

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT  
PROCEDURE**

**DATE:** JUNE 29,2017  
**NUMBER:** 6.09 – PATROL  
**SUBJECT:** HANDLING OF INJURED ANIMALS  
**RELATED POLICY:** 1.05, 6.09  
**ORIGINATING DIVISION:** OPERATIONAL SUPPORT  
**NEW PROCEDURE:**   
**PROCEDURAL CHANGE:**   
**SUPERSEDES:** DP 6.09 – 10/23/2015

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All portions of this document in **bold print** are deemed by the San Diego Police Department to be records of security procedures and are exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act by Section 6254(f) of the California Government Code.

**I. PURPOSE**

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for the care and disposition of injured animals.

**II. SCOPE**

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

**III. BACKGROUND**

- A. Penal Code Section 597.1 requires police officers, animal control officers, and humane society officers to convey all injured cats and dogs found without their owners in a public place directly to a veterinarian for emergency treatment.
- B. County Animal Services is designated as the responsible agency for responding to injured cats and dogs found within the limits of the City of San Diego. The County will provide treatment and/or euthanasia to injured cats and dogs on a twenty-four hour basis. The County will not provide treatment to wildlife. The County may, however, be able to transport the wild animal to an appropriate care facility or provide euthanasia, if appropriate.

#### IV. PROCEDURE

- A. The welfare of the injured animal is to be given first consideration.
- B. Police officers who need assistance with handling or transporting an injured cat or dog will request an animal control officer via Communications Division. The animal control officer will assume responsibility for the animal upon his/her arrival.
1. Injured animals may be taken to the County Animal Shelter during normal business hours, 0930 to 1730 hours, Tuesday through Saturday.
  2. Injured animals may be taken to the Emergency Animal Clinic of San Diego, 2317 Hotel Circle South, San Diego, (619) 299-2400 for emergency treatment 24-hours a day.
  3. Animal control officers are in the field every day from 0600 to 2230 hours. **Deleted - Records of Security** Call-outs should be made via Communications Division.
- C. In instances where an animal control officer or a veterinarian is not available, a police officer may destroy an animal with a service firearm when:
1. It is obvious the animal is too severely injured to be moved;
  2. It would be more humane to destroy the animal;
  3. It can be done with complete safety; and,
  4. The immediate supervisor of the officer gives approval, which is mandated by law. Any police supervisor, or the Watch Commander, may be considered the "immediate supervisor" and approval may be obtained by radio or telephone.
- Officers have discretion in deciding whether or not to turn the deceased animal's body over to the County Animal Services.
- D. If the discharge of a firearm was within the guidelines of this procedure, a "Shooting Incident Report – Euthanasia" shall be prepared by a supervisor who responds to the scene.
1. The commanding officer of the Department member involved will review the report for compliance with Department Procedures. If no discrepancy is found, the original will be sent to Internal Affairs and copies to the Assistant Chief of the Department member and Commanding Officer of

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the Training Division. No other review will be conducted by Internal Affairs.

2. If a discrepancy is found, the Commanding Officer will order a Supervisor's Investigative Report to be completed to document the discrepancy. The Supervisor's investigative Report will be routed as in IV., D., 1., above.

E. The County Animal Services veterinarian will not treat injured cats or dogs brought in by their owner or in cases where the owner is present at the scene of the injury. In such cases, the owner must be referred to a private veterinarian. If the owner refuses to seek care for the injured animal, an animal control officer should be called to the scene.

F. Police officers are not to take injured animals to a private veterinarian or pet hospital for treatment, other than the Emergency Animal Clinic of San Diego, under the guidelines set forth above.

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G. If an injured animal is licensed and does not require immediate treatment, an attempt should be made to notify the owner by contacting County Animal Services for licensed owner information. **Deleted - Records of Security.**