

JERSEY CODE OF PRACTICE FOR WELFARE OF ANIMALS KEPT IN SANCTUARIES

THE CODE

The Code of recommendations for the welfare of animals kept in rescue centres is intended to encourage those responsible for looking after these animals to adopt the highest standards of husbandry. It takes account of five basic needs, known as the "Five Freedoms".

The Five Freedoms are:

1. FREEDOM FROM HUNGER AND THIRST

- by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour;

2. FREEDOM FROM DISCOMFORT

- by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area;

3. FREEDOM FROM PAIN, INJURY OR DISEASE

- by prevention or by rapid diagnosis and treatment;

4. FREEDOM TO EXPRESS NORMAL BEHAVIOUR

- by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals' own kind;

5. FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND DISTRESS

- by ensuring conditions and treatment to avoid mental suffering.

INTRODUCTION

1. The paramount aim of any animal rescue organisation must be the welfare of the animals in their care.

STARTING A NEW RESCUE CENTRE

2. For those considering starting a *new* rescue centre that will care for dogs, cats or other species, the following points should be considered:

3. Is there a need for such a charity? If a local or national charity already exists, it may be better to develop liaison with it rather than starting a new organisation.

4. Have Trustees and competent staff who are committed to provide full time care with sufficient knowledge about the care of dogs, cats or other species been nominated?

5. Can sufficient funds be found to sustain the charity?

HOUSING

6. Specific animal housing, husbandry and management recommendations, requirements and practices for individual species should be followed as stipulated in the applicable Codes of Practice, such as the Codes of Practice for breeding guinea

pigs, breeding rabbits, pet shops, cat and dog breeders and cat and dog boarding establishments.

7. In the case of exotic animals, such as reptiles (example - snakes, iguanas, lizards), chelonians (example- tortoises and terrapins) and amphibians (example – frogs), particular care should be taken to ensure that their individual, species specific environmental requirements are met at all times; suitable ventilation, relative humidity, temperature and lighting (including additional access to a suitable ultraviolet light source if appropriate for that species) must be provided. All chelonians should have access to fresh water for drinking and bathing.

Bedding

8. Animals must be provided with a suitable area with adequate bedding to allow the animal to lie comfortably.

Temperature

9. The sleeping accommodation must be capable of being maintained at an ambient temperature appropriate for the species and breed.

Lighting

10. The accommodation must be adequately lit, by natural daylight with adequate supplementary artificial lighting to allow proper working and cleaning of compartments.

Ventilation

11. A draught free atmosphere must be maintained in the sleeping quarters of the animals with an adequate number of air changes, where applicable.

MANAGEMENT

Cleanliness

12. The accommodation and ancillary establishment, kitchen, corridors, runs etc must be maintained in a state of cleanliness conducive to maintenance of disease control and animal comfort. All excreta and soiled material should be removed at least once daily or as necessary for the species, from all living and exercise compartments and disposed of in an appropriate manner. The floors of the living compartment must be clean and dry. Care must be taken to protect animals from disinfectant poisoning associated with cleaning routines.

Litter Trays

13. Cats must be provided at all times with adequate litter trays. Facilities must be provided for the collection of all used bedding, cat litter and other waste material. 15. All material must be disposed of in an appropriate manner.

Routines

14. Animals must be adequately supplied with suitable food. Clean fresh drinking water must be available at all times and changed daily. Where bedding material is used it should be maintained in a clean and dry state. Moveable benches should be removed for thorough cleaning as necessary.

Exercise

15. All animals should have access to exercise on a daily basis and supervised if necessary. Staff should be encouraged to interact with the dogs, cats and other domestic animals as appropriate.

16. Precautions should be taken to minimise the risk of disease outbreak.

Grooming

17. All animals must be groomed regularly and care must be taken to ensure that the animals are free from parasitic infestation and the coats are free from matts.

RECORDS

18. A record must be kept containing a description of all animals received into the establishment, noting date of arrival and departure, and the name and address of the new owner. Records of veterinary treatment must also be kept. Records must be kept available for inspection at all times by an authorized person.

Supervision

19. Whilst animals are at the establishment there must always be a competent person available. Animals must be visited at suitable intervals for their health safety and welfare.

20. Special arrangements must also be made to attend to sick animals during the day and night.

Feeding Equipment and Storage

21. Feeding utensils must be satisfactorily cleaned or disposed of after each feed. A food preparation area must be provided and be separate from staff facilities. It must be kept clean and vermin free at all times. Refrigeration facilities must be provided where fresh foods are used. All bulk supplies of food must be kept in vermin proof containers.

VETERINARY CARE AND DISEASE CONTROL

22. All reasonable precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious disease among animals. Adequate isolation facilities must be provided.

23. Routine disinfecting of a cage or kennel at a change of occupancy should be adequate to protect the new occupant from the disease or parasites of its predecessor. A complete change and disinfection of bedding, water and feeding utensils is required.

24. Animals should be vaccinated, as appropriate for the species, to offer protection against infectious diseases. Veterinary advice should be sought.

25. Dogs accepted with an unknown vaccination history, for example stray dogs, must be kept separate, away from any vaccinated boarding animals.

26. Advice from a veterinary surgeon must be sought where an animal shows signs of disease, injury or illness. Where any animal is sick or injured, any instructions for its treatment, which have been given by a veterinary surgeon, must be strictly followed.

27. Treatment may be euthanasia. A competent person must ensure veterinary advice is followed.

28. Each organisation is required to nominate a veterinary surgeon who shall be responsible for the health of animals entering and resident within the centre. The veterinary surgeon should advise on prevention of disease, including vaccinations, and should explain the 'on-call' facilities for animals requiring veterinary care. All veterinary products must be stored, used and disposed of as directed by the Veterinary Surgeon.

29. Animals should be euthanased following veterinary advice, if their quality of life is such that continuance of life will cause unnecessary suffering.

STAFF TRAINING

30. Where an organisation has employees and volunteers, they should be fully trained according to the organisation's standard procedures. There should always be supervision and induction training for new staff; particularly those not experienced in animal handling.

EMERGENCIES/FIRE PREVENTION

31. Appropriate steps must be taken for the protection of all animals in case of fire or other emergencies.

32. A proper emergency evacuation plan and fire warning procedure must be drawn up in consultation with the Fire Safety Officer and posted on the premises.

33. Fire fighting equipment must be provided in accordance with advice given by the Fire Safety Officer

34. All electrical installations and appliances must be maintained in a safe condition.

35. Heating appliances must not be sited in a location or manner where they may present a risk of fire, or risk to animals.

36. Precautions must be taken to prevent any accumulation of materials which may present a risk of fire.

37. There must be adequate means of raising the alarm in the event of fire or other emergency.

TRANSPORT

38. Vehicles should be suitable for transportation of animals, ensuring the safety of animals in transit as well as ensuring suitable restraint.

39. Animals must be transported suitably and appropriately for the individual species and should not be left unattended in vehicles. There should be adequate ventilation provided.

40. The interior of vehicles must be kept in a clean condition with strict attention to disease control.

41. Vehicles should be maintained to high standards and regularly serviced.

TRAINING OF ANIMALS

42. Any training of animals must be carried out by staff who have been trained in modern, positive reinforcement training techniques. It is expected that staff involved with training will have an understanding of the characteristics of each species and rely on reward and reward orientated stimuli to modify behaviour. The use of physical punishment apparatus, such as electric shock collars, should not be used.

43. Where possible each organisation should aim to provide an individual responsible for the evaluation and recommendation of positive behavioural programmes to enhance the opportunity for adoption of animals that exhibit behavioural or social difficulties.

REHOMING PRACTICES

The following procedures are advised when responsibly rehoming any animal.

44. The organisation must be committed to a high standard of responsible *rehoming Practices*.

45. All rescue organisations should aspire to a non-destruction policy of healthy animals.

46. Other than the requirement for euthanasia on humane grounds, euthanasia should only be recommended if extreme physical or behavioural conditions exist which make rehoming impossible. It is essential that euthanasia is carried out by or under the direction of a veterinary surgeon, using an approved method

Animal Assessment

47. Assess the characteristics of each particular animal in order to match it with the most suitable type of home.

Owner Assessment

48. Obtain information about the new owner and their family to ensure their circumstances and facilities fit the requirements of the animal they are about to rehome. Where necessary, visit the home of the new owner to ensure the facilities are suitable.

Animal Preparation

49. Ensure, where possible, that the animal has had a full veterinary examination, been fully vaccinated, is parasite free and has some form of identification, as appropriate for the species, prior to leaving the rescue centre.

Permanent Identification

50. In addition to current legislative requirements, consideration should be given to micro-chipping and keeping an appropriate database as the means of permanently identifying dogs and cats in the care of the organisation.

Neutering

51. Where possible the organisation should have the animal neutered and aim to promote and encourage neutering. Advice on the benefits and reasons for neutering should be given.

Owner Support

52. Provide advice to the new owner on any relevant details about the animal and its future care, both behavioural and veterinary. Advise that the organisation will take the animal back if the re-homing is unsuccessful.

PROVISIONS FOR WILDLIFE SPECIES

53. The welfare of the individual must be the prime consideration before embarking on treatment and rehabilitation. Although it is appropriate also to consider the conservation status of the species.

54. As a general principle, any wildlife casualty (that is any sick, injured or orphaned wild animal that is unable to survive in the wild without human intervention) retained for treatment at a wildlife rehabilitation unit or wildlife rescue centre should have a reasonable expectation of successful release and long term survival in the wild.

55. The 'Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2000' should be referred to for specific legal aspects of 'taking of wild animals', the release of wild animals and their welfare whilst in captivity.

56. The facilities of the centre and the expertise of the personnel should dictate the species, the ages, the total numbers and the types of casualties that can be handled.

57. Rescue centres and rehabilitation units should ensure that, if they are prepared to attend wildlife casualties in the field, they have suitable, well maintained equipment for the capture, restraint, first-aid and transportation of the species likely to be encountered and that all personnel are trained in the techniques involved.

58. At all times during handling and transportation of wildlife casualties, care must be taken to ensure that any additional stress to which the casualty is exposed is minimized, no further injury is sustained and the animal is secure from escape.

59. Facilities and trained personnel should be available in every centre to administer first-aid and to house a casualty in clean, secure, secluded and, if required, heated accommodation. A basic first aid kit should be available and maintained with the advice and assistance of the attending veterinary practice.

60. At all stages of treatment of a wildlife casualty, its welfare must be the prime concern. Each centre should have a close working relationship with a local veterinary practice.

61. Advice from a veterinary surgeon must be sought where an animal shows signs of disease, injury or illness. Where any animal is sick or injured, any instructions for its treatment, which have been given by a veterinary surgeon, must be followed. A competent person must ensure this advice is followed.

62. Careful thought must be given to the assessment of each case, its welfare whilst in captivity, its potential for release and, if appropriate, its long term care. An early assessment of the condition of a casualty and the nature and extent of its injuries or disease is essential to establish a programme of treatment. Such assessment requires, in most cases, the assistance of a veterinary surgeon.

63. The Centre's facilities and the staff's experience may be unsuitable for a particular species or type of treatment. Close links with other centres able to provide these

facilities and early referral of suitable cases will ensure the welfare of a casualty is not compromised.

64. Consideration must be given to protect personnel at a centre from injury whilst handling casualties and from the risk from infectious agents (zoonotic infection). Working practices and training should be designed to minimise such risks.

65. Dedicated facilities for the treatment of animals, preparation of animal food and washing of any animal bedding must be provided.

66. Accommodation for wildlife casualties should provide the following:

- Security from escape
- Seclusion from threatening sights sounds and smells
- Safety, to prevent the casualty from damaging itself
- Ability to provide food and water in containers that the casualty can reach and use, without excessive soiling.
- Provision for changing food and water containers with minimum disturbance to the casualty
- The provision of heat, where necessary, in a safe and controllable manner
- Provision to clean the floor and change any bedding with minimum disturbance to the casualty and to allow thorough physical cleaning and disinfection between patients

67. Following treatment, most casualties, especially long-term casualties, will require a period of convalescence in suitably sized accommodation (in which there is sufficient space to allow the casualty to exercise) which, as far as possible, will mimic the natural environment. Methods of feeding, watering and cleaning the accommodation should cause minimum disturbance to the occupant.

68. Every effort must be taken to prevent the imprinting of wildlife casualties onto human carers.

69. Facilities of a centre or experience of the staff may not be suitable for the convalescence phase for certain species. Close links with other centres able to provide these facilities will ensure the welfare of a casualty.

70. Before the release of any animal an assessment should be made of its ability to survive in the wild. Particular attention should be paid to locomotion, the casualty's senses, behaviour and physical condition.

71. Each rehabilitator should assess the ethics of keeping a permanently disabled casualty, taking into account advice from a suitably experienced veterinary surgeon; the animal's welfare should be the overriding consideration.

72. Permanent casualties should be assessed daily and records kept on their diet, health and veterinary treatment.

LEGISLATION

73. The following legislation is of relevance:

Animal Welfare (Jersey) Law 2004

Diseases of Animals (Jersey) Law 1958

Veterinary Surgeons (Jersey) Law 1999

Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2000

Diseases of Animal (Welfare in Transit) (Jersey) Order 2001

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