

ATHENS COUNTY

HUMANE SOCIETY GUIDELINES

MINIMUM REQUIRED CARE OF ALL ANIMALS

Overview

<i>The Expectation</i>	To create clear boundaries and set expectations, minimize nuisances and dogs/animals at large complaints while offering the opportunities for meaningful discussions and education with pet and livestock owners about animal care.
<i>The Why</i>	<p>Animals across Ohio are suffering and, in some cases, dying from exposure to extreme cold and heat. Others are suffering and, in some cases, dying from lack of minimal care including water, food and shelter.</p> <p>These guidelines provide clear expectations for pet and livestock owners about minimal levels of care, helping them avoid punitive action.</p>

Athens County Guidelines

To include ALL animals including but not limited to: dogs, cats, amphibians, reptiles, companion animals, exotics and livestock.

<i>Food and Water</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Food and water MUST be wholesome and adequate for every animal● MUST be provided in a clean and sanitary manner● NO frozen water allowed. If it is so cold that the water is freezing that fast then it is too cold for dogs outside. Use of heated bowls acceptable.
<i>Humane Standards for Tethering</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Tethers with weight must be limited to not to exceed 1/10 of dogs body weight. No locks/padlocks or chains wired to collars. Must have a swivel snap to prevent binding/kinking/hanging.● It shall be unlawful for any person to allow a dog to be confined by use of a tether, chain or similar restraint: (1) by a tether of less than 10 feet in length, or less than four times the length of the dog's body from tip of nose to base of tail, whichever is greater; (2) by a tether the length of which allows the dog to cross the property line of the property on which it is tethered ;(3) using logging chain, tow chain or other tether that causes injury or pain to the dog because of the material of which it

is made or because of the size or weight of the tether; (4) by attaching the tether to the dog by a collar that is not properly fitted or by means of a choke chain collar, pinch collar or prong collar; Must be wide nylon or similar; (5) in an area likely to cause injury or pain to the dog because of entanglement or because of surrounding structures; (6) if the dog is not spayed/neutered, less than 6 months old, underweight, sick or injured.

- Water access MUST be available at all times. Food must be present on the property, stored securely and fed on a regular basis.

Extreme Weather

- No dog shall be left outside and unattended, regardless of access to an outdoor shelter, during any period in which a severe weather advisory or warning has been issued for the area by the National Weather Service, or if the temperature is below 32 degrees Fahrenheit or above 90 degrees Fahrenheit. This includes but is not limited to a dog in a securely fenced-in yard, a dog in a kennel or a dog tethered.
 - Exceptions can be made for untethered livestock, guardian dogs and arctic breeds
- Depths of Straw required: 6" of fresh, dry straw below 40 degrees

Shelter

- "Outside and Unattended" for purposes of this section, shall mean any dog who is confined outdoors for a duration of longer than 15 minutes and not in visual range and physical presence of the owner. This expressly includes, but is not limited to, a dog in a securely fenced in yard, a dog in a kennel or a dog tethered. For purposes of this section, a dog shall be considered "outside" regardless of access to an outdoor doghouse or similar structure.
 - No plastic shelters are permitted below 32 degrees and above 80 degrees and all shelters must be raised off the ground.
 - For any dog left outside and unattended for more than 30 minutes during any period, the following must be provided:
 - A shelter that is moisture-proof and of suitable size to accommodate the dog, allowing for freedom of movement to make normal postural adjustments, including the ability to stand, turn around and lie down with limbs outstretched. It shall be made of durable material with a solid, moisture-proof floor raised at least 3 inches over the doorway and not permit rain to enter inside the shelter. The shelter shall not be constructed of metal or any material that readily conducts heat or cold.
 - Between November 1st and March 31st of any year, all structures must have a windbreak at the entrance and must contain a sufficient quantity of suitable, clean bedding material consisting of straw and provide insulation appropriate to local climate conditions and sufficient to protect against cold and dampness. Hay, blankets, rags and other materials that retain moisture shall not be used for bedding.
 - Between May 1st and October 31st of any year, all dogs must be afforded one or more areas of shade by natural or artificial means large enough to accommodate the entire body of the dog at one time to provide protection from the direct rays of the sun. Shaded area must be separate and outside of any shelter.
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Livestock

- Livestock must receive feed and water of sufficient quantity and quality on a regular basis so as to help ensure maintenance of normal body condition and/or growth.
- Adequate Shelter (Final decision by Humane Agent): Three sided structure with roof that livestock can access 24/7

“Tethering is an unacceptable method of confinement for any animal and has no place in humane sheltering. Constant tethering of dogs in lieu of a primary enclosure is not a humane practice.”

-The Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters, Association of Shelter Veterinarians.

FAQS

<p>We are a country founded on freedom and personal rights; don't tell me how to raise my dog.”</p>	<p>Part of our social contract is to accept laws that are for the common good, and one of our shared values is the humane treatment of animals. We must consider all of the financial aspects of caring for a pet when determining if pet ownership is a good idea. In short, these laws are part of our social contract. Owning animals is not a requirement, but caring for them humanely is absolutely a requirement that owners sign up for when acquiring an animal.</p>
<p>A tether doesn't mean a dog is neglected. A dog could be just as neglected behind a fence. Removing chaining won't stop neglect, and we already have laws for that.”</p>	<p>A tethering ordinance will not solve every dog problem in your community overnight, but it is part of a long-term solution. Chained dogs are taxing to a community, and we all pay the costs. It is important to remember that tethered dogs are more likely to bite and attack than are dogs living behind fences, because tethering restricts natural behaviors and leaves the dog exposed.</p>
<p>These regulations will flood the shelters.</p>	<p>This guideline is designed to improve conditions for animals who live outdoors, but the goal should be keeping pets in their homes when possible. Working with owners to reach compliance is the goal, and the citation/seizure options should only be employed when education is ineffective. There might be an increase in calls in the beginning, but they tend to even out and eventually reduce the number of reports to law enforcement. Rather than being a burden on animal control officer, it will help create long-term change in the community by raising animal-keeping standards.</p>

<p>What about people who can't afford a fence?"</p>	<p>Often, education and resources are the solution to a dog living at the end of a chain or being kept outdoors. More and more communities have fence-building coalitions and groups like Pets for Life who provide services and fences free of charge for families. Fences for Fido, for example, also offers resources for advocates, including supply lists, fence-building instructions, etc. Working with these groups will help mitigate some of these concerns and keep dogs with their people whenever possible.</p>
<p>What about escape artists? This is the only way to confine my dog.</p>	<p>There is often a solution available for these dogs. For example, law enforcement and/or volunteer groups might help citizens bury their fence to prevent digging, extend the length of wire at the top of the fence or install roller bars to prevent jumping. Coyote rolls and hammered in hogwire cost just dollars and address both the digging and climbing issues. Also, a small solar panel will charge a line of hotwire that can be run high or low along a fence line as well.</p>

Conclusion

Animals across Ohio are suffering and, in some cases, dying from exposure to extreme cold and heat. Others are suffering and, in some cases, dying from lack of minimal care including water, food and shelter.

Using this guideline will create clear, objective expectations. Well-defined terms establishing minimum standards of care are essential to combatting animal suffering. This Athens County Humane Society Guideline will serve as an educational tool to inform pet and livestock owners of the minimal level of care they MUST provide. Additionally, it will make law enforcement less burdensome by providing criteria for determining when the law has been violated. This is a clear and enforceable guideline, designed to solve a problem at hand, and reasonable for citizens of Athens County to comply with.

Any questions and concerns can be directed to:
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