




ARLINGTON COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVE MANUAL

Chapter: 5 Procedures	Effective Date: July 1, 2019	Amends/Supersedes: November 3, 2017 September 3, 2013 November 17, 2005	By Authority of the Chief of Police  Charles A. Penn
Accreditation Standard(s): N/A			

533.01 Animal Cases

I. Policy

The Animal Welfare League of Arlington (AWLA) provides animal control and animal sheltering services to Arlington County. The Police Department will render reasonable assistance when requested by an animal control officer.

II. Procedure

A. Animal Investigations

1. Animal control officers are charged with the enforcement of all Virginia and Arlington County laws pertaining to the welfare, care, and control of domestic and wild animals and are legally authorized to issue citations and take cases to court. AWLA officers will complete any necessary reports and perform follow-up investigations. Animal control officers investigate all animal complaints including:
 - a. Neglect and cruelty to animals.
 - b. Animal bite complaints.
 - c. Barking dog complaints, if the concern is related to physical distress. (Animal control officers do not have the legal authority to issue citations for barking dogs since this falls under the County's noise ordinance).
2. Police - The police department may investigate or handle the following types of animal-related incidents:
 - a. Larceny of animals.
 - b. Illegal shooting of animals.
 - c. Unattended, injured, or dangerous animals.
 - d. Noise complaints involving barking dogs between 1900-0700 only.

- B. Destruction of Animals – Officers may humanely destroy an animal found suffering from an injury or disease if the officer believes the animal is in pain and is unlikely to recover from its wound or illness. Officers may also humanely destroy any animal that poses an imminent threat to the public.

Destructions shall occur only with supervisory approval, unless the animal poses an immediate threat to the officer or the public. Destruction shall be accomplished in a manner that causes minimal further suffering to the animal. Where practical, destruction should occur out of public view or in a manner that attracts the least public attention to the incident.

Following an animal's destruction, the destroying officer shall ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for removal and disposal of the carcass, including testing of the animal's remains in rabies cases. A case report shall be completed by the destroying officer or their supervisor. The supervisor shall complete a *Firearms Discharge at Animal* review via BlueTeam and forward it through the chain of command to the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) and the Chief of Police.

- C. VCIN Information - Officers may disseminate VCIN vehicle registration information to animal control officers in furtherance of an animal related investigation. Prior to the dissemination, however, the officer shall meet with the animal control officer to verify the purpose for obtaining the information.