the 1<sup>st</sup> precinct
- Return PD-180 to:
  - PDO at the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> precinct
- **Place the 4<sup>th</sup> copy of the summons in the turn in box in the AEU office.**

Once a magistrate summons has been obtained, every attempt should be made to have the paperwork served. If the magistrate summons cannot be served during one shift, it should be left in the appropriate zone box to be passed on to the next shift.

**No officer shall take a summons/warrant home with them or hold the paperwork when off duty.**

### **Traps**

Traps are one of the best tools available to capture domestic animals, feral cats, and wildlife in various circumstances. Trapping is controlled by various laws, regulations and best practices.

Guidance regarding the trapping of wildlife is provided by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and can be found at [www.statehuntandfishregs.com/VAHUNT/pageflip.html](http://www.statehuntandfishregs.com/VAHUNT/pageflip.html). No Traps are to be kept in the shelter garage, if it is a city owned trap it is to be placed on the animal control truck, or in the shelter trap yard. If it is a citizen trap to be returned it is to be kept in the shelter trap yard until it is returned clean.

- Citizens seeking traps for cat related issues will have a case entered for an officer to respond and determine if a trap is the appropriate solution. If so a green trap should be used and a Trap Agreement for (PD997-2) should be completed and the trap tracked out through Pistol.
- ACOs may leave a red city trap with the property owner/resident in situations where there is a sick/injured animal or where an exposure has occurred. A Trap Agreement (PD 997-2) shall be completed each time. Regardless of how the trap is laid, domestic species (including feral cats) must be turned over to the control of an ACO either by driving the trapped animal to the shelter or by requesting the assistance of an ACO to respond and service the trap.
- ACOs will be expected to respond to service traps that contain wildlife, as citizens are not able to transport wildlife. ACO's shall monitor the number of times healthy wildlife are trapped and

removed from an address, as the city has a limit of six healthy wildlife that Animal Control will service. Officers should add comments to each case indicating the number of wildlife, and notification provided to trappers.

- Traps owned by a citizen shall be marked with the owners' last name, address and phone number, and will be returned as soon as practicable by the ACO.
- ACOs will remain vigilant for circumstances where trapped animals are treated cruelly or released in a manner contrary to law.
- When an ACO retrieves a city trap from a property the trap should be tracked back into Pistol. If the citizen still needs the trap, the officer will do the following options (in both cases the trap number needs to be entered in the CAD case comments):
  - When the trap is picked up with an animal in it and they still need it for trapping, the officer will unload the trap and return that specific trap to the citizen.
  - Or: The trap that is picked up it is checked back into PISTOL, and a new trap and Trap Agreement Form (PD977-2) is completed.
- All unused traps are to be stored in the locked trap yard outside of the VBACAC building.

## Treatment Records

- Any animal placed on medications must have a Treatment Record to communicate the animal's medical needs to the Shelter Veterinarian. A completed Treatment Record must include:
  - Animal ID #
  - Location of Animal
  - Name of medication / Dosage
  - The number of days medication is to be given. The dates medication will be given must be written out down on the sheet for all days ahead of time and not on a day to day basis. This will allow us to see how many more days of treatment an animal is scheduled for at a glance.
  - Medication should be placed in a bag with ID# on the label and placed on the clipboard with the Animal Custody Record for that animal. If the medication requires refrigeration the bag should be placed in the refrigerator in the Vet Suite and a note be made on treatment sheet as to the medicine location.
  - A "Has Meds" sign will be placed on the animal's cage

## Use of Force by ACOs

ACOs may encounter aggressive animals; ACOs are expected to use only that force which is reasonable and necessary to protect themselves, others and the animal. ACOs are governed in their application of force by VBPD General Order 5.01 and by the specific mandates discussed in the training provided to ACOs. ACOs may, in rare circumstances be required to defend themselves against human violence in the commission of their duties. ACOs are not authorized to use force to affect an arrest but are governed by VBPD General Order 5.01 and their training. If an ACO is involved in a force encounter with a citizen, the police are to be dispatched immediately and a supervisor is to be notified.

- ACOs will report force they use in the performance of their duties through the Blue Team reporting mechanism. For the purposes of mandatory reporting, force against animals will be considered any deadly force, and any striking.
- ACOs will take the protection of nearby citizens as a high priority when deciding to or refraining from using force.

- ACOs will examine any animal that force was used on to determine if medical treatment is necessary.

## Veterinary Records

Any animals that have been to an outside veterinary clinic and return with veterinary records should be evaluated by the City Veterinarian. The veterinary records should be labelled with the animal's Intake ID # and scanned with the copy of the Animal Custody Record and placed on the clipboard together. The animal's Intake ID # should be logged on the Vet treatment clipboard, and have a "Needs Vet Attention" sign place on the cage.

## Weapons

Animal Control Officers are required to carry their department-issued weapons while on duty. Animal Control Officers are required to complete firearms training in accordance with the standards of the Virginia Beach Police Academy or equivalent academy with approval of the Commanding Officer of Personnel Development and Training. Additionally, Animal Control Officers are required to requalify with all issued weapons in accordance with re-qualification standards for Police officers established by Professional Development and Training and General Order 5.02 (Weapons.).

With the prior approval of the Commanding Officer, Bureau of Animal Control, Animal Control Officers may qualify with the department issued shotgun in accordance with qualifications established by PD&T. Only those Animal Control Officers who are approved and qualified may use the department issued 20 gauge shotgun to humanely dispose of dangerous or injured animals. Animal Control Officers will not carry Department issued weapons while off duty.

With the prior approval of the Commanding Officer, Bureau of Animal Control, Animal Control Officers may qualify with the department issued shotgun in accordance with qualifications established by PD&T. Only those Animal Control Officers who are approved and qualified may use the department issued 20 gauge shotguns to humanely dispose of dangerous or injured.

- Use of the shotgun shall be authorized by a supervisor when no other immediate means of capture of a suspected rabid animal are available and it is necessary to prevent exposure to the public and/or the ACO.
- The ACO shall follow all appropriate safety precautions to ensure that a firearms discharge will not result in injury to any person or property.

## Discharge of Weapons

- Whenever an ACO discharges any department firearm, other than in training:
  1. The dispatcher will be made aware that the officer discharged the weapon to document the time in CAD and to notify a police supervisor on duty in that zone.
  2. An IBR number will be assigned to the case.
  3. A Use of Force report shall be completed by the ACO prior to the end of the ACO's shift and submitted to their supervisor via Blue Team.

## Wildlife

In that part of the AEU's mission is to provide education and support to the public, ACOs will be called upon at various times to educate the public about safe and productive wildlife management. It is the position of AEU that healthy wildlife generally constitutes no threat to public safety and thus should not be interfered with. When an ACO responds to a report of a healthy wild animal in a trap they are to refer to the process outlined in the Trap section of this Field Guide (pg. 31).

If an ACO picks up wildlife during the course of their shift and the ACO wishes to take the animal to a wildlife rehabber, it is the ACO's responsibility to do so. If the ACO still has the animal in their custody at the end of their shift, the ACO will need to euthanize the animal.

