

Animal Control

806.1 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.

806.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Louisville 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.

806.3 CODE ENFORCEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Animal control services are generally the primary responsibility of Code Enforcement and include:

- a. Animal-related matters during periods when Code Enforcement is available.
- b. Ongoing or persistent animal nuisance complaints. Such complaints may be scheduled, if reasonable, for handling during periods that Code Enforcement is available for investigation and resolution.
- c. Follow-up on animal-related calls, such as locating owners of injured animals.
- d. Tasks identified in the Colorado Animal Protection Act (CRS § 35-42-101 et seq.).

806.4 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.

Due to the hazards of handling animals without proper training and equipment, responding members generally should not attempt to capture and 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:

1. There is a threat to public safety.
2. An animal has bitten someone. Members should take measures to confine the animal and prevent further injury.
3. An animal is creating a traffic hazard.
4. An animal is seriously injured.
5. The owner/handler of an animal has been arrested or is incapacitated. In such circumstances, the member should find appropriate placement for the animal.
 - a. 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.

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- b. With the owner's consent, locating appropriate placement may require contacting relatives or neighbors to care for the animal.
- c. 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.

806.5 ANIMAL CRUELTY COMPLAINTS

Laws relating to the cruelty to animals should be enforced, including but not limited to CRS § 18-9-202 et seq.

- 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 or protection from acts of cruelty.

806.6 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.

If a biting dog has been killed (see Destruction of Animals section) in order to prevent further injury or death, the local board of health shall be notified of the facts related to the bite and the killing, and the body of the dog shall be held until a disposition is received from the board of health (6 CCR 1009-1:1).

806.7 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 shall be transported to the appropriate shelter/holding pen.

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

806.8 DANGEROUS ANIMALS

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

806.9 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.

806.10 DECEASED ANIMALS

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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.

If a deceased animal is a domestic animal, members shall scan the animal for a microchip ID, and make all reasonable attempts for identifying and notifying the animal's owner or responsible handler.

Deceased animals on public property should be removed, sealed in a plastic bag and properly disposed of by the responding member.

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

If a domesticated animal is found deceased, members shall complete a case report which includes a description of the animal, the location found, as well as any attempts to contact an owner or responsible party.

806.11 DESTRUCTION OF ANIMALS

When it is necessary to use a firearm to euthanize a badly injured non-domestic animal or stop an animal that poses an imminent threat to human safety, the Firearms Policy shall be followed. A badly injured or sick/diseased non-domestic animal shall only be euthanized with a firearm and with the approval of a supervisor. Officers may euthanize badly injured or sick/diseased non-domestic animals with the appropriate caliber firearm.

A Response to Resistance form shall be completed in all incidents where an animal is destroyed, as well as a case report.

806.12 INJURED DOMESTIC ANIMALS

When a member becomes aware of an injured domesticated animal, all reasonable attempts shall be made to contact the owner or responsible handler, as well as scanning the animal for a microchip ID. If an owner or responsible handler cannot be located, the officer will make reasonable attempts to take the animal to a designated animal care facility. Members will complete a case report which includes a description of the animal, the location they were taken, as well as any attempts to contact an owner or responsible party.

806.13 CONDUCTED ELECTRICAL DEVICES

Upon completion of approved training, CEOs will be issued a Conducted Electrical Device (CED) or TASER StrikeLight. CEOs will be trained in the proper use, care, and carry of these items before they may carry them on duty. The StrikeLight will be carried while in uniform. CEOs are only authorized to use the equipment for which they have been trained.

806.13.1 DEFINITIONS

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CED - Conducted Electrical Device or TASER StrikeLight

Deploy - to draw or present a CED

Activate - to turn on or spark the CED

806.13.2 TRAINING

CEO will carry the Taser StrikeLight once they have undergone training and successfully completed the departmental training. CEO will be required to complete annual recertification to continue carrying the StrikeLight.

806.13.3 USAGE

The StrikeLight offers an alternative to the use of lethal force in response to an attack by an aggressive animal.

Code Enforcement Officers (CEO) who have completed department approved training may carry the TASER StrikeLight. The StrikeLight may be deployed against an attacking or dangerous animal to startle /haze or repel, only if the animal reasonably appears to pose an imminent threat to human safety, or to protect the community from dangerous wildlife and alternative methods are not reasonably available or would likely be ineffective.

The StrikeLight may be deployed/arched as a deterrent to an aggressive animal.

The bezel of the StrikeLight is designed to strike at an aggressive/attacking animal and may be deployed as an impact weapon as a method of defense.

CEOs may also deploy the StrikeLight to provide non-lethal force in self-defense against a person when confronted with active aggression as defined in the Department's Use of Force-Response to Resistance Policy.

Officers shall only use a StrikeLight which has been issued by the Department.

CEOs shall wear the device in an approved holster on their person.

CEOs carrying the StrikeLight should perform a spark test on the unit prior to every shift.

The StrikeLight will be stored and charged inside the CEO offices in the off position.

806.13.4 DOCUMENTATION

Any use of the StrikeLight must be reported to the on duty supervisor. Any Use of Force against a person must be documented in a report and a Response to Resistance form must be completed.

Any use against a domestic animal where the animal sustains injury or death must be documented in a report and a Response to Resistance Form will be completed.

