

# **JERSEY CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE WELFARE OF CATS IN BOARDING FACILITIES**

## **THE CODE**

The Code of recommendations for the welfare of cats in boarding facilities 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 AND 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.

## **HOUSING**

### **CATTERIES**

1. All exterior wood should be smooth and properly treated against wood rot. Only products which are not toxic to cats should be used.

2. All internal surfaces used in the construction of walls, floors, partitions, doors and door frames should be durable, smooth and impervious. There must be no projections or rough edges liable to cause injury.

3. Sleeping areas of units should be insulated to prevent extremes of temperature.

4. Fencing material must be secure and safe. There should be no projections or rough edges liable to cause injury.

5. The construction must be such that security of the cat is ensured.

6. All areas to which cats have free access must be roofed.

### **Walls**

7. The walls with which cats may come into contact should be of smooth impervious materials, capable of being easily cleansed. Where concrete or other building blocks or bricks are used, they should be sealed to be smooth and impervious, and resealed as necessary.

8. Junctions between vertical and horizontal sections should be covered. If impractical in existing premises, these joints should be sealed.
9. Full length and height sneeze barriers should be provided where the gap between units is less than 625 mm (2ft).

### **Floors and Concrete Bases**

10. The concrete base and floors of all buildings and units should be of smooth, impervious materials, capable of being easily cleansed. In new catteries, this should incorporate a damp proof membrane.
11. Floors of all units and individual exercise areas should be constructed and maintained to prevent pooling of liquids.

### **Ceilings and Roofing**

12. Ceilings should be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected.
13. All exercise areas and the external safety passages should be covered with mesh or equivalent.

### **Doors**

14. Doors must be strong enough to resist impact and scratching and must be fitted to be capable of being effectively secured.
15. Where metal edging is used, this must not present a risk of injury to the cat.
16. Construction should prevent and control the spread of infectious disease particularly by droplet infection.

### **Windows**

17. All windows which pose a security risk must be escape proof at all times.

### **Drainage**

18. Kitchens used for producing/preparing animal meals should be connected to mains drainage or an approved, local sewage disposal system.
19. Individual drainage is required in cases where the drain is inside the kennel to which the cat has access.

### **Lighting**

20. During daylight hours light must be provided to exercise and sleeping areas. Where practical this should be natural light.
21. Adequate supplementary lighting must be provided throughout the establishment.

### **Ventilation**

22. Ventilation must be provided to all interior areas without the creation of excessive localised draughts in the sleeping area.

### **Maintenance**

23. Maintenance and repair of the whole establishment must be carried out regularly and recorded.

## **SLEEPING AND EXERCISE FACILITIES**

24. In new constructions, each unit should have a sleeping area and an adjoining exercise area, which is exclusive to that unit.

25. In new constructions, each unit should be provided with a sleeping area of at least 0.85 sq. m (9 sq. ft) for one cat, 1.5 sq. m (16 sq. ft) for two cats, 1.85 sq. m (20 sq. ft) for up to four cats.

26. Units should have a minimum internal height of 1.8m (6ft) in the exercise area. The height of the sleeping area should be at least 3ft (91 cm) in existing units and 4ft (1.22m) in new buildings

27. Suitable clean bedding must be provided and must be capable of being easily cleaned and disinfected, if it is to be reused. Bedding material should be checked daily and maintained in a clean, parasite-free and dry condition.

28. In new construction, each unit should be provided with an exercise area of at least 1.7 sq. m (18 sq. ft) for a single cat; 2.23 sq. m (24 sq. ft) for two cats; 2.78 sq. m (30 sq. ft) for up to 4 cats.

29. Units should open into secure areas so that cats are not able to escape from the premises.

30. Exercise areas to which there should be direct and voluntary access, must not be used as sleeping areas.

### **KITCHEN FACILITIES**

31. In cases where more than six cats are boarded, exclusive facilities, hygienically constructed and maintained, must be provided for the storage and preparation of food for the cats.

32. Where fresh and cooked meats are stored, refrigeration facilities must be provided. Food contamination must be avoided.

33. A sink with hot and cold water must be provided for washing food equipment and eating and drinking bowls. A separate wash-hand basin with hot and cold water should be provided for staff use.

34. Containers must be provided for storage of foods. These should be vermin proof and capable of cleaning and disinfection.

### **ISOLATION FACILITIES**

35. Isolation facilities must be provided.

36. When any cat is showing signs of or has been diagnosed with an infectious disease, it must be isolated.

37. These isolation facilities must comply with the other requirements but must be physically isolated from the main units. The separation must be a minimum 3m (10ft).

38. Adequate facilities and practices to prevent spread of infectious disease between the isolation unit and other units must be in place. A disposable overall or boiler suit for use solely in the isolation unit is recommended. Hands must be washed after leaving the isolation facilities.

### **MANAGEMENT**

39. The maximum number of cats to be boarded at any one time must be appropriate for the facilities.

40. Each cat must be provided with a separate unit except cats from the same household who may share a unit of adequate size at the owner's request. Cats from different households must not be mixed at any time.

41. A spare emergency unit of the same specification, for holding animals temporarily, may be available.

42. Stray cats must not be accepted.

### **Temperature in Units**

43. Heating facilities must be available in the unit and used according to the requirements of the individual cat.

44. Sleeping area temperature should be in the range 15° -26°C.

45. Extremes of temperature should be avoided.

46. In isolation units, there should be a means of maintaining the temperature at a level suitable for the conditions of the cat and dependent on veterinary advice.

### **Cleanliness**

47. All areas must be kept clean and free from dirt and dust in order to maintain disease control and cat comfort.

48. Each occupied unit must be cleaned daily. All excreta and soiled material must be removed from areas used by cats at least daily and more often if necessary.

49. All bedding areas must be kept clean and dry.

50. Suitably sited litter trays, which are impermeable and easy to clean, must be provided. These must be emptied and cleaned at least once a day and more frequently if necessary throughout the day. A suitable material for litter must be provided.

51. Each unit must be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected and dried upon vacation. All fittings and bedding must also be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at that time.

52. Facilities must be provided for the proper reception, storage and disposal of all waste. Particular care should be taken to segregate clinical waste arising from the treatment and handling of cats with infectious diseases. Clinical waste must be incinerated.

53. Measures to control the risks from rodents, insects and other pests must be undertaken without endangering the health or welfare of the cats.

### **Food and water**

54. All cats must be adequately supplied with suitable food. At least two meals a day should be offered approximately eight hours apart. Fresh, clean water must be available at all times and changed daily.

55. Eating and drinking bowls must be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected. Disposable eating dishes may be used.

56. Eating bowls must be cleaned or disposed of after each meal.

57. Drinking bowls must be cleaned at least once a day.

## **RECORDS**

58. A register must be kept of all cats boarded. The information kept must include the following and should be managed in accordance with the Data Protection (Jersey) Law 2018:

- date of arrival
- name of cat, and any identification such as microchip number or tattoo
- description, breed, age and gender of cat
- name, address and telephone number of owner or keeper
- name, address and telephone number of emergency contact person
- name, address and telephone number of cat's veterinary surgeon
- anticipated and actual date of departure
- health, welfare and nutrition requirements
- vaccination status

59. The register must be kept readily available for a minimum of 24 months

60. Where records are computerised, a back-up copy must be kept.

### **Identification of units**

61. Each unit must be clearly identified. Relevant information about the cat in the unit should be readily available.

### **Supervision**

62. A fit and proper person must always be available to exercise supervision and deal with emergencies.

63. Cats must be visited at regular intervals as necessary for their health, safety and welfare.

### **Disease Control and Vaccination**

64. Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious and contagious disease and parasites amongst cats, staff and visitors.

65. Proof must be provided that cats boarded or resident have current vaccinations against infectious feline diseases. Your veterinary surgeon's advice should be sought and followed. The course of vaccination must have been completed in accordance with manufacturers' instructions or veterinary advice. A record of current vaccination status should be kept. Any cat which is not vaccinated must not be accepted.

66. Advice from a veterinary surgeon must be sought in case of signs of disease, injury or illness. Any instructions given by a veterinary surgeon must be strictly followed.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

67. A written training policy should be provided. Staff training records should be kept.

## **EMERGENCIES/FIRE PREVENTION**

68. Appropriate steps must be taken for the protection of the cats in case of fire or other emergencies. Use of a smoke detector is recommended.

69. 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.

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

71. All electrical installations and appliances must be maintained in a safe condition. There should be a residual current circuit breaker system on each block of units.

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

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

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

## **TRANSPORT**

75. All vehicles used by the establishment for the transportation of animals must be regularly serviced and kept clean. They must be fitted with cages of adequate size for the safe transportation of animals and be provided with adequate ventilation. All vehicles must be secure and should not be left unattended when transporting animals, except for loading and unloading.

## **LEGISLATION**

76. The following legislation is of relevance:

- Animal Welfare (Jersey) Law 2004
- Animal Health (Jersey) Law 2016
- Veterinary Surgeons (Jersey) Law 1999

**05-03 AWC (31/01/07) (legislation amended 19/10/17)**