



Lunenburg Police Department

Policy Number: 1.28	Subject: Animal Control Officer
Issue Date: 02/04/2016 Revision Date: 10/18/2022; 02/15/2022 Effective Date: 02/04/2016	Massachusetts Police Accreditation Standards Referenced: 16.4.1; 16.4.2; 16.4.3
Issuing Authority: <i>Chief Thomas L. Gammel</i>	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this position is to perform enforcement, investigation and administrative work in enforcing all relevant state statutes and Town Bylaws as they relate to the control and regulation of animals. Ensures the safe return, care and handling of all residential animals, and provides protection to the residents of Lunenburg from annoyance, intimidation, irritation, and injury from animals; performs all other related work as required. The Animal Control Officer / Municipal Animal Inspector is responsible for maintaining and improving upon the efficiency and effectiveness of all areas under their direction and control.

II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Lunenburg Police Department to protect the health, safety, welfare and property of all individuals who reside or frequent the Town of Lunenburg. Further, it is the purpose of this policy to prevent the needless health hazards and nuisances caused by animals, upon public and private properties. The Animal Control Officer shall be contacted, during normal business hours, whenever a complaint is received involving animals.

III. SUPERVISION

- A. Supervision Scope: Performs a variety of responsible functions requiring the exercise of judgment, initiative and discretion in dealing with the public and in interpreting and applying relevant state laws and town bylaws.
- B. Supervision Received: Works under the administrative direction of the on-duty Sergeant, except with respect to Animal Inspector duties, which are under the Administrative direction of the Director of Public Health. Works according to established Department Policies & Procedures, Rules & Regulations, and Town of Lunenburg Policies & Procedures, standards, or special directives, instructions, and intent.

IV. WORK ENVIRONMENT

Majority of work is performed outdoors or at the homes of residents, at which time the employee may be exposed to weather extremes of hot and cold temperatures and inclement weather. Periodically the employee is subject to the stress of emergencies and dangerous situations. Employee is required to traverse uneven terrains. Possible risk of injury is present as it relates to the handling of animals including bites and scratches. Work may be performed outside of normal business hours and on the weekends; responds to emergency situations. Administrative work is performed in an office environment.

Operates an automobile, equipment to humanely capture animals, hand tools, computer and telephones. Makes frequent contacts, requiring courtesy, patience and tact with concerned animal owners, town residents, local veterinarians, animal shelters, state agencies, other Town departments, and civic organizations. Communication requires considerable persuasiveness to influence the behavior of others in oftentimes-volatile situations.

Errors could result in danger to public health and safety, personal injury, confusion, delay of services, and cause adverse public relations.

V. DUTIES OF THE ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER [16.4.1(b), 16.4.2]

- A. Receives complaints, investigates, and resolves situations involving annoyance, intimidation, irritation, and injury from animals.
- B. Investigates situations, and provides information to the public regarding the improper use, abuse, inhumane treatment, and neglect of animals.
- C. Resolves problems by educating owners, issuing fines, or pursuing complaints in court if necessary. Prepares reports on all calls and prepares for court appearances.
- D. Quarantines dogs and cats or other domestic animals suspected of having bitten a person. Ensures the quarantine of any domestic animal that has been exposed to wildlife, by a bite, scratch, or proximity. Issues rabies vaccinations.
- E. Returns licensed dogs to their owners.
- F. Searches for owners of stray animals.
- G. Educates the general public on all local laws relating to animals.
- H. Picks up injured animals and arranges for medical treatment as required; may pick up and dispose of dead animals in conformance with state and local laws and safety procedures.
- I. Works with humane societies, veterinarians, and the general public to place unclaimed animals; provides for the humane disposal of unclaimed animals as required.
- J. Assists different town departments that have animal-related problems. Works in cooperation with the Police and Fire personnel when necessary.
- K. Prepares report for the Annual Town Report.
- L. Explains applicable statutes and bylaws which regulate the control of animals within the town; advises individuals on specific laws, statutes, codes, and criminal justice procedures; assists residents by resolving animal problem complaints. Issues oral and/or written warnings or citations to law violators.
- M. Performs barnyard inspections of all domestic animals within the town.

- N. Ensures that when human health and safety or that of domestic animals is immediately threatened by an animal, that the animal is destroyed.
- O. Notifies the public of any known or suspect contagious disease among any domestic animals.
- P. Promotes education in the areas of avoiding animal bites. Promotes education in all areas relating to animals.
- Q. Prepares required reports for appropriate state agencies.
- R. Performs similar or related work as required, directed or as situation dictates.

VI. MUNICIPAL ANIMAL INSPECTOR DUTIES

- A. The primary duty of the Animal Inspector are:
 - 1. Rabies control in the domestic animal population.
 - 2. Assessed reports of rabid domestic animals to determine severity of risk.
 - 3. Submit Notice of Exposure forms.
 - 4. Issue an Order of Quarantine for domestic mammals that bite a human or another domestic mammal for a period of ten days to determine the risk of rabies transmission.
 - 5. Ensure all animals (wild or domestic) which must be tested for rabies are captured and euthanized.
- B. Municipal Animal Inspectors are also responsible for barn inspections. Barn inspections are designed to:
 - 1. get a good census of the domestic animal population of the town;
 - 2. be sure that all of the animals appear to be in good health and free from disease, and;
 - 3. observe animal housing and ensure ample food and water are supplied.
 - 4. Permission to inspect any premise upon which animals are kept is assured to Municipal Animal Inspectors under Section 7 of Chapter 129 of the MGL.
 - 5. Visits should be scheduled for normal business hours.
 - 6. If a conflict between the animal owner and the Inspector occurs, the Inspector may have a local police officer accompany him or her.
- C. The third duty of the Animal Inspector is to check ear tag numbers and date of arrival of cattle from out of state and to report this information on the Animal Inspector's copy of the Cattle and Llama Permit which is furnished to the Animal Inspector by the Department of Agricultural Resources.
- D. Municipal Animal Inspectors may also be called to assist with other domestic animal disease quarantines in the event of an outbreak.

VII. TRAINING [16.4.2]

Animal Control Officers will have at a minimum the following:

A High school education or equivalency, possession of a valid motor vehicle operator's license, Animal Control Officer Certifications.

VIII. LAW ENFORCEMENT POWERS AND DUTIES

Animal Control Officers are not empowered to make arrests, effect seizures, or serve warrants. Animal Control Officers do not have the status of sworn police officers, but may perform limited duties, consistent with their position as ACOs. [16.4.1(a)]

IX. UNIFORM

Animal Control Officers shall wear the approved uniform while working in their official capacity. The Chief of Police has the final say in what will be worn by the Animal Control Officers using the below descriptions as guidelines. Uniforms must clearly distinguish the Animal Control Officer from full and part-time police officers. [16.4.3]

Uniform for Animal Control Officers [16.4.3]

- A. Pants: tactical, khaki, or work style pant, in a neutral color.
- B. Jacket: Hi-Viz yellow or black with “Town of Lunenburg Animal Control Officer” in white or black lettering on the back.
- C. Shirt: Polo with “Town of Lunenburg Animal Control Officer” on the back area and/or Town of Lunenburg town seal above left pocket (long sleeve optional in winter).
- D. Shoes: Black leather shoes, heels not to exceed 1.5 inches. Athletic shoes, sneakers, or boots in a neutral color may be worn.
- E. Equipment and apparel not issued may be carried as authorized by the Chief of Police.