

Hamden Police Department

General Orders

Policy Number: 028-014

Effective Date: September 20, 2023

Section: General Operating

Rescinds: August 1, 2005

Procedures

Approved By: Police Commission

Title: Animal Control Officer

Approval Date: September 19, 2023

PURPOSE

To establish procedures that insure a uniform response to the Department's handling of animal related complaints. It is the responsibility of all personnel to become familiar with and adhere to these procedures. It is the additional responsibility of supervisory staff to insure compliance with these procedures. For the purposes of this policy, references to an ACO, which stands for Animal Control Officer, shall also include the Assistant Animal Control Officer when governing actions. It is understood that an ACO is generally the supervising animal control officer while the assistant ACO is subordinate however they share much of the same function under this policy.

POLICY

The Animal Control Officer (ACO) is primarily responsible for handling all complaints regarding canines. However, the ACO is also involved with handling all types of animal nuisance, and sick or injured animal complaints. The ACO is additionally responsible for insuring that impounded dogs under their control receive proper care, and that the impound facility is maintained in a neat, sanitary and professional condition abiding by all laws.

Animal Control Officers are not sworn police officers and are not authorized to perform the duties of sworn police officers on or off duty. They may however issue infractions and take action as governed by Connecticut General Statutes as applicable.

Animal Control Officers shall receive training that is mandated by the State of CT and any addition training as deemed appropriate by the Hamden Police Department and HPD policy as applicable to an ACOs duties.

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PROCEDURES

A. Calls for Service.

1. When a call for service is received:
 - a. The ACO will respond to the call for service and handle it in a manner consistent with accepted practices.
 - b. As soon as practical after clearing a call, the ACO will contact dispatch to obtain an incident case number if one has not already been generated. The information necessary for the CAD generated complaint will be relayed to the dispatcher.
 - c. In the event an infraction ticket is issued by the ACO, a case report will be completed by the ACO.

B. Complaints and Incidents When a Report is required.

1. On-going complaints at the same location or by the same owner.
2. Any incidents, complaints or referrals to other Department Divisions and/or other agencies.
3. At the discretion of a supervisor.

C. Emergency Calls after Hours.

1. The Patrol Supervisor will use the following situational guidelines for ACO emergency call-out:
 - a. Injured canine still alive, must call out for transportation to appropriate facility.
 - b. Dog bite with unknown owner, or if owner is known however canine has not been vaccinated.
 - c. Injured wild animal still alive.
 - d. Vicious/aggressive roaming dog.
 - e. Roaming dog which is a danger to itself, vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic.
 - f. Incidents involving the issue of quarantine when the owner of an animal is not known or not available.

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2. The ACO(s), having been called out on an after-hours emergency call, shall:
 - a. Respond to the scene and notify Central Communication of arrival.
 - b. Handle the call for service in a professional manner according to accepted practices.
 - c. Contact Central Communications upon clearing the scene.
 - d. Complete any case report that may be necessary.
 - e. Turn into the desk office any paperwork such as infractions for court officer processing.

D. Non-Call Out of ACO.

1. The following situational incidents will be handled by other on-duty Divisions when an ACO is not working:
 - a. Patrol Division Responsibilities.
 - i. Dog bite on owners' property when canine has been vaccinated; the owner can quarantine the canine until the next ACO business day.
 - ii. Wild animal that appears sick, for example rabid, and has had no contact with domestic animals or humans. In normal circumstances, the supervisor will be responsible for the dispatch of the animal. A supervisor may authorize an officer to dispatch the animal.
 - iii. Wild animals that appear sick and has had contact with domestic animals or humans can be dispatched, preferably with animal head in-tact, bagged and stored in ACO refrigerator for examination by the State. The officer **MUST** notify the ACO if an animal is in storage for State examination.
 - iv. In the case of "ii or iii", the Department shotgun is the preferred weapon.
 - v. For a wild animal on a residents' property that appears healthy, the officer must tell the resident to leave the animal alone until the next ACO business day. The resident can contact DEEP at 860-424-3011 for exclusion advice. Nuisance Wildlife Control (NWCs) can be contacted for non-injured wildlife. Phone numbers for NWCs are listed on the DEEP website. However this will be at the expense of the resident.

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- vi. A barking dog can only bark for 15 minutes then must be taken into a residence. The dog can then be put out again. Enforcement can be taken by officers under C.S.S. Sec. 22-363 or in violation of Town Ordinances.
 - b. Central Communication Responsibilities.
 - i. Central Communication personnel are to follow up on received complaints of dead animals in the road by contacting the appropriate agencies:
 - a. Hamden Public Works
 - b. State Department of Transportation
 - c. Entry in ACO log book
 - 2. Central Communication personnel will advise the complainant(s) concerning non-vicious/non-aggressive roaming dogs that are not in complainants custody to:
 - a. Leave a voicemail message on an ACOs voicemail.
 - b. Advise complainant(s) the ACO will respond on the next business day.
 - c. Make notification in the ACO log book including all pertinent information, name, location, contact person, etc.
 - 3. Complaint(s) received of wild dead animals on residential properties; advise the resident to bag and dispose of the remains.
- E. Present Facility Utilized by ACO(s) and the Police Department.
- North Haven Center
Tel. # 239-5321, Ext. 415
Hours of Operation: M-F, 0800-1600, SAT, 0800-1200
Closed Sunday and Holidays

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F. ACO Uniforms

1. ACO uniforms will be determined by the Chief of Police and supplied by the Police Department's uniform vendor per ACO contracts.
2. The ACO uniform however will be clearly distinguishable from sworn police officers.
 - a. ACO uniform shirts will be of a different color or shade of color from sworn police officers.
 - b. ACO patches shall be distinguishable from a sworn police officer's patch and will denote that the employee works in an ACO capacity.
 - c. ACO badges will be clearly distinguishable from a sworn police officers badge either by design, markings / insignia or both.