

**Title: PROVIDING SHORT TERM SHELTERING FOR PETS OF FAMILIES IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS**

**Affected Agencies:** DES-RALS-RASKC

**Authorities:** 4.1 King County Executive Order on Domestic Violence

**Keywords:** [Note: Words typically used for electronic searches]

**Sponsoring Agency:** Regional Animal Services of King County

**Signature:** Gene S. Muller

**Date signed and effective:** 02/02/17



**King County**

**I. Purpose**

To provide short term assistance to families in crisis due to domestic violence by providing temporary care for family pets.

**Applicability and Audience DES-RALS-RASKC**

**II. Definitions**

The following organizations and/or entity shall be deemed agents if duly authorized by the client to work with Regional Animal Services of King County (RASKC) to coordinate service to the Pet or communication about same with the Client.

2.1 Agent: King County Domestic Violence Units  
King County Law Enforcement Agencies  
King County Office of the Prosecutor  
Community Domestic violence support agencies or programs  
Women's / Men's Domestic Violence Shelters  
Child Welfare agencies of the Dept. of Social & Health Services

2.2 Manager of Regional Animal Services: The person designated by the Director of Records and Licensing Services Division to coordinate the Domestic Violence Sheltering Program including waiver of fees, consistent with KCC 11.04.335 Waiver of fees and penalties, and other discretionary decisions necessary for administration of this program.

2.3 Client: The person on whose behalf an authorized Agent coordinates with Regional Animal Services of King County for temporary animal shelter and care.

2.3. Designee: Any fostering home, veterinarian, County agency or other entity working with or on behalf of Regional Animal Services of King County to provide shelter or care to pets whose families are victims of domestic violence.

2.4 Domestic Violence: The category of offenses as defined in RCW 10.99.020 committed by one cohabitant against another (see RCW 70.123.020).

2.5 Domestic Violence Program: An agency that provides shelter, advocacy and counseling for domestic violence victims in a supportive environment (See RCW 70.123.020).

2.6 Fostering: The temporary placement of any pet receiving care under this program in a private family living situation as opposed to receiving such care in King County's or a delegate agency's animal sheltering facilities.

2.7 Pet: Any animal considered eligible for temporary sheltering under this program. Pets eligible for domestic violence sheltering shall include common household dogs,

cats, potbellied pigs, rabbits and other small common household pets. Dangerous animals (defined as those animals, other than common household dogs or cats, capable of killing or seriously injuring a human being; and any domestic animal deemed "vicious," "potentially dangerous," or "dangerous" through a legal procedure) are excluded from participation in this program.

2.8 Referring Agency: See Definition 2.1 Above, Agent.

### **III. Policy**

A. King County recognizes that the safety of family pets is a consideration in a domestic violence situations and can impact a victim's decision to remove him/herself from the domestic violence situation.

B. King County will take reasonable steps to attempt to facilitate the temporary care of pets of domestic violence victims to assist the victims in their ability to remove themselves from the dangerous situation.

C. As a publicly funded entity, King County must comply with public disclosure laws and regulations. Understanding this, potential Clients must recognize that the confidentiality of the Client and the sheltered pet will be maintained to the extent permitted by RCW 42.17.250 and 42.17.310. Also, reasonable and lawful steps will be taken to maintain the safety of County personnel and foster families.

D. Only persons who have been referred by a domestic violence programs as defined in Section 2.1 of this policy and in RCW 70.123.020 shall be eligible for participation in the program.

E. King County shall provide a level of care to the animal(s) sheltered under this program consistent with that level regularly provided to stray and owner released animals. The cost of such care shall be reimbursed to the County by the client when possible. Where the client is not able to reimburse the County for the care and feeding of the sheltered animal, consistent with KCC 11.04.335 Waiver of fees and penalties, the Manager of Regional Animal Services of King County shall have the discretion to authorize a waiver of such payment.

F. King County reserves the right to refuse to shelter any animal after giving due consideration to the circumstances, type of animal to be sheltered, etc.

G. To the extent possible, communications regarding the status of the animal being sheltered shall be between the Manager of Regional Animal Services of King County or her/his specific designee and the agent.

H. Limited visitation (no more than once in any 7 day period) may be allowed and facilitated at the discretion of Regional Animal Services of King County. No visits shall be allowed if animals are fostered at the discretion of the Regional Animal Services Manager and the agent.

I. Temporary fostering of sheltered animals shall be permitted when space in the shelter or the specific needs of the animal dictates. In these cases, candidate foster families shall be notified of the need to shelter a domestic violence client's pet and the requirement for confidentiality.

J. Regional Animal Services of King County shall consult with the Domestic Violence Intervention Unit of the King County Sheriff's Office (or Domestic Violence Liaison / Detective for the law enforcement agency of the pet owner's jurisdiction) as needed to ensure proper handling of Domestic Violence related activities.

K. Regional Animal Services of King County shall shelter no more than two animals per client at any time. Any requests to shelter more than two pets per client must be authorized at discretion of the Manager of Regional Animal Services. Kenneling fees may be waived at the discretion of the Manager of Regional Animal Services, consistent with KCC 11.04.335, Waiver of fees and penalties.

L. The standard holding period for eligible pets is seven calendar days. If at the expiration of the standard seven day sheltering period, client has not redeemed the pet, the Manager of Regional Animal Services shall have discretion to extend the pets holding period for seven more calendar days, during which time, Regional Animal Services shall attempt to contact the client or his/her agent to arrange for return of the animals. If neither the client or agent has redeemed the pet within fourteen calendar days, such animal will be automatically relinquished to Regional Animal Services of King County for handling and disposition. Any extension beyond fourteen days must be authorized by the Manager of Regional Animal Services.

#### **IV. Implementation Plan**

A. This policy becomes effective for Regional Animal Services of King County on the date that it is signed by the Section Manager. Regional Animal Services of King County is responsible for implementation of this policy.

B. Referring Agency

B.1 Determine Client Eligibility (Clients must be in need of temporary animal sheltering to assist in efforts to remove themselves from a domestic violence situation).

B.1.a Only those persons who have been referred by a domestic violence support service or agency shall be eligible for participation under this program. Examples of such referral services and/or agencies include:

- King County Domestic Violence Units
- King County Law Enforcement Agencies
- King County Office of the Prosecutor
- Community Domestic violence support agencies or programs
- Women's / Men's Domestic Violence Shelters

Child Welfare agencies of the Dept. of Social & Health Services

- C. Regional Animal Services of King County Control Officers
  - C.2 Coordinate transportation of pet to Regional Animal Services of King County for Sheltering
    - C.2.a Animals sheltered under this program shall whenever possible be delivered to Regional Animal Services of King County and shall be picked up from Regional Animal Services of King County at the conclusion of the sheltering period. Under circumstances where delivery of the animal is not immediately possible, when requested by a referral agency, Regional Animal Control Officers shall provide field support to pick up said animals at no charge to the client.
    - C.2.b To the extent possible, animals shall be delivered to **Regional Animal Services of King County** during normal business hours. When due to emergency circumstances, it is necessary for Regional Animal Services to begin sheltering the animal outside of normal business hours, arrangements for such sheltering shall be made with the **Manager of Regional Animal Services**.
- D. Regional Animal Services of King County Staff
  - D.3 Complete Pet Intake Procedure
    - D.3.a The manager of Regional Animal Services or her/his specific designee (e.g. Shelter sergeant, Field Officer or Shelter Veterinarian) shall obtain completed intake forms (see Appendices) from client or agent.
    - D.3.b The following completed forms shall be obtained at the time of intake:
      - Service Agreement
      - Animal Information Form
      - DV Intervention Plan

D.3.c Regional Animal Services of King County staff shall complete Internal DV Receiving Form (See Appendices)

D.3.c Name, address and other identifying information shall, when possible, reference only the AGENT, so the victim's name/location do not appear on shelter records that is viewable by the staff, volunteers or public

D.3.d All shelter records on pets sheltered under this program shall be clearly marked "MANAGER'S HOLD".

D.3.e For confidentiality purposes, shelter records regarding animals sheltered under this program, shall be marked as "already adopted". Information shall be kept confidential to the extent allowed by applicable law.

D.3.f Animals shall, unless absolutely necessary, be listed under the name of the referring agency or agent

D.3.g Assign one single phone number (206) 296-3959 which will be regularly answered for the use of DV agencies in coordinating necessary services.

E. Regional Animal Services of King County Staff

E.5 Facilitate Limited Pet / Client Visitation

E.5.a The Client may visit the sheltered animal only after prior arrangements have been made with and approved by the **Manager of Regional Animal Services**. All such visitation shall occur during regular business hours and shall occur at a location designated by the **Manager of Regional Animal Services**. No visitation shall be allowed if pets are temporarily placed for care with a foster family.

E.6. Release Pet to Client or Agent / Referring Agency

E.6.a. If required by KCC 11.04.030, pets sheltered under this program shall be licensed and microchipped prior to returning pet to client or agent. Licensing and microchipping shall be at client's expense. In circumstances where client cannot purchase required license, a temporary three-month license may be issued free of charge which shall be renewed at client's expense, the microchip will be issued free of charge at the expense of Regional Animal Services. License and microchip must be registered either in the name of the Client or the Agent where necessary to maintain confidentiality. In situations where the animal is licensed under the name of the Agent, it will be the responsibility of the Agent to ensure Client's receipt of mailings, etc. Agent's mailing address or P.O Box may be used as an address for this purpose.

E.6.b Client or agent shall receive and sign all forms that are standard when redeeming an animal from Regional Animal Services of King County. Such forms may be signed and recorded under the name of the Agent in order to protect the confidentiality of the Client.

E.6.c Client or agent shall also complete Domestic Violence Release form which shall indicate treatment received by pet while sheltered under this program.

Responsibilities:

- F.1 Agent / Referral Agency
  - F.1.a Screen potential clients for placement of pets under this program
  - F.1.b Refer clients to Regional Animal Services of King County for participation in this program
  - F.1.c Work with Regional Animal Services of King County to coordinate all communications, pick-up and delivery of pets to client
  - F.1.d Obtain completed forms from client and forward same to Regional Animal Services of King County
  - F.1.e Obtain authorization from client to work with Regional Animal Services of King County on behalf of sheltered pet
  - F.1.f Provide guidance and/or coordination within their capacities to Regional Animal Services of King County
- F.2 Client
  - F.2.a Maintain sufficient contact with Agent / Referral Agency and/or Regional Animal Services of King County (RASKC) such that RASKC can either directly or by way of the Agent provide and obtain information regarding health and or decisions regarding disposition of the animal(s) whenever necessary.
  - F.2.b Provide updated contact information to Agent / Referral Agency and/or Regional Animal Services of King County
  - F.2.c Reimburse Regional Animal Services for all costs incurred as a result of sheltering, including medical care deemed necessary by Regional Animal Services of King County Veterinarian
  - F.2.d Purchase animal license and renew same as required by law
- F.3 Regional Animal Services of King County
  - F.3.a Assure appropriate documentation is received and recorded
  - F.3.b Take reasonable steps within the law to maintain confidentiality of client
  - F.3.c Provide for feeding, watering, sheltering and exercise of pet
  - F.3.d Evaluate required medical care and make provisions for same
  - F.3.e Coordinate with Client or Agent and with Designees and King County Law Enforcement as necessary
  - F.3.f Work in cooperation with Agents and referral agencies regarding pick-up and return of pets
  - F.3.g Facilitate limited pet/client visitation where possible (not to exceed once per seven day period). No visitation shall be allowed if a pet is placed in foster care.
  - F.3.h Inform Client of any medical care provided to pet during sheltering
  - F.3.i Make reasonable attempts to return animal to client using agent as an intermediary as necessary.
  - F.3.j The manager of Regional Animal Services shall exercise discretion, consistent with KCC 11.04.335, Waiver of fees and penalties, in determining whether waiver of any fees associated with temporary DV sheltering is appropriate on a case by case basis.

F.4 King County Law Enforcement Office

F.4.a Provide guidance, expertise and direction to Regional Animal Services of King County in all matters regarding domestic violence including communications, release of pet, etc.

**V. Maintenance**

A. This policy will be maintained by DES-RALS-RASKC, or its successor agency.

B. This policy will automatically expire five (5) years after its effective date. A new, revised, or renewed policy will be initiated by DES-RALS-RASKC, or its successor agency prior to the expiration date.

**VI. Consequences for Noncompliance**

A. Regional Animal Services of King County Staff – This policy is a directive, a stated order, to protect the pets of qualified clients.

B. Agents – Failure to adhere to the policies contained herein may lead to review of, and a decision by the Manager of Regional Animal Services of that Agents ability to be a party to this policy.

C. Clients – The consequences of noncompliance range from a removal of a pet from this program (e.g. for visiting without approval, sharing pet's location) to the relinquishment of a pet for failing to redeem in a timely manner.

**Appendices:** DV Receiving Form  
Service Agreement  
Animal Information Form  
DV Intervention Form  
DV Release Form

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE- Release

(NOTE: Agent/Designees name and address may be used if necessary to maintain Confidentiality.)

Date in: \_\_\_\_\_ Date released: \_\_\_\_\_

Client and or/Agent name: \_\_\_\_\_

Released to: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of animal: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of animal: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed of animal: \_\_\_\_\_ Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Male \_\_\_\_\_ Neutered \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Spayed \_\_\_\_\_

Fees collected:

Licensing \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Fees waived:

Licensing \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Fees owed:

Licensing \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Explain: \_\_\_\_\_



- Treatment received while in custody:

**Felv** \_\_\_\_\_ **FIV** \_\_\_\_\_ **Rabies** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Additional treatment recommended:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Comments

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Regional Animal Services of King County**  
**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM**

Protective custody

**Service Agreement**

**I. Regional Animal Services shall:**

1. Take reasonable steps to maintain the client's confidentiality in accordance with the program per applicable law.
2. Provide for the shelter, care and feeding of said animal(s) while under the control of Regional Animal Services.
3. Shelter said animal(s) for up to seven (7) days and may shelter animal for additional seven day period if necessary and authorized by the Manager of Regional Animal Services.
4. Make and execute all medical decisions which are deemed appropriate and in the best interest of the animal. Care shall be given at the same level as strays and owner released animals.
5. Determine disposition of said animal(s) if the animal(s) are not claimed within seven days after the standard seven day holding period, unless other arrangements have been made with the Manager of Animal Services.

**II. The Client shall:**

1. Comply with all requirements of the program guidelines including reimbursing King County for any veterinary costs necessarily incurred by King County in the care of said animal(s) unless a waiver is permitted for said costs by the Regional Animal Services Manager.
2. Maintain or provide for contact with RASKC while said animal(s) are in the custody and care of RASKC pursuant to the program guidelines. Such contact must be sufficient to allow RASKC to either directly or by way of the Agent provide and obtain information regarding the health and or decisions regarding disposition of the animal(s) whenever necessary.
3. Making other redemption arrangements or contact the Manager if he/she is unable to claim said animal(s) on or before the expiration of the seven day holding period. Animal is automatically relinquished to Regional Animal Services at the end of fourteen days.
4. Notify the Regional Animal Services Manager to voluntarily relinquish the animal if he/she is unable to care for said animal(s).
5. Defend, indemnify and hold King County, its officers, employees, agents, and designees free and harmless from all liability arising out of any and all claims, demands, losses, damages or causes

of action, of every kind and description which may occur or arise from this agreement or the clients choice to shelter or surrender said animal(s) to Regional Animal Services of King County and to participate in this program.

**Client signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**(or signature of authorized representative of Agent/Referral Agency)**

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION FORM

### STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Animal is sheltered under the following Agent/referral agency:

\_\_\_\_\_

Referral Agency contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date animal(s) will be claimed (7 days unless otherwise approved) \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact/designee: \_\_\_\_\_

(Name)

(Relationship to Participant)

Designee address:

Designee phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of animal(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Animal(s) can be released to: (List names of authorized parties):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Regional Animal Services of King County Manager signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Case number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_