

**CITY OF LYONS POLICE DEPARTMENT  
POLICE OPERATIONS MANUAL**

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**PURPOSE:**

This manual shall set forth the standard operating procedures for Animal Control City of Lyons. It is designed to provide guidance and instruction in performing the duties and responsibilities and in solving Animal Control problems that may arise. Lyons Animal Control and the Animal Shelter will be operated according to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Agriculture, OCGA 40-13-13.

**SCOPE:**

This manual is not in lieu of the City of Lyons Employees Personnel Handbook. It is not intended to cover every possible situation that confronts an ACO, nor does it eliminate the necessity for exercising initiative and sound judgment when called for.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Each ACO is expected to perform their assigned duties in a manner that inspires confidence from the public, other employees, and the City. Each ACO will be required to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS:**

This job entails almost constant contact with the general public. You have the means to enforce the Animal Control ordinance at your disposal. You will face many situations that will place you in the position of the villain and put the owner on the defensive. Be prepared for the worst in people you deal with when on duty. Whatever the situation, be fair, courteous, and as firm as necessary. Never threaten. Your job is to enforce the Animal Control ordinance in a professional manner. Any time you approach a citizen in any situation, state your name, who you represent, and the nature of business you need to discuss with them. Always have your facts correct and follow “due process” as set forth in this manual. When you face a situation you cannot handle effectively, back off, and consult the Animal Control **Supervisor** for advice before the situation becomes unpleasant. Practice professionalism. Know the ordinance you are enforcing. Remember, this manual is a guideline to follow and does not take the place of common sense.

**RECORDS:**

A. General: Records and Forms

1. Purpose of record keeping is to show all activities of the Animal Control Program and the individual Officers.
2. Record keeping can be a pain, however it is more painful to NOT keep records.
  - a. Record only essential information
  - b. Adequate and correct record of activities can be used to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the program and the individual officer.
  - c. Review records routinely as a method of evaluating the program and the officer's activities.
3. Apply the classic "who, what, when, where, why and how" to every form you presently use or plan to use in the future.
4. Records and forms must be completely filled out and be legible.
5. Retain records for an appropriate length of time, depending on the individual situation and the record.
6. Adequate records are essential in legal matters. Documentation is Mandatory!

## B. Field Records

1. Most records will be started in the field. Of these, some will be completed while in the field and others will be completed after returning to the office.
2. Animal Control Officer's daily activities:
  - a. A record of daily activities should be kept by each ACO; applying the "who, what, where, when, why and how" to the form
    1. Miles traveled
    2. Hours worked
    3. Specific calls, points of destination and activities at each location.
  3. Animal Capture Records: **Intake tickets are** to be filled out for every animal picked up by ACO
    - a. Name of ACO (who)
    - b. Description of animal captured (what)
    - c. Time and date of capture (when)
    - d. Location of capture (where)
    - e. Reason for capture (why)
    - 25-3
    - f. Method of capture (how)
  4. Warnings / Citations:
    - a. Name of ACO issuing
    - b. Name and information of person to whom warning or citation issued.
    - c. Time and date of issuance
    - d. Time and date of specific violation
    - e. Location of the violation which resulted in the warning or citation
    - f. Specific violation must be shown.
    - g. Must clearly state what action person receiving it must do.

## 5. Investigations:

- a. Name of investigator or ACO
- b. Name and address of all persons interviewed
- c. Name and address of person reporting incident, but kept confidential if possible.
- d. Reason for investigation
- e. Dates investigation begun and concluded.
- f. Site or location of the situation under investigation
- g. Complete description of the situation and all pertinent facts relating should be included before investigation is closed.
- h. Records should show whether investigation was performed in person or by telephone.

### C. Office Records

1. Records must accurately reflect the activities of all personnel in the program.
2. Certain categories of information must be recorded regardless of the size of the program.

### D. Other Records

1. Periodic activity summations serve several useful purposes.
  - a. Weekly, monthly, and/or annual reports should be made to the appropriate governing body. Such reports serve as a means of education and , if properly done, will enhance the support received by the Animal Control Department.
  - b. Periodic summations should be compared with previous reports to assist in determining the effectiveness, efficiency and progress of the agency.
  - c. By summarizing certain records, the procedures can be simplified by eliminating storage requirements.
2. **E-mailed** CAD sheets from the 911 Communications Center are to be **electronically** filed and kept for each fiscal year. They are valuable by demonstrating public requests for service, and action taken by officers.

### E. Communications

1. Clear, understandable communications are essential for ACOs.
2. All written reports must be concise, direct and legible.
  - a. Complete all activity reports promptly.
  - b. Use correct terminology in all written reports and communications.
  - c. Press releases must be brief, concise and absolutely correct. Be informative, but remember the more you give them, they more they can mess up.
  - d. When speaking, be certain of your subject; know what you are talking about.
  - e. Public educational programs should be integral to the activities of the program.

### F. Photographic Records

1. All photographs shall be kept with the appropriate report and shall include the following information:
  - a. Photographer's name;
  - b. Date and time taken;
  - c. Location of incident;
  - d. Scene depicted;
  - e. Type of camera used;

- f. Weather conditions;
- g. Film type (35mm, digital, etc.);
- h. Light (daylight, flash, etc.).

#### **FIELD PROCEDURES:**

Having the right tools and equipment to work with will make your job easier. The equipment identified below will be kept in your vehicle when possible.

1. Ketch-All pole
2. Snake tongs
3. Flash light
4. Heavy gloves
5. Cadaver bags
6. Disposable gloves
7. Tranquilizer, syringes, needles
8. All necessary record forms
9. Humane live traps
- 10.

#### **DEAD ANIMAL REMOVAL**

ACOs are not responsible for the removal of dead animals from private property. This includes domestic animals or wildlife.

#### **SENIOR CITIZENS**

ACOs will assist senior citizens whenever necessary, within reason and scope of the Animal Control Ordinance.

#### **MUTUAL AID**

City of Lyons Animal Control Officer will answer any calls within any City limits of Lyons with the appropriate agreements/contracts in place, or to answer the call of assistance from a Police Officer outside the city Limits after approval from shift supervisor.

#### **911 PROTOCOL**

Dispatchers shall enter all calls for service into the computer system and a CAD sheet shall be printed and held for pickup by an Animal Control Officer. Calls may be given over the phone or radio to improve response times, but are not in lieu of a printed copy. ACOs will only be called out after hours for biting/vicious animals endangering humans or other animals, when a Police Officer or other Law Enforcement personnel in the city limits is requesting assistance in removing animals from accident or arrest scenes, or for extremely sick or injured animals. Animal Control *will not* respond after hours for stray animals or unwanted pets.

#### **CALL PRIORITY:**

All calls and complaints you receive during regular hours will be handled in this priority order:

1. Vicious or biting animals
  - a. Animals that have bitten a human or another animal
2. Sick or injured animals
3. Strays
4. Unwanted pets

ACOs shall be in proper uniform when on duty.

#### **BITING ANIMALS:**

The following is the proper procedure when working an animal bite case. All animals that bite a person or other animal will be placed into quarantine for a period of not less than 10 days from the date of the bite.

A. When an animal bite is reported to you:

1. Have the victim identify the animal;
2. Fill out a bite report and turn it in to Environmental Health;
  - a. Faxed copy within 24 hours (unless a holiday or weekend)
  - b. Hard copy to be hand delivered or mailed by the end of every month:
3. Advise the victim to consult a physician;
4. Procure a medical report if deemed necessary.

B. Stray Animals that bite:

1. Stray animals will be impounded at the licensed animal shelter and held in Quarantine for a period of not less than 10 days from the date of the bite.
2. If an owner should be identified after the impoundment, procedures under Section C. 1.b., will be followed before allowing the animal to finish quarantine at home.

C. Owned animals:

1. After the animal has been identified, the owner/caretaker will be contacted, and informed of the incident. The owner/caretaker will be informed of his/her options in regard to the required confinement of the animal:
  - a. The animal will be impounded for ten (10) days in the licensed animal shelter if the owner cannot produce a valid rabies vaccination certificate and the vaccination cannot be verified with a veterinarian.
  - b. If a valid rabies vaccination certificate can be produced, the owner may be allowed to quarantine the animal on his/her property, provided the animal has no history of running at large, has not bitten any people previously, and the owner can responsibly and adequately confine the animal as directed by state and local law.
- c. Before the animal is impounded the owner/caretaker will be advised of:
  1. The reason for impoundment;
  2. Reclaim date;
  3. Cost involved.

If the owner is available, have them lead the animal to the truck and put it in the compartment. If you must use the Ketch-All pole, be careful to avoid choking or any other abuse of the animal. Move slowly and lead the animal rather than pulling it. Use only as much force as is absolutely necessary to get the animal into the proper compartment of the vehicle.

D. If all proper procedures have been followed and the owner becomes irate; do not argue, threaten, or raise your voice. The proper response is to:

1. Make an accurate report of the incident;
2. Submit a copy of the incident to the department supervisor and the health department.

### **SICK OR INJURED ANIMALS:**

Be cautious when approaching an injured or sick animal. An animal in pain may bite. A muzzle, or substitute used correctly, should protect you and cause no great discomfort to the animal.

A. If sick or injured animals have identification tags, a reasonable effort to contact the owner shall be made, and/or a veterinarian may be called for advice on disposition of

the animal.

B. If sick or injured animals have no identification tags, the animal will be impounded and observed for stray period of five (5) days. If the animal is severely ill or injured it will be euthanized to prevent further suffering.

### **STRAY ANIMALS:**

When going after strays, remember that almost any dog can outrun you. Don't get into this kind of competition. Get the dog to come to you. Stay still and call the dog in a quiet tone of voice.

Be reassuring. A food treat may tempt the dog to come to you. Take your time, and avoid quick moves that might startle and scare it away. When the dog is close enough, take hold of the dog's collar, or slip a lead over its head. In some cases a snappy snare may be the easiest way to secure the animal.

If the animal becomes fractious on the snare, or leash, use a Ketch-All pole for further security.

Do not grab any dog that gives you a warning by growling, or shying away. Try a leash, or resort to a trap.

There will be times when you will have to pursue a dog to catch it. Usually a stray-owned dog will run home. You can solve that problem without having to impound the animal most of the time.

A. When a Stray Dog Runs Home:

1. Follow the dog home;
2. Check to see if anyone is at home;
3. If owner is home issue a warning / citation if applicable;
4. If no one is home impound the animal, leave notice for owner.

B. When a Stray Dog with Identification is picked up:

1. Check I.D. tags;
2. If returning animal to owner, issue warning / citation if applicable;
3. If owner is not home impound the animal, leave notice for owner;
4. Attempt to contact owner by phone.

C. When a Stray Dog without identification is picked up, it is immediately impounded.

### **UNWANTED PETS:**

When a call is received to pick up an unwanted pet (or stray, see C.) from a citizen or from private property:

A. Owners wanting to surrender their pets shall be encouraged to take the animal to the Humane Society on their own.

B. Senior and handicapped citizens will be assisted upon request.

C. The owner of an animal or the property **owner** must sign a statement of surrender.

### **VICIOUS ANIMALS:**

Any animals that are deemed vicious and posing an immediate threat to the safety and welfare of an Officer or other persons, may be handled under the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Section 16-12-4 (f) (1) (A) and (B), stating that a person may defend himself or property by killing the animal as humanely as possible. **However, while in the field the ACO should attempt, while observing due caution, to capture the animal with a control pole, live trap, or if in a controlled environment with a tranquilizer.**

### **HUMANE LIVE-TRAPPING OF ANIMALS:**

When stray or wild animals cannot be captured **safely** by hand, humane live traps may be used.

Traps will be dispensed to first come, first served, barring any emergency situations that would require the immediate dispensation of a trap. **The City of Lyons loans traps to their citizens as a courtesy. ACO explains trapping procedures to the borrower of the trap and then the borrower is responsible to set the trap at dusk and to call the next morning for ACO to pick up the animal in the trap and to leave another trap if further animals need to be trapped.**

A. If a trap is set on private property, documented permission of the property owner is required **to enter the property to remove animals from the trap.**

1. Have the property owner sign trap-loan agreement.

2. Animals caught in department traps shall not be released to any persons in the public;

(a) Unless a person can prove ownership of said animal **to the ACO.** (See procedures under Stray Animals)

3. Animals trapped shall be taken to the Humane Society, unless it is wildlife that may be relocated.

(a) Animals with I.D. tags will be impounded and the owner notified.

4. Traps will be checked every four hours during daylight hours by the borrower.

5. Wild animals will be relocated if no signs of illness are present.

6. All traps will be pulled before 5 p.m. on Fridays, and/or holidays.

7. Special arrangements may be made for leaving traps over weekends.

8. Traps should be set at dusk in an area where the animal will be out of full sun and have protection against the elements. Once an animal is in the trap the **borrower** needs to cover the trap in an attempt to help the **animal** to remain calm while confined in the trap.

B. Wild – Domestic (Feral) Animals

1. Cats trapped in residential areas will be classified as stray as long as the animal can be held with a degree of safety.

a. Stray cats may be reclassified as abandoned by ACO if disposition is unchanged after 24 hours.

b. Feral cats will be euthanized as soon as possible to alleviate the stress of capture.

2. Dogs acting in an aggressive or wild manner will be held in a secure area as a stray, if feasible to do so.

1. Severely injured or diseased animals, without identification, caught in Animal Control traps will not be held and will be euthanized as soon as possible to prevent further suffering.

C. Emergencies requiring traps

1. Animal bites where the animal is too skittish or fractious to capture by hand.

2. Bites are the only emergencies for **animals** requiring immediate dispensation of a trap.

### **WARNINGS / CITATIONS, AND COURT PROCEDURES:**

ACOs are authorized to issue warnings and citations at their discretion.

A. Warnings

1. Verbal warnings may be issued by the officer on scene for a first time offense

that is not of a serious nature. (i.e.: running at large, no rabies tag displayed)

2. Written warnings will be issued for ordinance violations, even first offenses, when

- a) No one is at home;
- b) To notify an owner of animal impoundment;
- c) To notify an owner of animal quarantine; and
- d) When the animal is a nuisance in the area
- e) **To attempt to contact the owner regarding welfare check of an animal**
- f) **Any other complaints where ACO needs to speak to the owners/caretaker of an animal.**

#### B. Citations

1. Use sound judgment and discretion in regard to issuing citations to appear in court;
2. When issuing a citation give the violator four full weeks before court appearance;
3. All citations issued will be turned in to the Municipal Court.

#### C. Court Appearances

1. Officers will appear in a clean uniform;
2. Officers will have all pertinent information to the case ready for the judge:
  - a. Certified copy of the ordinance;
  - b. Copies of warnings issued to defendant;
  - c. Copies of complaints received (if possible), including CAD sheets;
  - d. Copies of animal intake receipts if animals have been impounded;
  - e. Any photographs that pertain to the case; and
  - f. Witnesses to testify if necessary.

#### **CRUELTY COMPLAINTS / INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES:**

1. All complaints will be investigated as soon as possible. It is not mandatory that the complainant(s) leave their name, address, or phone number, but it is encouraged for purposes of gaining additional information. Advise complainants that a witness for such acts as a beating or killing of an animal will be necessary for prosecution in court.
2. The following information should be written down in order to expedite the investigation:
  - a. Suspect (if known)
  - b. Suspect's address
  - c. Suspect's phone number (if known)
  - d. Animal species, number of animals, description of animals, location of animals, i.e. backyard, fenced, chained, etc.
  - e. How long animal has been in that condition
  - f. The complaint i.e., without food, water, shelter, etc.
  - g. Any witnesses, other than the complainant.
3. Once an actual cruelty situation has been verified, the following procedure shall be followed:
  - a. Fill out "cruelty complaint checklist" and witness statement report if applicable.



b. Notify owner or caretaker as soon as possible of the situation and steps to be taken to correct the problem, also take appropriate actions as deemed necessary, i.e., warnings, citations, impoundment, etc.

c. If owner or caretaker is not available and the animal's life is in immediate danger, impound the animal and leave notice for the owner/caretaker, consult with ACO **Supervisor and take animal to a Veterinarian for evaluation and emergency treatment .**

d. Fill out "Investigation Report".

#### **ANIMAL SHELTER ADMISSIONS:**

##### **IMPOUNDMENT PROCEDURES**

Animals impounded by ACOs under the City of Lyons Animal Control Ordinance will be taken to the Animal Shelter and housed.

1. Appropriate forms shall be filled out on all animals brought to the shelter.

2. Animals will be placed into the designated holding pens when appropriate and when pens are empty.

3. Quarantine animals will not be placed into outdoor holding pens at any time.

4. Feral cats will not be placed into outdoor holding pens nor handled in any way due to the dangerous nature of the animal, but should be euthanized as humanely and as soon as possible after admittance.

5. ACOs will turn in appropriate paperwork to the office of the shelter.

ACOs will wash hands after handling any and all animals to prevent the spread of infectious conditions.

#### **ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS ON-CALL:**

**This section only applies as written if more then one ACO works for the City, single ACO is not required to be on standby or to limit his or her activities after hours in any way shape or form since no compensation is made to that employee for being on standby.**

ACOs will be "on-call" as set forth in the monthly schedule.

A. Officer on-call will be on-call after regular working hours. Overtime will be paid as set forth in the "Employee Handbook."

B. On-Call emergencies are defined as follows:

1. Police requests to remove animals from scene of accident /arrest.

2. Injured animals without an owner/caretaker. (Evaluated by ACO case-by-case)

3. Vicious animals presenting an immediate danger to human safety. (Evaluated by ACO case-by-case)

The on-call Officer is reachable by either phone, or pager. The police band radio in the vehicle shall be used for emergencies and official business only. Officers on-call will not indulge in intoxicating beverages during the on-call tour of duty. ACOs must wear jacket/sweater/shirt with ACO patches when answering on-call requests for service after hours.

#### **USE OF CITY VEHICLE:**

All ACOs who drive a City vehicle are responsible to follow all maintenance dates as set by Fleet services. Contact Fleet Services for any problems with your vehicle.

The animal control unit you are assigned to will be kept clean, not only for good public relations, but for the health and safety of the animals you transport.

Animal control vehicles will be driven in a defensive and courteous manner at all times, adhering to all instructions as set forth in the fleet safety manual.

**Vehicles will be made available for inspection by a representative of the Department of Agriculture as they see fit.**

**ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS IMAGE:**

Officers shall not accept money for services rendered without a proper written receipt. Officers shall fill out accurate, appropriate forms for every action taken. These forms are to be filed in the ACO office.

City of Lyons demands the best service possible. Officers must be hard working, doing their best to help the community and the animals. To accomplish this, their performance should be checked in three areas:

**A. APPEARANCE**

Look like a professional. Your uniform should be neat and clean. Your equipment should be clean and in good working order at all times. Your truck should be kept clean inside and out at all times.

**B. ATTITUDE**

You are dealing with people as well as animals. The way you approach people will affect their view of you and the Animal Control Department. Be courteous, friendly, and avoid arguments. Be informative. Use fieldwork as an opportunity to educate people. Explain the reasoning behind the laws you are enforcing.

**C. ACTION**

Keep in mind that the animals you deal with are living, feeling creatures that, like most of us, will respond better to kindness and gentleness than to force or pain. Use only as much force on an animal as is absolutely necessary to protect yourself or the public. Take the time to reassure a nervous or frightened animal. Remember the public will be watching the way you handle the animals.

**D. CONFRONTATION**

Remember to not engage into an argument with a pet owner, if the person becomes irate step back and call for assistance. Once an Officer arrives explain the situation and then approach the person again and continue with your investigation.