

SEC. ____ - ABUSE, CRUELTY, NEGLECT

General

Animal abuse, cruelty and neglect covers a wide range of situations and may be addressed by city ordinances and/or state statutes. Refer to Section 1 – City Ordinances 4-22, 4-24, 4-25 and 4-26 and Section 2 – State Statutes 828.12 and 828.13.

Animal Assessment – Emergency Response

If during the initial assessment, you find the condition of the animal requires immediate intervention, you must:

1. Impound the animal and notify the Supervisor.
2. If another Animal Control Officer is on duty, request back-up.
3. Call for an Police Officer to respond.
4. If possible, take at least 1 photograph with either your phone or tablet to document the animal's condition. If not possible, begin documenting via photographs as soon as possible.
5. Animals may be taken to the following locations:
 - a. Animal Emergency & Referral Center
 - b. Veterinary Medical Center of St. Lucie County
 - c. Tri-County Animal Hospital
6. Return to the location and follow the procedures for Documenting and Reporting.

Animal Assessment – Imminent Danger

If during the initial assessment, you find the animal is in imminent danger, you must:

1. Impound the animal and notify the Supervisor
2. Call for an Police Officer to respond.
3. Follow the procedures for Documenting and Reporting.
4. Take the animal to the Humane Society veterinarian for an official assessment of the animal's condition.

5. Complete an impound slip. Note the impound # in the computer and leave a copy with the animal.

Animal Assessment – Serious

1. Take whatever steps are needed to mitigate the situation (i.e. – put down food and/or clean water) and place a red tag on the door. If the owner does not contact animal control within 24 hours or the situation has not been remedied, the animal is to be impounded the following day.
2. Follow the procedures for Documenting and Reporting.

Document and Reporting

1. Assess the situation to determine the most appropriate response required.
2. If either an emergency response or imminent danger exist, make sure both a supervisor and the Police are notified.
3. Document the scene, taking photos with your tablet.
 - a. Start at the street and take overall photo of the property and front of the house.
 - b. Take several distance / overall photos as you approach the animal from different angles.
 - c. Take close up / detailed photos of the animal and any nearby items.
4. Speak with all witnesses available. Make sure to obtain their correct name and contact information. If they are willing, they may also provide a written witness statement.
5. If reporting an emergency or imminent danger case, submit your recommendation if the City is to initiate custody proceedings for review.
6. If the evidence and testimony provided do not support a criminal charge, issue Animal Control citations to address all violations found.
7. Create and complete computer case. Be sure to upload all the photos taken and include all witness statements.
8. If impounding the animal, fill out impound slip – make sure to note impound # is the computer case.