

# Animal Welfare Code of Practice

## Breeding Dogs and Cats

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NSW DEPARTMENT OF  
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

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#### Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is a Code of Practice defined under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (General) Regulation 2006*. Users are reminded that compliance with this Code is a requirement under the Regulation. New versions of this Code may be issued from time to time. It is the responsibility of users to ensure the version of the Code on which they rely is current by checking it is the latest version available on the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries website.

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# 1 PREFACE

This Code is designed for everyone involved in the activity of breeding dogs and cats and has been developed to protect the welfare of the animals in their care. By adhering to this Code, people involved in animal breeding demonstrate to the general community their concern for the welfare of the animals in their care.

When humans manipulate or limit an animal's choices in relation to its physical or social environment, the welfare of that animal must be considered. Humans have a duty of care towards these animals and the greater the level of intervention or control of an animal or its environment, the greater those responsibilities become.

Animal welfare can be thought of as the way an animal's health, safety and well-being are affected by its physical and social environment. Health and behaviour indicators provide information about how an animal is responding to a situation, thus enabling us to make informed decisions relating to the animal's welfare.

Compliance with this Code does not remove the need to abide by the requirements of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1979* and any other laws and regulations, for example; the *Local Government Act, 1993*; the *Companion Animals Act, 1998*; or the *National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974*.

This Code contains both standards and guidelines for the care of dogs or cats for breeding. The standards have legal effect in three ways:

- Failure to meet a standard may result in the issue of a Penalty Infringement Notice.
- Failure to meet a standard may be used in proceedings under Clause 20 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (General) Regulation 2006*. A breach of this provision may lead to a maximum court imposed fine of 25 penalty units (currently \$2,750).
- In more serious cases, failure to meet a standard may support a prosecution for an offence under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1979*.

Under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* the person in charge of an animal is responsible for meeting the legal obligations regarding an animal's welfare. The person in charge, who may be the owner of the animal or another person who has the care or control of the animal, for example the breeding manager or a member of staff, is legally responsible for the care of the animal, and therefore for meeting the standards of this Code.

This Code has been prepared in consultation with Dogs NSW, NSW Cat Fanciers Association, Waratah National Cat Alliance, the Australian Veterinary Association, RSPCA NSW, NSW Animal Welfare League, NSW Farmers, and other people and organisations involved in the industry. It is also endorsed by the NSW Animal Welfare Advisory Council.

The Code is neither a complete manual on animal husbandry, nor a static document. It will be revised from time to time to take into account new knowledge of animal physiology and behaviour, technological advances, developments in standards of animal welfare and changing community attitudes and expectations about the humane treatment of animals.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 This Code sets the standards for the care and management of breeding dogs and cats.
- 2.2 It applies to the welfare of dogs and cats kept for the purpose of breeding and raising puppies and kittens, whether or not for fee or reward.
- 2.3 In this Code a reference to “dog housing” or to “cat housing” includes, but is not limited to, garages, carports, sheds, commercially sold dog kennels of any material, and any room forming part of a house, flat, apartment or town house used for human habitation.
- 2.4 This Code comprises both enforceable provisions and guidelines. Enforceable provisions are identified by the word “Standards”, and are located within boxes.
- 2.5 The breeding of animals at pet shops, pounds or shelters are activities for which the standards are set by other Codes in this series.

## **3 INTERPRETATION AND DEFINITIONS**

### **3.1 INTERPRETATIONS**

#### **Objectives**

The intended outcome(s) for each section of this Code.

#### **Standards**

*Standards* describe the specific actions needed to achieve acceptable animal welfare levels. These are the minimum standards that must be met under law.

They are identified in the text by the heading “Standards” and use the word “must”. They are highlighted in boxes within the text.

#### **Guidelines**

*Guidelines* describe the best practice agreed at a particular time following consideration of scientific information and accumulated experience. It also reflects society’s values and expectations regarding the care of animals. A guideline is usually a higher standard of care than minimum standards, except where the standard is best practice.

Guidelines will be particularly appropriate where it is desirable to promote or encourage better care for animals than is provided by a minimum standard. Guidelines are also appropriate where it is difficult to determine an assessable standard.

Guidelines are identified by a heading “Guidelines” and always use the term “should”.

#### **Notes**

*Notes* describe practical procedures where appropriate to achieve the minimum standards and guidelines.

## 3.2 DEFINITIONS

### **Animal**

For the purposes of this Code an animal is a dog or cat.

### **Authorised euthanasia technician**

A person who has acquired competency in humanely destroying dogs and cats through training, qualifications and experience.

### **Behavioural enrichment**

The provision of stimuli that promote appropriate behavioural and mental activities, resulting in healthier and more active animals.

### **Bordetella bronchiseptica**

A disease, commonly known as kennel cough, is caused by a highly infectious bacterium commonly causing respiratory tract infections in dogs, alone or in concert with viral agents. The disease is characterised by a dry hacking cough.

### **Breeding**

The breeding of litters of animals, whether or not for fee or reward.

### **Canine cough**

See Bordetella bronchiseptica.

### **Cat**

An animal of the species *Felis catus*, whether or not domesticated.

### **Cat housing**

A cattery, cage, module, colony pen or enclosure used to contain cats within a facility.

### **Distemper**

Canine distemper is a highly infectious viral disease of dogs and some other species caused by a paramyxovirus. Infection often results in death of affected animals.

### **Dog**

An animal (of either sex, or desexed) of the species *Canis familiaris*, whether or not domesticated.

### **Dog housing**

A kennel, cage, module, colony pen or enclosure used to contain dogs within a facility.

### **Facility**

Any place, premises or thing used for the accommodation or shelter of animals for the purpose of breeding or rearing dogs or cats. "Facility" also includes a vehicle used for the transportation of animals.

### **Feline infectious enteritis**

Otherwise known as feline panleukopaenia, this is highly infectious and often fatal disease of cats caused by feline panleukopaenia virus (FPV). Kittens are particularly susceptible.

### **Feline respiratory disease**

Feline respiratory disease complex (cat flu) includes those illnesses typified by rhinitis, conjunctivitis, lacrimation, salivation, and oral ulcerations. The principal infectious agents involved in this disease are feline viral rhinotracheitis virus (FVR) and feline calicivirus (FCV).

### **Hepatitis**

Properly known as canine infectious hepatitis, this is a transmissible disease of canids caused by infection with canine adenovirus 1. The infection affects the liver, kidneys, eyes and other organs and may result in death.

### **Impervious**

Material which does not admit water and associated contaminants, or which does not allow water or contaminants to be absorbed and held.

**Isolation**

A secure area in which individual animals can be placed to separate them from other members of the group.

**Kitten**

A cat, less than 16 weeks of age. See also “Cat”.

**Manager**

A person, including an owner, who directly or indirectly controls a facility. If controlling indirectly, this is likely to be through entering into a contract with another person, corporation or organisation for the operation of the facility.

**Microchip**

An inert miniaturised electronic passive transponder inserted under the skin of a dogs or cats for permanent identification purposes.

**Owner**

The owner of an animal may be: the person to whom the animal belongs (in the sense of property belonging to a person), or the person by whom the animals is ordinarily kept, or the registered owner of the animal.

**Parainfluenza (Type 2)**

A highly infectious canine virus which on its own may cause a mild respiratory disease. However, when present in combination with *Bordetella bronchiseptica* contributes to the development of canine cough syndrome.

**Parvovirus**

A virus which causes intestinal inflammation in infected dogs. Symptoms may include vomiting, diarrhoea, high fever, and dehydration, which typically result in a high mortality rate in infected puppies.

**Person in Charge**

The person who has any animal/s in their possession or custody or under their care, control or supervision, and who is responsible for meeting the welfare needs of the animal/s (from the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1979*). The person in charge may refer to the owner of an animal, the manager or staff of a facility, or volunteers of a facility, depending on the situation.

The person in charge, in relation to a facility, includes the owner of the facility or the person expressly appointed by the owner as the Manager of the facility.

**Premises**

Any property or premises used for breeding dogs and/or cats, as defined by this Code, or where puppies or kittens are housed as a result of breeding.

**Puppy**

A dog, less than 12 weeks of age. See also “Dog”.

**Quarantine**

A strict isolation for individual animals, involving biosecurity measures, designed to prevent the spread of disease. This may be provided through the use of a premises (such as a veterinary hospital) separate to the breeding premises, and must be for a minimum of 7 days.

**Re-home**

The process of providing an animal with a new owner/carer and a new place to live.

**Sale**

The transfer of ownership of an animal or animals. This concept includes causing, permitting or suffering an animal to be sold by auction, barter, exchange or other supply, and also includes the attempt to sell or offer to sell, expose, supply, possess or receive animals.

**Significant infectious disease**

A disease caused by a transmissible agent that is likely to cause illness or death in susceptible animals that become infected. Common examples include: canine cough; feline respiratory

disease; canine parvovirus infection; feline enteritis; canine infectious hepatitis and; distemper.

**Staff**

Manager, employees and volunteers that work in the facility.

**Operating procedures**

Are procedures for the management and operation of a facility for the breeding of animals.

**Volunteer**

A member of the public who is not paid, but works in a voluntary capacity under the supervision of the person in charge.

## 4 RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMPETENCY OF STAFF

### Objectives

All persons involved in the care and management of dogs and cats in breeding establishments should be competent and aware of their responsibilities.

### 4.1 ALL PREMISES

#### 4.1.1 Standards

- 4.1.1.1 The person in charge of the premises is responsible for the premises complying with all enforceable provisions within this Code, the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1979*; and any other relevant legislation.
- 4.1.1.2 The person in charge of the premises must ensure a copy of this Code and any operating procedures are kept at the premises and are accessible.
- 4.1.1.3 The person in charge of the premises must be aware of their responsibilities towards dogs and cats and, if caring for animals, be knowledgeable and competent to provide for:
- the care and welfare of dogs and cats;
  - the feeding, and watering, of dogs and cats;
  - the protection of dogs and cats from distress or injury caused by other animals or interference by people;
  - cleaning and proper hygiene in the facility;
  - identifying signs and symptoms of common diseases of the species kept

#### 4.1.2 Guidelines

- 4.1.2.1 A person in charge who provides care for animals should be trained and experienced, in:
- animal behaviour and social needs;
  - the receipt and release of dogs and cats;
  - housing of dogs and cats;
  - animal husbandry;
  - the handling and control of dogs and cats;
  - moving, transporting and capture of dogs and cats;
  - identifying signs of health and ill health in dogs and cats, including identifying symptoms of stress or when prompt veterinary care is required;
  - procedures for the care of sick and injured dogs and cats;
  - special requirements of old or young dogs and cats;
  - disease and parasite control and prevention;
  - emergency management and evacuation procedures;
  - the keeping of records.

- 4.1.2.2 The person in charge is encouraged to have First Aid training.
- 4.1.2.3 The person in charge should ensure that dogs or cats are not sold to inappropriate purchasers.

## **4.2 STAFFED PREMISES**

### **4.2.1 Standards**

- 4.2.1.1 The person in charge of the premises is responsible for the provision of appropriate animal housing and equipment and the supervision of all staff associated with the premises whether working full or part time and whether or not working for fee or reward.
- 4.2.1.2 The person in charge of the premises must ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities towards dogs and cats and that each animal is kept in the care of knowledgeable and experienced staff.
- 4.2.1.3 Each person who has duties in relation to the care or treatment of the dogs and cats must be appropriately supervised at all times.
- 4.2.1.4 Staff and volunteers must be made aware of the public and occupational health risks associated with the care and management of dogs and cats, and the appropriate steps which must be taken to reduce or eliminate them.
- 4.2.1.5 A person in charge must ensure that staff are trained, experienced and competent in:
- the care and welfare of dogs and cats;
  - the feeding, and watering, of dogs and cats;
  - the protection of dogs and cats from distress or injury caused by other animals or interference by people;
  - cleaning and proper hygiene in the facility;
  - identifying signs and symptoms of common diseases of the species kept.

### **4.2.2 Guidelines**

- 4.2.2.1 A person in charge should implement management practices to ensure that, where appropriate, employees are trained and experienced, in:
- animal behaviour and social needs;
  - the receipt and release of dogs and cats;
  - housing of dogs and cats;
  - animal husbandry;
  - the handling and control of dogs and cats;
  - moving, transporting and capture of dogs and cats;
  - identifying signs of health and ill health in dogs and cats, including identifying symptoms of stress or when prompt veterinary care is required;
  - procedures for the care of sick and injured dogs and cats;
  - special requirements of old or young dogs and cats;
  - disease and parasite control and prevention;
  - emergency management and evacuation procedures;

- the keeping of records.
- 4.2.2.2 Trainees and volunteers should work under the direct supervision of experienced staff.
  - 4.2.2.3 The person in charge is encouraged to employ staff who have formal training and qualifications in animal care and management, or who are in the process of completing such training.
  - 4.2.2.4 The person in charge is encouraged to employ staff which have First Aid training, or to provide First Aid training to staff members who do not have such qualifications.
  - 4.2.2.5 The person in charge should ensure that policies, procedures and staff training are implemented which eliminate the sale of dogs or cats to inappropriate purchasers.
  - 4.2.2.6 The person in charge should maintain a staff training register and ensure that all training is provided on a biennial basis.

**Note**

*For information on nationally recognised animal services qualifications, see: [www.ntis.gov.au](http://www.ntis.gov.au).*

*For information on emergency management response planning for animal holding facilities, see: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/emergency/management](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/emergency/management)*

## 5 QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

### Objectives

Breeding establishments should operate in a transparent way which ensures that standards of animal welfare are maintained.

### 5.1 Standards

- 5.1.1 The following information must be recorded relating to each dog or cat housed at the breeding establishment:
- a description of the dog or cat which includes: name, microchip number; sex (including whether desexed); breed; colour; distinguishing features; vaccination status; heartworm prevention status for dogs; details of any special medical and dietary requirements;
  - the date of birth; and the date of acquisition/arrival, and registration number (for purebred animals) of owned and leased dogs and cats;
  - the name, address and telephone number of owner or lessee of the dog or cat;
  - details of veterinary treatment of dogs and cats, including routine husbandry procedures such as worming or parasite control; and for leased dogs or cats, the name and contact telephone number of the veterinarian who normally attends the animal;
  - the disposal of owned and leased dogs and cats including the date and details of how the animal was disposed of.
- 5.1.2 Information which details each litter bred must be recorded and must include: the name and microchip number of both the dam and the sire; the date of mating(s), the date of whelping/queening; identification details of each animal within the litter, including any abnormalities or deaths.
- 5.1.3 Records must be retained for no less than three years, on the premises, and all staff must be able to produce the records.
- 5.1.4 The premises must have a documented program in place to control pests such as fleas, flies, lice, mosquitos and wild rodents. This document must be kept on the premises and all staff must be able to produce the document and must be familiar with its content.
- 5.1.5 Each premises must have a documented procedure for the swift removal of animals from the premises, in the case of emergency. This document must be kept on the premises and all staff must be able to produce the document and must be familiar with its content.

### 5.2 Guidelines

- 5.2.1 Procedural documents should be periodically reviewed and approved by the person in charge. The period from the last review and approval of procedures should not exceed 2 years.
- 5.2.2 Records kept should have space for notes or observations regarding individual animals made during time at the facility, including any significant alteration in the animal's condition or behaviour since arrival.

## 6 ANIMAL HOUSING

### Objective

The accommodation, environment and security of animals should be of a standard which ensures their security, safety and wellbeing.

### 6.1 ACCOMMODATION

#### 6.1.1 Standards

- 6.1.1.1 Dog housing and cat housing must be designed, constructed, serviced and maintained in a way that ensures the good health and well being of the animals, which prevents the transmission of infectious disease agents, the escape of animals and does not cause injury to either animals or humans.
- 6.1.1.2 Dog housing and cat housing must provide protection from rain and wind, direct sunlight or other adverse weather conditions and be at least partially enclosed to provide a sheltered sleeping area.
- 6.1.1.3 Cat housing must be a sufficient distance or otherwise isolated from dog housing to minimise the stress created by the sound, sight or smell of dogs.
- 6.1.1.4 Facilities must be available either at the breeding establishment or at a veterinary premises for isolation of dogs or cats that are suspected of, or have been diagnosed as having an infectious disease, or which are whelping or kitting.
- 6.1.1.5 Dog housing and cat housing must meet the minimum pen sizes shown in Tables 1 and 2 below. These limits do not apply to dogs and cats under veterinary care for a disease or injury.
- 6.1.1.6 Vehicles, caravans, portable crates and the crawl space under any dwelling must not be used as permanent housing for dogs and cats.
- 6.1.1.7 Breeding establishments must have a continuous water supply, adequate to meet the daily requirements of the dog and cats held.
- 6.1.1.8 Dog housing and cat housing must drain water and other liquids freely to ensure that the dogs and cats housed within them are not in extended contact with wet floors.
- 6.1.1.9 Cats must each be provided with a raised sleeping area and a suitable box in which to hide or sleep.
- 6.1.1.10 All sleeping areas for cats and dogs must have sufficient clean, dry and soft bedding, appropriate to the species and breed.
- 6.1.1.11 All confined cats must be provided with litter trays containing sufficient depth of material such as commercial cat litter, sawdust, shavings, sand or shredded paper.
- 6.1.1.12 Litter trays must be of a size to comfortably accommodate a digging or sitting cat.

**Table 1: Dog pen sizes (for maximum of two dogs)**

Height of dog at shoulder (cm)	Min floor area for 1 dog (m <sup>2</sup> )*	Min Height (cm)*	Min width (cm)	Floor area for each additional dog (m <sup>2</sup> )
>60	3.5	180	120	1.7

Height of dog at shoulder (cm)	Min floor area for 1 dog (m <sup>2</sup> )*	Min Height (cm)*	Min width (cm)	Floor area for each additional dog (m <sup>2</sup> )
40-60	2.4	180	90	1.2
<40	1.5	180	90	1.0

\* Includes the area allocated to bedding.

**Table 2: Cat pen sizes (for maximum of two cats, or one litter of kittens)**

Circumstance	Min floor area for 1 cat (m <sup>2</sup> ) **	Min Height (cm)	Min width (cm)	Floor area for each additional cat (m <sup>2</sup> )
<12 weeks *	0.9	90	90	0.8
>12 weeks	0.8**	210	60	0

- \* A maximum of two mature cats are allowable in this enclosure. They must not be held for more than 21 days.
- \*\* The module must contain at least 2 levels incorporating raised sleeping quarters. Access to all levels must be available through the provision of ramps, poles, steps or the like.

## **6.1.2 Guidelines**

- 6.1.2.1 If grassed or landscaped areas are provided for exercise they should not be allowed to deteriorate to bare earth.
- 6.1.2.2 If necessary, breeding establishments should seek water use exemptions and permits from their local authority.
- 6.1.2.3 All establishments should be sewered or on a septic system, or have some other adequate and acceptable method for disposal of faeces and other liquid wastes.
- 6.1.2.4 Dog housing and cat housing should be designed and maintained to facilitate easy cleaning, feeding, watering and the regular inspection of dogs and cats kept; and to minimise the risk of injury, the spread of disease, and to prevent the escape of dogs and cats.
- 6.1.2.5 Where groups of cats are housed together, consideration should be given for each cat to be able to be free from interference by other cats.
- 6.1.2.6 Very old and very young cats which are more sensitive to changes in temperature may require provision of heating or cooling. Queens in the early stages of pregnancy should not be subjected to constant high temperatures.

## **6.2 ENVIRONMENT**

### **6.2.1 Standards**

- 6.2.1.1 Dog housing and cat housing must have a shaded area when exposed to sunlight.
- 6.2.1.2 Dogs and cats must be protected from extremes of temperature.
- 6.2.1.3 The duration and intensity of artificial lighting in the premises must be as close as possible to natural conditions and must allow for diurnal light cycles.
- 6.2.1.4 Dog housing and cat housing must be protected from excessive light at night, which is generated from a source external to the premises. The light must be turned off, subdued or other light protections used.
- 6.2.1.5 Lighting must be sufficient to allow thorough inspection and observation of dogs and cats.
- 6.2.1.6 Where pens are located in enclosed buildings where forced ventilation is the only form of air movement, the following is required:
  - an air change rate of 6-12 changes per hour to prevent the build up of foul odours;
  - ventilation devices must avoid draughts and distribute fresh air evenly to all of the areas holding animals;
  - temperature must be maintained in the range of 15-30° C;
  - effective air cleaning and filtration;
  - a back-up source of power and alarm system in case of power failures or breakdown of ventilation and temperature control mechanisms.

- 6.2.1.7 Ventilation must be adequate to keep dog housing and cat housing free of dampness and draughts, and minimise noxious odours. Cage or pen areas must have an ample supply of fresh air.
- 6.2.1.8 Where heated floors are not installed, all dog housing must have a raised sleeping area or flexible trampoline style bed, which is a minimum of 150mm above the floor surface.

## **6.2.2 Guidelines**

- 6.2.2.1 Environmental temperature should be controlled to minimise distress to dogs and cats including the provisions of heating or cooling particularly for old or young animals if necessary. Particular attention should be given to protections for brachycephalic breeds, especially against heat.
- 6.2.2.2 Dog housing and cat housing should be free from draughts.
- 6.2.2.3 Dog and cat breeding establishments should be located away from sources of excessive noise or pollution that could stress or injure dogs or cats.
- 6.2.2.4 Loud or sudden noise, which may distress dogs or cats, should be avoided.
- 6.2.2.5 Noise from barking dogs should be managed to comply with noise regulations and may be reduced by one or more of the following methods:
- situating kennels so that they do not face each other;
  - limiting external stimulation, e.g. by partitioning between kennels or use of a visual barrier;
  - holding dogs singly or in compatible pairs.
- 6.2.2.6 Noise from stud cats or calling queens should be managed to comply with noise regulations and may be reduced by one or more of the following methods:
- providing lockable soundproof night quarters in which the stud is held in compliance with noise regulations;
  - locating the stud house inside another building, or by taking advantage of as much shielding by existing walls and buildings as possible;
  - providing the stud with companion cats, a more interesting run, or more companionship, such as relocation to where people, other cats and other animals can be regularly seen;
  - removing a calling queen from an outside pen and placing indoors in a pen, which can also be further covered over at night;
  - taking the queen promptly to stud, either entire or after vasectomy.
- 6.2.2.7 Lighting should not generate excessive heat.
- 6.2.2.8 Sunlight is the preferred means of lighting, provided shaded areas are available.
- 6.2.2.9 Very old and very young dogs which are more sensitive than others to changes in temperature may require provision of additional heating or cooling.

## **Notes**

*Brachycephalic means short-faced or short-headed, by comparison to the length of the body.*

## **6.3 SECURITY**

### **6.3.1 Standards**

- 6.3.1.1 The premises must be able to be reasonably secured to prevent access to the premises by unauthorised people.
- 6.3.1.2 Dog housing and cat housing must be fitted with a secure closing device that cannot be opened by the dogs and cats held.
- 6.3.1.3 Unauthorised people must not have access to dog and cat holding areas unless under the supervision of a staff member.
- 6.3.1.4 Functioning fire fighting equipment must be readily available and staff trained and practised in its use.
- 6.3.1.5 All potential poisons and harmful substances, whether in storage or in use, must be kept out of reach of dogs and cats.

### **6.3.2 Guidelines**

- 6.3.2.1 Double barriers are recommended to assist in preventing the escape of dogs and cats.
- 6.3.2.2 Any security methods used should allow for ready access to dogs and cats and ready exit for staff and animals from the premises in the event of an emergency.

### **Notes**

*Some fire retardants may be toxic to dogs and cats.*

## 7 ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

### Objectives

To ensure the safety, wellbeing, and psychological health when of breeding dogs and cats when housed and transported; animals should be protected from distress, injury, illness and disease, and provided with appropriate food and water.

### 7.1 ANIMAL CARE

#### 7.1.1 Standards

- 7.1.1.1 Measures must be implemented to protect dogs and cats from distress or injury caused by other animals.
- 7.1.1.2 Dogs and cats must be protected from distress or injury caused by interference by people.
- 7.1.1.3 Dogs and cats which must be housed singly include:
- bitches with puppies;
  - queens with kittens;
  - aggressive dogs and cats;
  - old or frail dogs and cats.
- 7.1.1.4 Dogs and cats that may be distressed by the presence of other dogs and cats must be housed in a manner that prevents visual and minimises or reduces olfactory contact.
- 7.1.1.5 Collars, choke chains or leads which may become entangled must be removed, when the dog or cat is not attended.
- 7.1.1.6 The coats of long haired dogs and cats must be groomed by brushing or clipping at a frequency which ensures that the dogs and cats coats are not left dirty, matted, tangled or unkempt.
- 7.1.1.7 Dogs which are able to move and walk must have the opportunity to exercise for at least 20 minutes daily. This can be provided by allowing them access to an exercise area to run freely, or by walking them on a lead.
- 7.1.1.8 Dogs must not be walked in unsecured areas unless:
- they are on a lead at all times; and
  - they are under the supervision of a competent person who is 18 years of age or older; and
  - no more than two dogs are being walked by the one person.
- 7.1.1.9 Any yard for group exercise must be supervised, and care must be taken to avoid mixing of incompatible dogs, fighting and the transmission of infectious disease agents.
- 7.1.1.10 Dogs must not be exercised in any way which may pose the risk of serious injury, for example attached to a motor vehicle, or unsupervised on a treadmill.
- 7.1.1.11 Dogs and cats must receive behavioural enrichment, recognising the physiological status and special needs of differing ages and species, to ensure good psychological health.
- 7.1.1.12 Dogs and cats that are unable to feed themselves must only be kept where adequate facilities and expertise is available for artificial rearing.

### **7.1.2 Guidelines**

- 7.1.2.1 All dogs and cats must be identified in accordance with the *Companion Animals Act, 1998*.
- 7.1.2.2 All equipment, which may affect the welfare of dogs and cats should be designed and maintained to minimise the risk of illness or injury.
- 7.1.2.3 Dogs and cats that may be distressed by the presence of other species of animals should be housed in a manner which prevents olfactory contact.
- 7.1.2.4 When grooming an animal, particular attention should be given to their eyes, nose, ears, breech, claws teeth and anal glands.

### **Note**

*Positive efforts should be made to socialise animals to humans and other animals. Animals which have been well-socialised when young may make better pets.*

## **7.2 FOOD AND WATER**

### **7.2.1 Standards**

- 7.2.1.1 Clean water must be available at all times at a temperature and quality that meets the physiological needs of the dog and cat, and that the dog and cat will drink.
- 7.2.1.2 Dogs and cats must receive a balanced and complete diet which allows them to maintain good health and growth, recognising the physiological status and special needs of differing ages and species.
- 7.2.1.3 Puppies and kittens must be offered a sufficient quantity of a balanced and complete diet at least three times daily, from three weeks of age.
- 7.2.1.4 Puppies from four to six months of age and kittens from four to eight months of age must be offered a sufficient amount of a balanced and complete diet at least twice daily.
- 7.2.1.5 Veterinary advice obtained in relation to feeding of sick dogs and cats must be complied with.
- 7.2.1.6 Dogs and cats which are co-housed must be monitored during feeding to ensure that all animals are eating their own share.
- 7.2.1.7 For dogs and weaned puppies, one feeding bowl must be provided per individual animal. For cats, there must be one feeding bowl per adult and one feeding bowl per three kittens.
- 7.2.1.8 Uneaten, spoiled or stale food must be removed and disposed of promptly.
- 7.2.1.9 Food and water containers must be removed, cleaned and replaced immediately if noticed to be contaminated by urine, faeces, vomitus and the like.
- 7.2.1.10 Food must be stored to prevent its deterioration or contamination.

### **7.2.2 Guidelines**

- 7.2.2.1 Food should be prepared hygienically and served in clean, non-spillable containers.
- 7.2.2.2 A variety of foods should be supplied. Canned and dry foods will form the staple diet in most cases, but fresh meat and fish should also be considered
- 7.2.2.3 Food should be given to pups and kittens under 4 months of age with a maximum interval of 12 hours between feeds. (For example, a puppy that receives its third feed,

and final feed, for the day at 5pm should receive its first feed for the next day no later than 5am the following morning.)

- 7.2.2.4 Food should be stored appropriately, with dry food kept in a rodent free place and fresh meat kept refrigerated.
- 7.2.2.5 Food and water containers should be readily accessible to dogs and cats, and be positioned to avoid spillage or contamination by urine or faeces.
- 7.2.2.6 Food and water containers should be stable, non-toxic and easily cleaned/disinfected

### **7.3 CLEANING AND DISINFECTION**

#### **7.3.1 Standards**

- 7.3.1.1 Dog housing and cat housing must be cleaned at least once daily and disinfected at least once a week. Bedding must be cleaned or changed at least once daily and disinfected at least once a week
- 7.3.1.2 Dog housing and cat housing must be cleaned and disinfected before new dogs and cats or puppies are introduced or before whelping or kitting.
- 7.3.1.3 Dog housing and cat housing must be cleaned and disinfected after an outbreak of infectious disease.
- 7.3.1.4 Exercise areas must be cleaned daily or before new dogs are introduced to the area.
- 7.3.1.5 At the completion of cleaning, dog housing and cat housing, must not be allowed to remain wet.
- 7.3.1.6 Food preparation and storage areas, food and water containers, and utensils and equipment used in the preparation and provision of food, must be cleaned daily.
- 7.3.1.7 Collection drains must be cleaned daily.
- 7.3.1.8 Litter trays must be checked, scooped and replenished daily.
- 7.3.1.9 Litter trays must be changed, washed and disinfected at least once every 3 days.
- 7.3.1.10 Litter trays that are saturated with urine must be changed immediately.

#### **7.3.2 Guidelines**

- 7.3.2.1 Cleaning and disinfection chemicals and materials should be chosen on the basis of their suitability, safety and effectiveness. They should only be used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions. Some common disinfectants, particularly those derived from or containing coal or wood tar products are toxic to cats. Pine oil, phenol, cresol and chloroxylenols are such products and should be avoided.
- 7.3.2.2 The Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals held should be available to staff.
- 7.3.2.3 All dead animals or waste products such as faeces, bedding, and food wastes should be disposed of promptly and hygienically, and in accordance with the requirements of the local government authority, the relevant government department or other authorities.
- 7.3.2.4 Staff should be aware of the risk of transfer of infectious disease and microbial contamination which could occur when handling dogs or cats or cleaning enclosures, and the practices that will reduce these risks.
- 7.3.2.5 Specialist advice should be sought before pest control operations are conducted, in order to protect the health and safety of the staff and the animals kept.

- 7.3.2.6 Chemicals used for pest control should be registered by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority under the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act, 1994* (Commonwealth) and only used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

## **7.4 FACILITY TRANSPORT**

### **7.4.1 Standards**

- 7.4.1.1 Dogs and cats must be boxed or suitably restrained to ensure their security and protection when transported. The box or restraint must protect dogs or cats from injury, and separate them from other animals.
- 7.4.1.2 Dogs and cats must not be transported in the boot of a car.
- 7.4.1.3 Dogs and cats must not be kept in a parked vehicle unless adequate temperature controls are provided.
- 7.4.1.4 Vehicles must have adequate ventilation and shade, sufficient to maintain good health and to avoid distress.
- 7.4.1.5 All purpose built vehicles must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after use to minimise the possibility of transmission of infectious disease agents between consignments of animals.
- 7.4.1.6 The minimum exercise requirement of this Code applies to transported dogs.
- 7.4.1.7 Litters of animals under eight weeks of age must be crated or contained with their mother. Litters from eight to sixteen weeks of age may be crated or contained as a litter.

### **7.4.2 Guidelines**

- 7.4.2.1 Transport may cause distress to dogs and cats and should be kept to a minimum.
- 7.4.2.2 All consignments of animals should comply with the recommendations and requirements for animal behaviour and containers of the current IATA Live Animals Regulations.
- 7.4.2.3 Containers used for dog and cat transport should provide adequate light and ventilation.
- 7.4.2.4 Any vehicle especially designed or regularly used for transporting dogs and cats should:
- protect animals from injury
  - have non slip floors
  - provide easy access and operator safety
  - protect against extremes of temperature
  - protect against unauthorised release of animals
  - be easy to clean and disinfect
  - be supplied with clean, secure cages for small dogs and cats, and with separate compartments or partitions for larger dogs and cats. Transport cages should permit an animal to turn around, but otherwise be of appropriate size to avoid trauma during transport.

7.4.2.5 On road trips of more than two hours duration, adequate stops should be made to allow dogs and cats the opportunity to exercise, eat, drink, urinate and defecate where appropriate; and for the enclosures to be cleaned where necessary.

7.4.2.6 For more detailed information about dog and cat transport, refer to the publication in this series titled “The Care and Management of Animals by Companion Animal Transport Agencies”.

### Notes

*Other Animal Welfare Codes of Practice are available from the NSW Department of Primary Industries Website at: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animal-welfare](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animal-welfare).*

*For more information about the IATA Live Animal Regulations, see: [www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live\\_animals](http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live_animals)*

## 8 ANIMAL HEALTH

### Objective

The health of animals should be monitored regularly to detect signs of disease, injury and distress with treatment provided where necessary. Where the destruction of animals is necessitated, it should be conducted in an efficacious and humane manner.

### 8.1 HEALTH CHECKS

#### 8.1.1 Standards

8.1.1.1 All dogs and cats must be inspected at least once daily to monitor their health and well-being. The person checking the animals must note all adverse observations where an animal is not:

- eating;
- drinking (in the case of kittens/puppies drinking milk);
- defecating;
- urinating;
- behaving normally;
- showing any obvious signs of illness or distress;
- able to move about freely;
- displaying a normal coat.

8.1.1.2 Any changes in health status must be promptly reported to the person in charge of the kennel or cattery for appropriate action.

8.1.1.3 Where there is evidence that whelping or kitting has commenced (eg straining or contracting) and there is no progress within two hours, the bitch or queen must be examined by a veterinarian and appropriate remedial action taken.

#### 8.1.2 Guidelines

8.1.2.1 Signs of illness or injury of for which veterinary treatment should be sought include but are not limited to:

- runny nose;

- runny, discharging or inflamed eyes;
- repeated sneezing;
- coughing;
- vomiting;
- severe diarrhoea, especially if bloodstained;
- lameness;
- bleeding or swelling of body parts (other than the vulva of a female on heat);
- inability to stand, walk, urinate or defecate;
- loss of appetite;
- weight loss;
- apparent pain;
- fits, staggering or convulsions;
- patchy hair loss.

8.1.2.2 Bitches or queens in the last week of pregnancy should be inspected at regular intervals.

## **8.2 VETERINARY CARE**

### **8.2.1 Standards**

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| <p>8.2.1.1 The person in charge of the kennel or cattery must establish liaison with a veterinarian who is able to attend to dogs and cats, and is able to advise on disease prevention measures.</p> <p>8.2.1.2 The contact details for the veterinarian must be posted in a location which enables staff and visitors to the facility to see it.</p> <p>8.2.1.3 Appropriate veterinary treatment must be provided for sick or injured dogs and cats.</p> <p>8.2.1.4 Sick or injured dogs and cats and dogs and cats suspected of suffering from a significant infectious disease must be cared for in the isolation facility.</p> <p>8.2.1.5 Dogs and cats known or suspected to be suffering from a significant infectious disease must remain in the isolation facility unless written assurances from a registered veterinarian regarding the appropriateness of housing with other animals is received.</p> <p>8.2.1.6 Any dog or cat confined in an isolation facility must be under veterinary supervision and the fate of the animal decided by a veterinarian.</p> <p>8.2.1.7 Veterinary advice must be obtained in the event of unexplained illness or deaths.</p> <p>8.2.1.8 Permission in writing must be obtained from an dog or cat's owner or nominee if leased at the time of accepting the animal for breeding authorising the provision of necessary veterinary treatment.</p> <p>8.2.1.9 Dogs must be vaccinated against distemper, hepatitis, parvovirus and canine cough in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.</p> <p>8.2.1.10 Cats must be vaccinated against feline infectious enteritis and feline respiratory disease in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.</p> <p>8.2.1.11 Kittens and puppies must be vaccinated against common infectious diseases at the earliest possible date, in consultation with a veterinarian.</p> |
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- 8.2.1.12 Dogs and cats known or suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease must not be used for breeding or be accepted for breeding under lease unless under written approval from a veterinarian.
- 8.2.1.13 A program for heartworm prevention for dogs must be in place and in accordance with veterinary advice.
- 8.2.1.14 Internal and external parasites must be controlled through routine and preventative treatments.

### **8.2.2 Guidelines**

- 8.2.2.1 A program for maintaining a feline leukaemia free population is recommended. This should include a program of testing and vaccination of resident cats in accordance with veterinary advice, and a requirement for a current negative test prior to breeding (which applies to cats from the permanent population, new additions to the permanent population or visiting cats).
- 8.2.2.2 Newly acquired dogs or cats or dogs or cats visiting from another location should not be mixed with the permanent population for a minimum of 48 hours.

### **Notes**

*Parasites include fleas, lice, ticks and gastrointestinal or heart worms.*

## **8.3 EUTHANASIA**

### **8.3.1 Standards**

- 8.3.1.1 Where treatment to restore the health of a dog or cat while in the facility is impractical or unsuccessful and where it is recommended by a veterinarian or an Inspector (appointed under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1979*) the dog or cat must be humanely destroyed.
- 8.3.1.2 Euthanasia of dogs and cats must only be performed by a veterinary surgeon or a person who is a trained euthanasia technician.
- 8.3.1.3 Euthanasia must be performed by the administration of an overdose of pentobarbitone sodium unless there are compelling reasons to use other methods to destroy a dog or cat.
- 8.3.1.4 Euthanasia must be conducted in an area that is separated from animal accommodation at the facility and must not be carried out in view of any other animals.

### **8.3.2 Guidelines**

- 8.3.2.1 All efforts should be made to home physically healthy and behaviourally sound dogs and cats.

## 9 TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP

### Objective

The transfer of ownership of animals should be used to promote socially responsible pet ownership.

### 9.1.1 Standards

- 9.1.1.1 Puppies and kittens must be 8 weeks of age before they are offered for sale or advertised.
- 9.1.1.2 Dogs and cats must not be re-homed to people less than 18 years of age.
- 9.1.1.3 No dog or puppy, cat or kitten may be sold unless vaccinated in compliance with the requirements of Section 8.2 of this Code.
- 9.1.1.4 All dogs and cats re-homed must be microchipped, and treated to remove gastrointestinal parasites prior to release.
- 9.1.1.5 No dog or cat suspected of being sick, injured or diseased may be sold under any circumstances.
- 9.1.1.6 At the time of purchase, clients must be offered accurate written information at no charge which concerns the care of animals purchased.
- 9.1.1.7 If within 3 days a dog or cat is not acceptable to the purchaser for any reason, the breeder is required to take the dog or cat back and refund 50% of the purchase price of the animal.
- 9.1.1.8 The guarantee required by Clause 9.1.1.7 must be provided in writing to the purchaser at the point of sale.

### 9.1.2 Guidelines

10.2.2 Information required by Clause 9.1.1.6 should include information about:

- general care requirements of the species, including appropriate diet and feeding regimes;
- usual life span of breed/species;
- minimum requirements for humane shelter and accommodation;
- minimum requirements for security of the dog or cat;
- minimum requirements for social contact with humans and other animals of the same species;
- minimum requirements for disease and parasite control/prevention;
- how to identify and appropriately manage common diseases;
- procedures for seeking emergency treatment for the dog or cat, and the value of establishing a relationship with a veterinary practitioner, and/or animal behaviourist or other experienced persons;
- the estimated costs associated with providing food and shelter for the dog or cat;
- routine veterinary treatment which may be required for the animal(s), for example vaccination or parasite control;
- maximum time a dog or cat can be left unattended;

- the expected behaviours of the species or breed, for example digging or scratching;
  - information about the legal requirements for pet ownership, and the penalties for non-compliance;
  - the dog or cat's vaccination status, and the need for ongoing vaccinations;
  - the desirability and advantages of desexing dogs and cats;
  - minimum requirements for exercise;
  - costs associated with registering the dog or cat;
  - other information which is reasonable that the purchaser must be made aware of.
- 9.1.2.1 If within 7 days a dog or cat is not acceptable to the purchaser due to health reasons, excluding injury, and the complaint is supported by a veterinarian, the breeder and the owner should negotiate in good faith to achieve an equitable outcome.
- 9.1.2.2 All advertisements for dogs and cats for sale should include the microchip number, and the vaccination status of the animal.
- 9.1.2.3 Desexing of dogs and cats not intended for breeding is strongly encouraged.
- 9.1.2.4 All facilities which re-home dogs and cats should assist in promoting socially responsible pet ownership in the community.
- 9.1.2.5 Policies, procedures and staff training should be implemented which ensure that prospective buyers are matched to suitable dogs and cats. Such matching should consider the characteristics and lifestyle of the buyer, the type and behavioural attributes of the animal including exercise requirements, and the environment of the new home, including yard size and presence of children.
- 9.1.2.6 Sick, aggressive, pregnant, unweaned, poorly socialised or deformed dogs and cats or animals with known vices such as excessive barking, fence jumping (dogs) should not be made available for rehoming.
- 9.1.2.7 Important information about the individual dog or cat, such as health care history, should be provided to the new owner of any animal sold.
- 9.1.2.8 New owners should be encouraged to seek advice about care, management and training issues from veterinarians or other people with appropriate expertise.
- 9.1.2.9 Where possible, breeders should participate in breed placement programs to assist pounds and shelters in the rehoming of surrendered dogs and cats.

## 10 BREEDING AND REARING

### Objectives

The mating, breeding, birthing and rearing processes should be managed in a way that assures good animal welfare outcomes.

#### 10.1.1 Standards

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| 10.1.1.1  | Bitches and queens must not be intentionally mated during their first oestrous cycle.  |
| 10.1.1.2  | A dog or cat must be physically and mentally fit, healthy and free of disease at the time of being mated.  |
| 10.1.1.3  | During mating, breeding pairs must be isolated from the remaining breeding population, and monitored by the person in charge.  |
| 10.1.1.4  | Mothers in the latter stages of pregnancy must be provided with additional volumes of food and water, provided at frequent intervals.  |
| 10.1.1.5  | During birthing bitches and queens must be isolated from the remaining breeding population, and monitored by the person in charge on a regular basis to ensure that the birth proceeds in a normal manner.   |
| 10.1.1.6  | Whelping bitches must be provided with a suitable whelping box, lined with clean bedding, changed daily.   |
| 10.1.1.7  | Kittening queens must be provided with a covered kittening box, lined with clean bedding, changed daily.   |
| 10.1.1.8  | Animals that are isolated from the remaining breeding population, eg dams in heat or entire stud sires, must be provided with additional attention and socialisation to animal carers.   |
| 10.1.1.9  | After delivery of a litter, the mother and young must be health checked by a veterinarian, and the birthing area must be cleaned and disinfected.  |
| 10.1.1.10 | Bitches must not have more than two litters in any two year period, unless with written veterinary approval.   |
| 10.1.1.11 | Queens must not have more than three litters in any two year period, unless with written veterinary approval.  |
| 10.1.1.12 | Lactating mothers must be provided with additional food and water.   |
| 10.1.1.13 | Lactating mothers must be housed in such a manner that they are able to escape their young.  |
| 10.1.1.14 | Kittens or puppies must not be separated from their litter or their lactating mother until they are seven weeks of age.  |
| 10.1.1.15 | Solid food must be offered to puppies and kittens from three weeks of age. Puppies and kittens must be monitored when first offered solid food to ensure that the food is acceptable and palatable. If necessary, solid food may require moistening or softening to increase palatability. |
| 10.1.1.16 | Puppies and kittens must be observed to ensure that they achieve an overall weight gain until eight weeks of age. Any puppies and kittens which do not achieve such a weight gain must be referred immediately for veterinary consultation.  |

## 10.1.2 Guidelines

10.1.2.1 Breeding practices should ensure that both breeding animals and the offspring they produce are as physically and behaviourally sound and healthy as possible. Dog and cat breeders have a responsibility to ensure that their breeding animals maintain the best quality of life possible, and litters should only be produced with a reasonable expectation of finding homes where they are both wanted and appreciated, and are offered a similarly good quality of life.

10.1.2.2 Where a heritable disease is recognised in a breed and where there is screening procedures or a test for that disease the manager in the case of a stud cat or dog or bitch or queen should:

- have a current official evaluation or test result for the dog or cat for such hereditary disease;
- provide the official evaluation or test result to the owners where the dog or cat is to be mated to an animal not owned by the breeding facility;
- provide the official evaluation or test result of both the sire and the dam to the new owners of any puppy or kitten;
- endeavour to ensure that the genetic make-up of both sire and dam will not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of known inherited disorders.

10.1.2.3 Breeding dogs and cats should be selected to eliminate negative behavioural traits, for example poor mothering ability or aggressiveness.

10.1.2.4 If dogs become aggressive during mating, it may be necessary to restrain or muzzle either or both the sire and the dam.

10.1.2.5 It is desirable to encourage puppies and kittens to urinate and defecate away from the nesting area. It is easier for dogs and cats to learn this behaviour at a young age, and animals with good toileting practices may make better pets.

10.1.2.6 Dogs and cats which are well socialised to human adults and children and with other animals will become well-adjusted companions. The best opportunity to socialise puppies to humans and other animals is before twelve weeks of age. For kittens, socialisation to humans and other animals is best achieved before seven weeks of age.

10.1.2.7 Before any dog or pup, cat or kitten is sold the prospective owner should be advised that the breeder has taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the animal is physically and behaviourally healthy.

10.1.2.8 Breeders should consider the welfare of their breeding sires and dams when deciding on the best time to re-breed or to cease breeding their animals.

10.1.2.9 When dogs or cats reach the end of their useful breeding life, or when mature potential breeding stock is found to be in some way unsuitable for breeding purposes, it is the responsibility of the owner to:

- have such dogs or cats spayed or castrated;
- settle the dogs or cats into their new condition (ex stud cats require considerable patience and care, but can become excellent candidates for pet homes);
- either provide a pet home for the desexed dogs or cats themselves, or to canvass for and carefully select a new pet home for the animals;
- exercise patience and retain responsibility for the dog or cat until such time as a satisfactory new home is established.

10.1.2.10 When cats are housed together for the purposes of mating, the animal care personnel should endeavour to ensure that:

- the queen and stud are both eating and using their litter tray;
- the animals have separate beds and are able to get some rest;
- the animals have actually mated;
- the stud has an easily accessible shelf on which to jump after mating the queen, to enable him to escape her claws;
- the correct paper work, including mating dates, sire's pedigree and any service agreements or litter registration forms are supplied to the owner/lessee of the queen when she is collected after the mating, or on payment of an agreed fee.