



WRITTEN DIRECTIVE	No.	PD14-0703	Page:	1 of 6
	Subject:	Effective Date:	08-08-14	
	ANIMAL-RELATED CALLS FOR SERVICE	Supersedes/Amends:	PD10-0703	
		Reference:		



I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines for the handling of animal-related calls for service.

II. Policy

It shall be the policy of the Lynchburg Police Department that animal-related calls for service are prioritized based on the severity of the call.

III. Procedure

A. PRIORITY ONE CALLS FOR SERVICE

1. Priority one calls for service relate to those instances involving immediate danger to a citizen or a domestic dog or cat.
2. Priority one calls for service will be the primary responsibility of Animal Wardens, will not routinely be held by the Lynchburg Emergency Communications Center (LynComm), and will include the following categories:
 - a. uncontrolled vicious or dangerous animals
 - b. animal bites
 - c. uncontrolled livestock, if on or near a roadway or if posing a threat to persons or property
 - d. bats in an occupied dwelling or possible bat exposure to a human or animal
 - e. any situation involving snakes inside a residence that poses a potential danger to the occupants
 - f. injured animals that are:
 - 1) posing a risk to persons or traffic
 - 2) causing significant public attention or alarm
 - 3) considered companion animals (dogs or cats)

3. Police officers may be assigned to assist in the handling of *priority one* calls for service, upon request by the Animal Warden handling the call.
4. Police officers will be responsible for handling priority one calls for service in the following instances:
 - a. there is no Animal Warden on duty
 - b. the on-duty animal warden is occupied with another priority one call
 - c. the call for service involves hunting in the city, in which case:
 - 1) The call will be dispatched as "hunting within the city", but will be considered as a "man with a gun" situation, and will be answered by police officers.
 - 2) Officers should confer as needed with the Chief Animal Warden in order to determine if persons located by officers are legally hunting.
5. Officers will not destroy a companion animal (i.e. domestic dog, cat, etc.) unless the animal poses a danger to the public or to the officer.

B. HANDLING OF BAT RELATED INCIDENTS

1. Bats are frequently carriers of hydrophobia (rabies). If not promptly treated, rabies is fatal. Therefore, bat calls must be handled with a high level of regard for the safety of residents, wardens and officers.
 - a. Nets and protective gloves for use in capturing bats will be maintained in animal warden vehicles and in patrol division supervisor's vehicles. This equipment will be used in all bat capture situations.
2. Bats located by wardens or officers under the following conditions will be captured in every situation to allow for Health Department rabies testing:
 - a. Presumptive rabies exposure situations
 - 1) Bats located in presumptive rabies exposure situations will be captured to allow for Health Department rabies testing.
 - 2) The Virginia Department of Health identifies the following situations as presumptive human rabies exposures:
 - a) any indication that a bat has bitten a person;
 - b) a bat located in an area where any person was asleep or unconscious;
 - c) a bat located in the presence of a child or an adult who is not able to clearly establish that he or she has not come into contact with the bat or been bitten by the bat.

- 3) These presumptive guidelines are based on bat bites often causing no pain and often leaving no readily visible wound: bat bites can therefore go unnoticed even by persons who are bitten.
- b. Bats observed inside a residence
 - 1) Bats located inside a residence will be captured to allow for Health Department rabies testing.
 - 2) Bats observed inside a residence will be captured regardless of whether or not the information available to the warden or officer at that time indicates a presumptive exposure situation.
 - 3) The public safety risk associated with bats dictates that bats located inside an occupied residence be captured in the event that rabies testing is later deemed necessary.
3. Capture and packaging of bats
 - a. Nets and protective gloves will be used in all bat capture situations: using this equipment will protect wardens and officers from risk of rabies exposure, and will minimize the risk of damaging the bat during capture.
 - b. Bats captured for rabies testing do not need to be killed. Care must be taken not to damage the bat's head during capture: damage to the brain will prevent rabies testing.
 - c. Place the captured bat in a suitable, sealed container.
 - 1) Use a container that the bat cannot bite through.
 - 2) Clearly mark the container with:
 - a) BAT
 - b) date of capture
 - c) CC number.
 - d) Place the packaged bat in the LPD evidence refrigerator – NOT in the freezer: freezing can damage the brain and prevent rabies testing.
4. An IBR will be completed to document the handling of all bat calls.
 - a. The IBR will document the following information:
 - 1) identifying and contact information for all persons potentially exposed to rabies
 - 2) whether the bat was or was not captured for rabies testing (If the warden or officer was not able to capture the bat, why the bat could not be captured.)
 - 3) any other pertinent information.
 - b. The IBR will be turned in by the end of the warden's or officer's duty tour.
 - c. Copies of the IBR will be routed to:
 - 1) the Chief Animal Warden

- 2) the Lynchburg Health Department.
5. The Chief Animal Warden, or his designee, will follow up with Health Department staff in order to:
 - a. determine if rabies testing will be conducted
 - b. deliver captured bats to the Health Department for testing.
6. Bat infestation of an occupied residence
 - a. A bat infestation will be defined as a situation in which multiple bats have gained access to an occupied area of a residence, typically as result of bats nesting within an unsealed portion of the residence.
 - b. Wardens or officers responding to bat infestation situations will advise residents to contact a pest exterminating firm to address the problem.
 - c. Unless the warden or officer has an articulable reason to do so, bats will not be captured for rabies testing in bat infestation situations.
 - 1) The presence of multiple bats within an occupied residence lessens the value of testing any particular bat for rabies.
 - 2) Wardens or officers will advise that all persons within a bat-infested residence should contact the Lynchburg Health Department to discuss the advisability of being treated for rabies exposure.
 - d. An IBR will be completed to document bat infestation situations.
 - 1) The IBR will document the following information:
 - a) residence address
 - b) identifying and contact information for all persons located within the residence
 - c) factors leading the warden or officer to identify a bat infestation
 - d) advice to residents to seek Health Department guidance on rabies treatment.
 - 2) The IBR will be turned in by the end of the warden's or officer's duty tour.
 - 3) Copies of the IBR will be routed to:
 - a) the Chief Animal Warden
 - b) the Lynchburg Health Department.
7. An employee who experiences a potentially infectious bat exposure will report and document the exposure according to the procedures set forth in directive PD-2009 (*Communicable Disease Exposure*).

C. PRIORITY TWO CALLS FOR SERVICE

1. Priority two calls for service involve animal annoyances or danger to a non companion animal.
2. Priority two calls for service will be handled by police officers only when no Animal Warden is on duty.
3. Priority two calls for service will include the following categories:
 - a. barking dogs with a complainant willing to speak to the animal warden or a police officer; LynComm will not accept refused complainant barking dog complaints
 - b. cruelty to or neglect of animals
 - c. uncontrolled livestock (not on or near a roadway and not posing a threat to persons or property).
4. Priority two calls for service may be held by LynComm for a reasonable amount of time with the complainant being advised of an approximate time of response.
5. Animal Wardens do not typically respond to injured animals or birds other than dogs or cats but can speak to the complainant to make referrals in most cases.

D. PRIORITY THREE CALLS FOR SERVICE

1. Priority three calls for service involve state law or Lynchburg ordinance violations.
2. Priority three calls for service will be handled solely by Animal Wardens and will include the following categories:
 - a. dogs at large
 - b. vicious animals (tied or caged)
 - c. destructive animals
 - d. animal trap to be set, checked, or picked up
 - e. stray dogs (under complainant's control)
 - f. calls involving cats (should be referred to the animal warden by phone.)
3. If no Animal Warden is on duty, priority three calls for service will be held until the Warden's tour of duty begins, unless extenuating circumstances exist.

E. CALLS FOR SERVICE REQUIRING NO RESPONSE

1. Calls for service requiring no animal warden or police officer response include:
 - a. any situation not covered previously in this directive that does not involve the violation of state law or Lynchburg ordinance, and
 - b. behavior that is considered natural for the animal in question, unless extenuating circumstances exist.
2. In such cases, the LynComm employee taking the call will make the appropriate referral.

Original Signed

Parks H. Snead
Chief of Police

August 8, 2014

Date