

NEWS RELEASE

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Council adopts Nanaimo's Animal Responsibility Bylaw

Summary

On September 21, 2021, Nanaimo City Council adopted the Animal Responsibility Bylaw. Council was able to take this step after receiving approval from the Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development regarding the bylaw.

The Animal Responsibility Bylaw, which takes effect immediately, is a result of a fulsome review of the City's Animal Control function that recommended an update to the bylaw to reflect current best practices for animal care standards. Some of the new provisions include:

- removing reference to "Restricted Dogs" since it is no longer best practice (and not practicable) to target;
- changing "Vicious Dog" to "Aggressive Dog";
- modernizing sections to reflect current best practises on standards of care;
- implementing mandatory identification for cats;
- requiring mandatory sterilization for outdoor cats; and
- prohibiting cats from running at large in a public place or another persons' property without their permission.

Public input was sought on the bylaw in November and December 2020. After reviewing the feedback, amendments were made including adding a "Animal Responsibility - Promise to Return" policy which would see seizure and impound fees waived until January 1, 2023 for any cat impounded that is sterilized and has identification.

For more information and to view the bylaw, the "Promise to Return" policy and a Fast Facts Brochure, please visit www.nanaimo.ca/goto/animals.

Strategic Link: Providing an updated Animal Responsibility Bylaw supports Council's priorities of Environmental Responsibility and Governance Excellence.

Key Points

- The main focus of this Bylaw is to emphasize the importance of animal safety and responsible pet ownership.
- The new bylaw includes a "Promise to Return" policy and phasing in fees for cats impounded until January 1, 2023.

Quotes

"Pets are beloved family members and bring an abundance of joy to our lives. This new bylaw focuses on protecting our pets through responsible and ethical care along with guidelines to ensure they are good neighbours."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- Owners of outdoor cats are still able to allow their cats to enjoy the outdoors; however, owners should be mindful that if there is a complaint submitted to the City due to their cat(s) trespassing on any private property

(without the property owner's consent), the City's Bylaw Enforcement will investigate the matter and work with the cat owners on getting compliance.

- There is no requirement for a cat to be on a leash. The Animal Responsibility Bylaw sets the structure that if there is a nuisance animal, stray or abandoned cat, or feral population that needs addressing, this Bylaw gives Bylaw Enforcement Officers the ability to respond to complaints and protect the health and well-being of the Animals.
- Impound fees will be waived until January 1, 2023 for any cat that is impounded in violation of Section 41 or 47 of the "Animal Responsibility Bylaw 2021 No. 7316" subject to the cat being sterilized and having identification (as defined in the Animal Responsibility Bylaw).

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