

City of Hampton
Animal Control
Administrative Guidelines

Title: <p style="text-align:center">Animal Cruelty Investigations</p>	Guideline Number: <p style="text-align:center">OP-108</p>
References: Hampton City Code Chapter 5	Date Issued: <p style="text-align:center">May 2006</p>

I. Purpose

To describe investigative considerations associated with animal cruelty cases, and to suggest procedural and case management steps in the investigation process, which will enhance the possibility of a satisfactory outcome from the humane, public policy, and legal perspectives.

II. Policy

Hampton Animal Control shall thoroughly and professionally investigate all allegations of animal cruelty and/or neglect, to intervene as provided by law and enforce the law when necessary those cases in which the welfare or lives of animals are in jeopardy. Attempts should be made to work with the owner towards the betterment of the animal's condition through education and/or referrals for outside agencies and resources.

III. Procedure

- A. All officers shall be familiar with and have working knowledge of the applicable state laws and city ordinances regarding animal welfare and animal cruelty.
- B. Requirments imposed on owners, commonly referred to as “**duties of owner**”, and the definitions associated with them establish minimum standards for owners, caregivers and custodians with respect to the provision of basic animal care and sustenance.
- C. Officers on scene of cruelty/neglect complaints should first determine if the animal's safety, health and/or life is in immediate jeopardy.
- D. In cases where the animals safety, health and/or life is not in immediate jeopardy, and in the officer's judgement, the passage of a specific time period will not materially threaten the animals welfare, the posting of a **Notice** may be appropriate. A follow-up, at the conclusion of the specific and relevant time period is crucial to the success of the officer's effort and may be crutial in terms of the animals welfare as well.
- E. In cases where the animal's safety, health and/or life is in immediate jeoopardy, the officer should impound the animal as provided for in state law. An Impoundment Notice must be completed and served on the owner or posted as provided for in accordance with statue. The officer will notify the immediate supervisor prior to impounding any animal. If the supervisor cannot be contacted, an Animal Control Officer II may be contacted and/ or the officer may impound the animal only if the totality of the situation is taken into consideration.
- F. In all cases where an animal is impounded, the officer will take the animal for evaluation and/or treatment to a veterinary hospital and obtain a copy of the doctor's report. The officer is responsible for retrieving any bills accumulated prior to their court date for restitution.

- G. An IBR will be completed for all animals impounded and any potential complaints which may lead to animal cruelty charges.
- H. Photographs are essential to cruelty and neglect complaints. Officers will photograph any impounded animal and if possible, the conditions for which the animal was maintained. Other complaints should be photographed as determined by the officer to document changes in the animal or conditions for possible future cruelty charges.

Authorized by: 	Revision Date: September 15, 2011
---	--------------------------------------