


## Animal Control

### 806.1 POLICY HEADER

<b>Original Effective Date:</b>	<b>Revised Date:</b>
September 1, 2021	January 4, 2023
Authorization:  Jason Haberman Chief of Police	

### 806.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for interacting with animals and responding to calls for service that involve animals.

### 806.3 POLICY

It is the policy of the Mt. Lebanon Police Department to be responsive to the needs of the community regarding animal-related issues. This includes enforcing local, state and federal laws relating to animals and appropriately resolving or referring animal-related problems, as outlined in this policy.

### 806.4 ANIMAL CONTROL RESPONSIBILITIES

Animal control services are generally the primary responsibility of Animal Control and include the following:

- (a) Animal-related matters during periods when Animal Control is available.
- (b) Ongoing or persistent animal nuisance complaints. Such complaints may be scheduled, if reasonable, for handling during periods that Animal Control is available for investigation and resolution.
- (c) Follow-up on animal-related calls, such as locating owners of injured animals.
- (d) Obtain any appropriate training pursuant to 3 P.S. § 459-901.

### 806.5 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Members who respond to or assist with animal-related calls for service should evaluate the situation to determine appropriate actions to control the situation.

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Due to the hazards of handling animals without proper training and equipment, responding members generally should not attempt to capture or pick up any animal, but should keep the animal under observation until the arrival of appropriate assistance.

Members may consider acting before the arrival of such assistance when:

- (a) There is a threat to public safety.
- (b) An animal has bitten someone. Members should take measures to confine the animal and prevent further injury.
- (c) An animal is creating a traffic hazard.
- (d) An animal is seriously injured.
- (e) The owner/handler of an animal has been arrested or is incapacitated. In such circumstances, the member should find appropriate placement for the animal.
  1. This is only necessary when the arrestee is expected to be in custody for a time period longer than would reasonably allow him/her to properly care for the animal.
  2. With the owner's consent, locating appropriate placement may require contacting relatives or neighbors to care for the animal.
  3. If no person can be found or the owner does not or cannot give consent, the animal should be taken to a designated animal care facility.
- (f) Dogs are found running at large. Members should take action to control them (3 P.S. § 459-302).

When the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture or any state dog warden requests assistance, officers are required to provide assistance (3 P.S. § 459-401).

#### **806.6 ANIMAL CRUELTY COMPLAINTS**

Laws relating to the cruelty to animals should be enforced, including but not limited to animal fighting, illegal physical modification of an animal, animal cruelty or animal neglect (18 Pa.C.S § 5532; 18 Pa.C.S. § 5533 through 18 Pa.C.S. § 5548; 3 P.S. § 459-601).

- (a) An investigation should be conducted on all reports of animal cruelty.
- (b) Legal steps should be taken to protect an animal that is in need of immediate care of protection from acts of cruelty.

#### **806.7 ANIMAL BITE REPORTS**

Members investigating an animal bite should obtain as much information as possible for follow-up with the appropriate health or animal authorities. Efforts should be made to capture or otherwise have the animal placed under control. Members should attempt to identify and notify the owner of the final disposition of the animal.

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#### **806.8 STRAY DOGS**

If the dog has a license or can otherwise be identified, the owner should be contacted, if possible. If the owner is contacted, the dog should be released to the owner and a citation may be issued, if appropriate. If a dog is taken into custody, it should be transported to the appropriate shelter/holding pen and Animal Control or Dispatch should be notified.

Members shall provide reasonable treatment to animals in their care (e.g., food, water, shelter).

#### **806.9 DANGEROUS ANIMALS**

In the event responding members cannot fulfill a request for service because an animal is difficult or dangerous to handle, the Watch Commander will be contacted to determine available resources, including requesting the assistance of animal control services from an allied agency.

#### **806.10 PUBLIC NUISANCE CALLS RELATING TO ANIMALS**

Members should diligently address calls related to nuisance animals (e.g., barking dogs), because such calls may involve significant quality-of-life issues.

#### **806.11 DECEASED ANIMALS**

When a member becomes aware of a deceased animal, all reasonable attempts should be made to preliminarily determine if the death of the animal is related to criminal activity. Arrangements should be made with Animal Control for the removal of the animal.

Members should not climb onto or under any privately owned structure for the purpose of removing a deceased animal.

#### **806.12 INJURED ANIMALS**

When a member becomes aware of an injured domesticated animal, all reasonable attempts should be made to contact an owner or responsible handler. If an owner or responsible handler cannot be located, the animal should be taken to an animal care facility.

##### **806.12.1 ANIMAL CARE**

Members are authorized to provide reasonably necessary care to an animal that has been seized pursuant to 18 Pa.C.S. § 5552.

#### **806.13 DESTRUCTION OF ANIMALS**

When it is necessary to use a firearm to euthanize a badly injured animal or stop an animal that poses an imminent threat to human safety, the Firearms Policy shall be followed. A badly injured animal shall only be euthanized with the approval of a Watch Commander.

When the owner or responsible handler of an animal cannot be located or is unavailable to provide care, or when the animal has been used in fighting or baiting and is disabled, injured or diseased beyond reasonable hope of recovery, it may be humanely destroyed (18 Pa.C.S. § 5552).