

**CODE OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE
WELFARE OF PET CATS**

**DUTY OF CARE TO A PET CAT 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 patterns.

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

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

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 cat 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 cat 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 cat 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 cat should have access to an outside area where it can dig and cover urine or faeces with soil or other material or it should be provided with a deep litter tray.
5. A cat 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 cat 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 cat normally has access.
9. A cat 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 cat's coat should be checked regularly for mats and external parasites and, if necessary, mats should be removed and parasites treated.
11. A cat's claws should be checked regularly and excessive growth should be clipped.
12. Any collar, harness or other gear fitted to a cat should not cause it discomfort, damage its skin or impede its breathing.

13. Food and water containers that are provided for a cat should be kept clean of waste food and contamination.
14. Cat's faeces should be removed from any place where a cat eats, rests or sleeps.

RECOMMENDATION - BEHAVIOUR

15. A cat should not be kept in a confined place, from which it cannot escape, with other cats if the cats fight regularly.

RECOMMENDATIONS - BREEDING

16. Only a cat that is adult, well developed, in good health and condition and with a favourable temperament should be used for breeding.
17. An owner or keeper who breeds a cat should make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the genetic characteristics of both the breeding animals will not result in known inherited disorders being transferred to the off-spring.
18. A female that is due to give birth should be provided with an area that is safe, warm, dry and quiet and also provided with clean bedding material. It should be inspected frequently to ensure that it is not experiencing difficulties, but otherwise disturbed as little as possible. If a female 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.
19. 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 female and kittens.
20. Veterinary advice should be sought if a kitten does not suckle, it does not gain weight after 3 days or if it gains weight then its weight stops increasing.

21. Kittens should be able to feed independently and be in good health and condition before they are re-homed.

RECOMMENDATIONS - TRANSPORTATION

22. A cat that is transported in a vehicle should be restrained in a secure container.

23. A cat should not be left unattended in a vehicle unless the environment within the vehicle is maintained below 24°C air temperature in the shade.

24. A cat 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.

25. A cat that is transported onto or off the Island in a vehicle should be restrained in a travelling cage or crate.

26. A travelling container should be large enough to allow a cat to stand up, turn around and lie down with ease. There should be space for a bed and a source of water. A container should be secured within the vehicle and positioned so that a cat is not exposed to extremes of temperature, drafts or high humidity.

27. A cat should not spend more than 8 consecutive hours confined in a vehicle or travelling container per day.

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