
Animal Control

811.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for animal control officers and San Leandro Police Department personnel in dealing with animal control related calls for service and to set forth procedures regarding animal control services, the handling of injured/deceased animals, and the abatement of animal nuisances.

811.2 ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY

Animal Control is currently classified as a Police Services Technician (PST). For the purpose of this Policy, the PST assigned to fulltime Animal Control duties shall be referred to as an Animal Control Officer (ACO). ACO's shall be responsible for enforcing local, state and federal laws relating to animals, and for appropriately resolving or referring animal problems as outlined in this policy. The ACO shall be under the operational control of the Traffic Division. The ACO's assigned working hours will be scheduled by the Traffic Division Sergeant.

During hours when the ACO is on duty, requests for animal control services shall be assigned by the Communications Center or the Traffic Division

811.3 OTHER POLICE PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITY

During hours when the Animal Control Officer is off-duty, or if the ACO is otherwise unavailable, animal related calls for service will be handled by the appropriate on-duty Police Services Technician or Patrol Officer as outlined in this policy. Any necessary follow up will be handled by the Animal Control Officer.

811.3.1 ANIMAL CRUELTY COMPLAINTS

Personnel shall conduct a preliminary investigation on all reports of animal cruelty and shall not hesitate to take any immediate actions deemed necessary. Any necessary follow up will be handled by Animal Control and Criminal Investigations, if needed.

811.3.2 STRAY DOGS

If the dog has a license or can otherwise be identified, the owner should be contacted, if possible. If the owner is contacted, the dog should be released to the owner and a citation may be issued if appropriate. If a dog is taken into custody, it shall be transported to the contracted Animal Shelter or to the holding pens at the City of San Leandro Corporation Yard, making sure the animal has food, water, and bedding. In cases where the ACO is not available, the Watch Commander shall designate an alternate to transport so that any animals are not held in the holding pens unnecessarily for extended periods.

The ACO will transport any animals in the holding pens to the contracted Animal Shelter as soon as practical. Once a dog has been taken into custody, all releases should be handled by the Animal Shelter.

San Leandro Police Department

San Leandro PD Policy Manual

Animal Control

811.3.3 ANIMAL BITE REPORTS

Personnel shall obtain as much information as possible including statements and photographs if necessary. Officers shall instruct the owner of a biting animal, if contacted, to keep the animal confined on the property until contacted by the ACO, so long as the animal can be properly secured. If the officer feels that the animal cannot be properly secured, the dog shall be taken to the City's holding pens or to the contracted shelter. If the animal is a stray, then every effort shall be made to capture and impound the animal immediately.

811.3.4 PUBLIC NUISANCE CALLS RELATING TO ANIMALS

Personnel shall obtain as much information as possible regarding the nature of the complaint, complaining person, owner information (if possible), location of problem, etc. Officers will also document any actions taken, citation(s) issued, related report numbers, etc.

In the event responding officers cannot fulfill urgent requests for service because the animal is difficult or dangerous to handle, the ACO may be called to duty to handle. If the ACO is unavailable, the patrol supervisor may request the assistance of an animal control officer from an allied agency. All requests to call in the ACO must be approved by a field supervisor or the Watch Commander.

811.4 INJURED ANIMALS

When any domestic injured animal is brought to the attention of a member of this agency, all reasonable attempts shall be made to contact the owner or responsible handler. When the owner or responsible handler cannot be located and the animal is not an imminent danger to the community, it shall be taken to a doctor of veterinary medicine as described below (Penal Code 597.1).

- (a) During normal business hours, the animal should be taken to an authorized veterinary care clinic or Emergency and Critical Care Services Clinic.
- (b) If after normal business hours, the animal should be taken to the authorized 24-hour Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Services Clinic.
- (c) The only exception to the above is when the animal is an imminent danger to the community or the owner of the animal is identified and takes responsibility for the injured animal.
 1. When the immediate need to dispatch (kill) a seriously injured or dangerous animal is necessary, the department Firearms Policy and/or Chemical Immobilization procedures shall be followed. The decision to "dispatch" a seriously injured animal will rest with the on-duty Watch Commander or supervisor.
- (d) When handling dead or injured animals, department employees shall attempt to identify and notify the owner of the final disposition of the animal.
- (e) Each incident shall be documented and, at minimum, include the name of the reporting party and veterinary hospital and/or person to whom the animal is released.

San Leandro Police Department

San Leandro PD Policy Manual

Animal Control

- (f) If injured wildlife cannot be handled in a safe manner, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Marine Mammal Center and/or Vector Control shall be contacted for assistance.

811.5 POST-ARREST PROCEDURES

The arresting officer should make a reasonable effort to ensure that animals or pets under an arrestee's care will be provided with adequate care while that person is in custody or placed on temporary psychiatric evaluation hold (5150 W&I). This is only required when there is no person to provide care and the arrestee is expected to be in custody for a time period longer than would reasonably allow him/her to properly care for the animal.

Relatives or neighbors may be contacted, with the owner's consent, to care for the animals. If no persons can be found or the owner does not consent, the animal should be taken to the temporary holding pens at the City Corporation Yard or the contracted shelter. The call for service should be printed for any necessary follow up.

811.6 FERAL/STRAY CATS

The San Leandro Police Department does not respond to calls regarding feral/stray cats unless they are severely injured. Residents should be referred to a feral cat organization.

811.7 TRAPPED ANIMALS

The San Leandro Police Department should not be dispatched to privately trapped animals unless exigent circumstances exist.

Public wishing to trap wild animals shall be directed to Fish and Wildlife. San Leandro Police Department does not trap wild or domestic animals unless they are an imminent danger to the public.

811.8 CITATIONS

It should be at the discretion of the handling PST, officer or the Field Supervisor as to the need for, or advisability of, the issuance of a citation for a violation.

811.9 ANIMALS ON FREEWAYS AND FREEWAY ON AND OFF RAMPS

Dead animals on the freeway or freeway on or off ramps shall be referred to CAL-TRANS.

811.10 RESCUE OF ANIMALS IN VEHICLES

If an animal left unattended in a vehicle appears to be in distress, members may enter the vehicle for the purpose of rescuing the animal. Members should (Penal Code § 597.7(d)):

- (a) Make a reasonable effort to locate the owner before entering the vehicle.
- (b) Take steps to minimize damage to the vehicle.
- (c) Refrain from searching the vehicle or seizing items except as otherwise permitted by law.

San Leandro Police Department

San Leandro PD Policy Manual

Animal Control

- (d) Leave notice on or in the vehicle identifying the location where the animal has been taken and the name and Department of the member involved in the rescue.
- (e) Make reasonable efforts to contact the owner or secure the vehicle before leaving the scene.
- (f) Take the animal to an animal care facility, a place of safekeeping or, if necessary, a veterinary hospital for treatment.

811.11 EUTHANASIA

DOMESTIC ANIMALS AND WILDLIFE

All reasonable attempts will be made by the responding PST or officer to transport injured or sick domestic animals to a veterinarian or rehabilitation center for care.

When injuries are such that treatment is not practical or transport would cause additional suffering or possible disease would jeopardize the health of other impounded animals, staff or public, the animal may be euthanized.

The ACO that performs the euthanasia shall document the animal's condition and the reason for the euthanasia in CAD and on required forms as outlined in the department's Chemical Immobilization/Euthanasia procedures.

Animals may be euthanized for the following reasons:

- (a) Animals exhibiting severe; contagious disease symptoms that would pose a threat to human or animal life;
- (b) Animals whose temperament is a potential danger to staff or public as defined under State law;
- (c) Animals with injuries so severe that transporting to a veterinarian or rehabilitation center would be inhumane or impossible to accomplish without causing additional injuries, pain, or death to the animal;
- (d) Any wildlife when a rehabilitation center is unavailable or unable to accept;
- (e) As directed by a veterinarian or supervisor.

Prescription drugs shall be issued to Animal Control Officers by the contracted animal shelter. Said drugs shall be tracked on forms as outlined in the department's Chemical Immobilization/Euthanasia procedure. Expired and/or unserviceable prescription drugs shall be turned into the contracted animal shelter.

Except when being deployed, the prescription drugs shall be kept secured within the lock boxes of the animal control vehicles or in the safe located in the Traffic Office.

811.11.1 REQUIRED TRAINING

ACO'S will hold a current certificate, in accordance with State and Federal Laws, in Chemical Immobilization, Humane Euthanasia, California Penal Code § 832 PC Powers of Arrest and Firearms course, Taser Certification/Qualification, Baton/Bite Stick training and Pepper Spray

San Leandro Police Department

San Leandro PD Policy Manual

Animal Control

course. ACO's will also be required to attend an approved Animal Law Enforcement Training Academy as soon as practical.

811.12 DECEASED ANIMALS

Deceased animals on public property will be removed and properly disposed of by the on-duty PST/ACO. Officers will remove deceased animals that pose a hazard when a PST/ACO is not on duty. The deceased animals shall be placed in the carcass storage freezer located at the City Corporation Yard.

- (a) For health and sanitary reasons, deceased animals should be placed in a sealed plastic bag prior to placing in the freezer.
- (b) No employee will be required to climb onto or under any privately owned structure, or steep terrain, for the purpose of removing deceased animals.

Deceased animals on private property should be bagged by the resident/business owner and placed on the curb for pick up by the ACO.

Privately owned animals:

SLPD will provide disposal service for owned animals for a fee (established by City Council). This fee shall be paid upon pickup. The ACO shall provide a receipt for payment at the time of pickup.

Small animals such as birds, rats, mice, and other small animals may be placed in a trash receptacle for disposal by the resident/business owner.