

**CODE OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE
WELFARE OF PET AND WORKING DOGS**

**DUTY OF CARE TO A DOG UNDER THE
ANIMAL WELFARE (GUERNSEY) ORDINANCE, 2012**

Section 8 of the Animal Welfare (Guernsey) Ordinance, 2012 provides that the owner or keeper of an animal owes a duty to take such care as, in all circumstances, is reasonable to see that the animal is free –

- from thirst, hunger and malnutrition,
- from discomfort,
- from pain, injury and disease,
- from fear and distress, and
- to express normal behaviour patterns.

In determining what care is reasonable in all the circumstances described above, the owner or keeper of an animal shall have particular regard to -

- (a) good practice for the care of the animal in question,
- (b) any lawful purpose for which the animal is kept,
- (c) any lawful activity carried on in relation to the animal,
- (d) the physical activity undertaken by the animal,
- (e) seasonal climatic conditions,
- (f) the life-stage of the animal, and
- (g) any special or additional dietary and nutritional requirements that may arise -
 - (i) where the animal is pregnant, brooding or rearing young, and

- (ii) from the general state of health of the animal.

"**normal behaviour patterns**" means normal behaviour patterns for a domestic animal or a captive animal, as the case may be, of the kind concerned.

The duty of care includes providing the animal with -

- (a) a supply of fresh drinking water and food of sufficient quantity and quality to keep the animal in good health,
- (b) where appropriate, suitable shelter which is sufficient to maintain the animal in good health and such shelter must include -
 - (i) access from the shelter to water and food,
 - (ii) sufficient space for the animal to lie down or otherwise rest in comfort, and
 - (iii) where appropriate, adequate light, heat and ventilation,
- (c) protection from injury, disease or unnecessary suffering including, where appropriate, providing timely and appropriate medical diagnosis and treatment where necessary by a recognised veterinary surgeon, and
- (d) the opportunity to express normal behaviour patterns and living conditions that are conducive to maintaining those normal behaviour living patterns.

The Welfare Recommendations below provide practical guidance on meeting this duty of care when caring for a pet or working dog.

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE UNDER SECTION 13(1) OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE (GUERNSEY) ORDINANCE, 2012 FOR THE WELFARE OF PET AND WORKING DOGS

A FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE WELFARE RECOMMENDATIONS MAY BE RELIED UPON IN COURT AS TENDING TO ESTABLISH LIABILITY FOR FAILING TO MEET THE DUTY OF CARE

RECOMMENDATIONS – FOOD AND WATER

1. A dog should be provided with food that contains the correct balance of essential nutrients, in sufficient quantity to keep it, in all circumstances, in good health and vigour.
2. A dog should be provided with fresh, clean water in sufficient quantity to keep it, in all circumstances, hydrated.

RECOMMENDATIONS - LIVING ENVIRONMENT

3. As a minimum a dog should be provided with a living space that –
 - a. is large enough to allow it to lie down and rest or sleep in a natural posture,
 - b. is large enough to provide it with space, other than the place in which it rests and sleeps, to stand up, stretch, walk three paces and turn around in a normal posture,
 - c. provides it with shelter that is dry, ventilated, but protected from draughts and which provides protection from direct sunlight and extremes of heat and cold,
 - d. provides daylight or light equivalent to daylight during normal daylight hours, and

- e. allows continuous access to water and appropriate access to food (to ensure it receives a sufficient quantity of food as required to meet the duty of care).
4. A dog should not be made to sleep directly on hard, cold surfaces such as stone, concrete or metal.
 5. A dog should be able to go to the toilet in a place other than the place where it normally eats, drinks, rests and sleeps.

RECOMMENDATIONS - HEALTH

6. A dog that is injured or ill should be provided with timely and appropriate treatment for the injury or illness or in the case of a serious injury or illness, medical diagnosis and treatment by a veterinary surgeon. In the case of doubt, advice should be obtained from a veterinary surgeon.
7. Veterinary medicines or treatments should only be administered in accordance with the directions of a veterinary surgeon or a person authorised to supply such products, or in the case of products that can be purchased by the general public, in accordance with the directions of the manufacturer of the product.
8. Hazardous substances should be kept out of the areas to which a dog normally has access.
9. A dog should be protected from hazardous appliances (household and garden) by keeping such appliances out of the areas to which it normally has access or by using measures to ensure it does not suffer harm from the appliances.
10. A dog should be given enough exercise to keep it in good health and vigour.
11. A dog's coat should be checked regularly for mats and external parasites and, if necessary, mats should be removed and parasites treated.
12. A dog's claws should be checked regularly and excessive growth should be clipped.

13. Any collar, harness or other gear fitted to a dog should not cause it discomfort, damage its skin or impede its breathing.
14. Food and water containers that are provided for a dog should be kept clean of waste food and contamination.
15. Dog faeces should be removed from any place where a dog eats, rests or sleeps.

RECOMMENDATIONS - BEHAVIOUR

16. A dog should not be routinely kept alone for more than 4 hours, or kept continuously, in an environment that provides no contact with people, other animals or any other form of mental stimulation.
17. A dog should be provided with the opportunity to regularly socialise with people, dogs and other animals unless, in the circumstances, it could cause it harm.
18. If the owner or keeper trains a dog, the least restricting or uncomfortable training method or aid should be used to achieve a training objective. A training aid should not be used in a way that causes injury, suffering or distress to a dog and should be fitted so that it is comfortable and does not cause chafing of the skin or impede breathing.
19. A dog should only be tethered to provide temporary restraint and only a dog which has a calm temperament should be restrained in this way.

RECOMMENDATIONS - BREEDING

20. Only a dog that is adult, well developed, in good health and condition and with a favourable temperament should be used for breeding.
21. An owner or keeper who breeds a dog should make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the genetic characteristics of both the breeding dog and bitch will not result in known inherited disorders being transferred to the off-spring.

22. Unless the intention is that a bitch is to be bred, bitches which are in 'season' should not be left unattended with males (neutered or entire).
23. A bitch that is due to whelp should be provided with a whelping area in a safe, warm, dry and quiet environment and with clean bedding material. It should be inspected frequently to ensure that it is not experiencing whelping difficulties, but otherwise disturbed as little as possible. If a bitch exhibits any signs of significant difficulties, veterinary assistance should be sought promptly. It should not be left pushing unproductively for more than 20 minutes without seeking veterinary advice.
24. Bedding material should be replaced after birth has taken place and as frequently as needed to keep the area clean. Care should be taken to minimise the disruption to the bitch and puppies.
25. Veterinary advice should be sought if a puppy does not suckle, it does not gain weight after 3 days or if it gains weight then its weight stops increasing.
26. Puppies should be able to feed independently, be in good health and condition and should have begun socialising with other dogs and humans before they are re-homed.

RECOMMENDATIONS - TRANSPORTATION

27. A dog that is transported in a vehicle should be securely confined within the vehicle. A dog should not be transported unrestrained in a vehicle with the windows wide open or in an open topped or open sided vehicle or trailer.
28. A dog should not be left unattended in a vehicle unless the environment within the vehicle is maintained below 24°C air temperature in the shade.
29. A dog that is transported in a vehicle within the Island or onto or off the Island for commercial purposes should be provided with ventilation and the environment within

the vehicle should be maintained between 17°C and 24°C air temperature in the shade.

30. A dog that is transported onto or off the Island in a vehicle should be restrained by a barrier, cage, travelling crate or seat belt and harness.
31. If transported in a travelling crate, cage or behind a barrier a dog should be able to stand up, turn around and lie down with ease. There should be space for a bed and a source of water. Crates, cages or barriers should be secured within the vehicle and positioned so that a dog is not exposed to extremes of temperature, drafts or high humidity.
32. A dog should not spend more than 8 consecutive hours confined in a vehicle or travelling crate per day.

Further, more detailed guidance for the welfare of dogs is set out in "Guidance for the Welfare of Pet and Working Dogs" issued by the Commerce and Employment Department and available on request from the Department or on the States of Guernsey website. That guidance does not form part of this Code.