



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY GARRISON, WEST POINT
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WEST POINT, NY 10996-1514

AMIM-MLG-ZA (200)

15 November 2023

U.S. ARMY GARRISON WEST POINT POLICY #24

SUBJECT: Stray Animal Control Policy

1. REFERENCES.

a. DoDI 4150.07, DoD Pest Management, dated 29 May 2008.

b. AR 40-905, SECNAVINST 6401.1B/AFI 48-131, Veterinary Health Services, dated 29 August 2006.

c. Technical Guide No. 37, Integrated Management of Stray Animals on Military Installations, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment, dated 25 May 2012.

d. New York Consolidated Laws, Agriculture and Markets Law - AGM § 355. Abandonment of Animals, and § 374. Humane Destruction or Other Disposition of Animals Lost, Strayed, Homeless, Abandoned or Improperly Confined or Kept, dated 1 January 2021.

2. PURPOSE. The purpose of this document is to establish the local policy and procedures governing the management and control of stray or feral cats and dogs on this Installation as well as to present clear ownership responsibilities of cats and dogs brought onto West Point to prevent any increase to stray and feral populations. This policy is necessary to protect the health, safety and harmonious coexistence of personnel, their family members, and their animals on this Installation. The management of cats and dogs, though relegated to installation Pest Management by Army policy, is inherently different than the management of those mammalian species traditionally designated as pests (i.e. rats and mice, bats, raccoons, etc.). The handling of domestic animals is governed under Agricultural and Markets law and veterinary practice whereas wildlife and pest management programs are governed by Environmental law. Permitting and allowable practices may vary significantly between the two systems as does the societal mores associated with the management of what are understood by the public as companion animals.

3: APPLICABILITY. This policy is applicable to all persons entering the West Point Installation.

4. RESPONSIBILITY.

a. Garrison Commander will:

(1) Ensure that stray animals are controlled on the Installation to protect the health, morale and welfare of Installation personnel and their pets; protect wildlife; prevent damage to Government property; and effect mission accomplishment.

(2) Establish an Installation policy that prohibits Installation personnel from providing food, water or shelter to stray or wild animals, excluding wild birds, and provides sanctions for non-compliance.

(3) Establish an Installation policy that prohibits personnel from tampering with or releasing captured uncontrolled cats or dogs from lawfully set traps and provides sanctions for non-compliance.

(4) Establish an Installation policy outlining the responsibilities of residents for the proper care and maintenance of their pets, with sanctions for non-compliance.

b. Directorate of Public Works (DPW) will:

(1) Fund and resource the Pest Control program and contract as the primary means of managing feral domestic animals on Garrison managed property. The DPW Natural Resources Branch, Garrison Pest Control staff, or the Provost Marshal may assist with animal capture as necessary. All personnel attempting to capture feral animals shall be adequately trained in the safe and humane use of capture techniques, shall employ appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and shall be familiar with the inherent risks involved with handling animals and offered rabies pre-exposure prophylaxis. At West Point stray and feral cats tend to be the species of greatest concern. Historically, the management of free roaming, un-owned dogs has not been required at West Point. Occasional capture of loose dogs may be required in order to assist the owner.

(2) Through the Pest Management Program: Establish an Installation Integrated Pest Management Plan that includes an Uncontrolled Cat and Dog Control Program which defines procedures for the humane capture, management, and disposition of stray animals, and identifies and delineates the responsibilities of Installation activities such as, but not limited to, Veterinary Services, Public Health, military law enforcement, Public Affairs and Facilities Engineers/Public Works that are required for the implementation of this program.

(3) Through DPW Family Housing:

(a) Provide all personnel owning cats or dogs, at the time they are assigned Family housing, with the Commander's policy pertaining to the proper care and maintenance of their cat or dog and stray animal control. Family housing occupants must notify the Housing Office if they later obtain a cat or dog and register the pet(s) with the Veterinary Treatment Facility within 30 days. Upon receipt of that notification, the Housing Office will provide the housing occupants with the Commander's policy for proper care and maintenance of their pet.

(b) Ensure that all privately owned animals residing in housing have been registered with the Veterinary Treatment Facility within the first 30 days of arrival.

(c) Emphasize to pet owners that failure to comply with the Commander's or Balfour Beatty Communities (BBC) policies may result in the requirement to reimburse the Installation or BBC for costs due to negligence, as well as other sanctions, to include a loss of their housing assignment.

(d) Instruct Family housing occupants to inform the BBC service desk of any stray animal issues.

d. Installation Medical Authority will:

(1) Establish an occupational medicine health program for all Garrison personnel who are occupationally exposed to uncontrolled and possibly unvaccinated cats or dogs.

(2) Determine program requirements, including, but not be limited to, pre-employment, pre-exposure and post-exposure rabies and tetanus vaccination requirements and periodic monitoring of immunized personnel at a frequency to ensure that protection levels are maintained.

(a) When an immunized person is exposed to or has contact with a known or suspected rabies-infected animal, the Installation Medical Authority or the individual's physician will determine what treatment will be provided to the exposed individual.

(b) When a non-immunized person is exposed to or has contact with a known or suspected rabies-infected animal, a post-exposure treatment should be initiated as soon as possible after exposure unless otherwise directed by the Installation Medical Authority or the exposed individual's physician. Rabies can be a fatal disease if treatment is delayed.

e. Provost Marshal Office will:

(1) Respond to reports of stray dogs and cats outside of duty hours, which can include humanely collecting the animal and transporting it to the local Veterinarian office IAW local Standard Operating Procedures. All other calls will be directed to the Pest Control contractor through the Directorate of Public Works during duty hours (M-F 0800 to 1630). The Natural Resources Branch will assist pest control or provost marshal in emergency situations related to dangerous or sick animals.

(2) In the event of a dangerous animal encounter or an event with significant public exposure, manage public safety at all times.

(3) Use appropriate force, including lethal force, as necessary, when an animal appears to be sick or its behavior is erratic and not typical, e.g., if aggressive or attacks without provocation, and cannot be restrained without possible injury to military law enforcement or Installation personnel. If the animal is suspected of being rabid, and lethal force is necessary, avoid damage to the brain to allow subsequent testing to confirm rabies status.

f. USAG Public Affairs Office will:

(1) Periodically publicize, with DPW Pest Control, procedures for reporting conflicts with nuisance animals, as well as Installation policies prohibiting the provision of food, water and shelter to uncontrolled cats, dogs or wild animals.

g. Personnel Who Own Animals and Reside on West Point will:

(1) Identify their pet: Ensure that their pet is microchipped or have their pet microchipped within 30 days of occupying a residence on the Installation.

(2) Ensure that pets wear a collar when outside with owner identification and rabies vaccination status.

(3) Feed pets indoors, whenever possible or practical. If feeding outdoors, remove excess uneaten food nightly to prevent the attraction of stray and wild animals that can pose a health and/or safety threat to pets and people.

(4) It is recommended that pets allowed outdoors be neutered or spayed. Un-spayed females, if left outdoors and accessible, will attract males when in cycle. Breeding animals for a business (commercial animal) on the Installation is not permitted.

(5) Secure pets at all times:

(a) Typical residential fence heights may keep some dogs confined. However, if the owner has a dog that can escape, an appropriate restraint, such as a chain and collar, must also be used. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that their animal remains in its designated area and does not create a nuisance or health and safety concern for other residents.

(b) Fences will not prevent cats from leaving the yard. Owners of cats will not leave their animals unsupervised outdoors. Free-roaming outdoor cats are not permitted.

(c) If a pet escapes or becomes lost on the Installation, the owner shall contact the Installation animal control activity or Military Police for assistance and the local Veterinary Services to determine if the animal has been turned in. If the animal has been located, but is still loose, the pet owner will be requested to assist in re-capturing their pet. If a pet repeatedly escapes and Installation animal control is involved in its re-capture, the Installation Military Housing Office will be notified by Installation Pest Control to take appropriate action to ensure that this problem (lack of pet owner control) does not continue. Pet owners may be held fiscally responsible for the capture and care of improperly maintained animals.

h. Supervisors, Facility Managers and Building Custodians will:

(1) Notify Installation animal control personnel and request capture and removal of uncontrolled cats or dogs or wild animals that have been observed in or around their facilities.

(2) Ensure that facility personnel do not provide food and/or water to uncontrolled cats, dogs or wild animals, or tamper with traps placed to capture these animals. Feeding may appear to be humane treatment but aggravates the Installation's stray animal problem by encouraging pet abandonment, feral animal reproduction, public exposure to disease vectors, and feeding limits the efficacy of capture methods.

5. STANDARDS.

a. Animal Capture and Handling:

(1) All capture methods used will cause a minimal amount of stress to the captured animal. Trap Placement and Types: Only live-capture traps will be employed. Box (Hav-A-Heart or similar) are preferred, but cloverleaf traps, nets, or other methods may be used. No method employed shall

cause pain or death to the captured animal. Snares and leg-hold traps shall not be used.

(2) All traps shall be clearly marked with the operator's organization and telephone number. Traps will be placed in a sheltered location, out of temperature extremes and precipitation. Traps shall be checked a minimum of every 24 hours, more often if conditions warrant. Trapping will not occur in temperatures exceeding 90 degrees. During winter, outdoor traps will be set during working hours only, checked frequently, and removed or disabled at the end of the working day to prevent animals from exposure during extreme temperatures.

(3) If using a snare pole, the operator shall attempt to secure the animal across the chest, avoiding picking up animals by the neck. Snare poles should be secure, but not overly tight. Animals should be released as quickly as possible from a snare pole to avoid injury.

(4) Irritants, such as pepper spray or smoke, shall not be used for hazing purposes on domestic animals.

(5) If targeting a female with young, the operator will attempt to capture the young first. Operators may not leave orphaned, un-weaned young.

(6) Captured animals shall be handled and transported securely for the safety of all involved personnel as well as the health of the animal. Operators shall use heavy gloves, appropriate clothing, snare poles, etc. All personnel will clearly understand their role in every action and rehearse actions to ensure smooth and safe handling.

(7) All captured animals shall be handled minimally in a manner which will not cause excessive stress. If necessary, the operator shall cover the captured animal with a light cloth to shield it from close human contact. Water shall be available at all times, and food if appropriate and practical.

(8) If box traps are used, animals should be transported the in the trap in which they were caught. If a transporter must be used, use great care in removing the captured animal from the trap. Choose a closed room or the outdoors to make the transfer.

(9) Except for obvious family groups, operators shall avoid transporting multiple animals in the same cage or trap.

(10) To limit human exposure and accident, operators should not transport captured animals in the interior of any vehicle if avoidable.

(11) All traps, transporters, tools, and equipment shall be maintained and shall be disinfected after use.

(12) Personnel shall always be aware that the public may be present. If possible, clear the area of unnecessary personnel prior to handling animals to avoid danger to the public and an overly complex situation. Animal capture is often chaotic and may appear rough to some observers. Operators must always be aware that the public may be sensitive to the manner in which an animal is captured or handled. While human safety, followed by animal safety, is paramount, be sure that all actions are defensible and reflect the installation's commitment to the humane treatment of animals.

b. Animal Disposition. Historically, cats have been the sole nuisance stray species on the Installation. The below applies specifically to cats. There have been no local animal shelters, rescue groups, etc. willing or able to accept stray animals from the Installation either as a voluntary or reimbursed agreement. DPW will continue to attempt to establish, as appropriate, agreement(s) between the Installation and local animal control agencies, shelters and rescue agencies to pick up or receive the transfer of stray animals captured on the Installation. Until such an agreement can be established, stray and feral cats will be handled as below:

(1) DPW Pest Control will deliver stray animals to the Installation Veterinary Clinic to have the animals scanned for a chip. If the animal does have a chip, the animal will be re-united with the owner who may be required to reimburse the installation for expenses. Cats with no chip will be considered feral and will be returned to the custody of the Pest Control office.

(2) Post-scan, Pest Control will contact an off-post veterinary services provider to determine capacity and cost. If capacity and funding are available, Pest Control will deliver the cat to the vendor, who will treat for fleas and provide first aid as necessary. The vendor will then hold the cat for two days to allow time for an owner to retrieve their pet. If no owner materializes, the vendor will provide a higher level of medical care, to include vaccination, spaying or neutering, de-worming etc. The vendor may then seek adoption for the cat or retain at their discretion. If adoption or vendor retention options are unavailable, the vendor will, after an appropriate post-surgical period, return the cat to installation Pest Control. Pest Control may offer the returned cat for adoption on post as appropriate, if a ready home is available. If not, Pest Control will release the captured cat in the vicinity of its original capture site. It is a violation of New York State regulations to release stray domestic animals to woodlands or an adjacent property.

(3) The Pest Control program may only capture or transport domestic animals and may not act in the capacity of a shelter or provide medical care. No animal will be held longer than 24 hours by the Pest Control Office before release.

(4) If a participating veterinarian determines that euthanasia is warranted by the health needs of any unclaimed animal in installation possession, such as

extreme injury or evidence of rabies, the veterinarian may provide this service at their discretion. Euthanasia for convenience shall not be pursued.

6. SANCTIONS. Individuals observed providing food, and/or water to stray animals shall be informed of Installation policy and requested to stop (First Incident). If the individual persists, DPW shall notify his/her supervisor and request that appropriate action be taken to stop this behavior (Second Incident). If the individual continues to disregard the Commander's policy, DPW shall elevate the issue up the individual's chain of command, the Provost Marshal and/or Family Housing for appropriate disciplinary action (Third Incident).

a. Violations of the requirements of this regulation may result in:

(1) Suspension.

(2) Withdrawal of animal keeping privileges and removal of the animal.

(3) Monetary reimbursement for installation costs associated with the capture, care, and/or disposition of mishandled privately owned animals.

(4) Loss of Family Housing privileges.

7. PROPONENT. Directorate of Public Works, at (845) 938-1856. This policy memorandum remains in effect until rescinded or superseded.



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Commanding