



Animal Welfare Position Statements

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- British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BCSPCA) and CEO Craig Daniels
- Edmonton Humane Society (EHS)
- Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) and CEO Kate MacDonald
- Ottawa Humane Society (OHS) and Executive Director Bruce Rooney

Each of these organizations is a leader in animal welfare in Canada and North America and each agreed that the Calgary Humane Society may use materials from their statements of position in formulating the following document.

We are very grateful for their support, and to work with such collaborative colleagues in pursuit of a society in which all lives are respected and treated with compassion.

Glossary of terms

Companion animals: Domesticated animals that have been selectively bred to live and thrive in mutually beneficial relationships with humans.

Distress: The state of being in need of adequate care, food, water, or shelter; or being injured, sick, or in pain, or suffering. Distress includes fear, agony, and stress and induced psychological phenomena; being abused; being subject to undue hardship, deprivation, and / or neglect. (See footnote for the Alberta Animal Protection Act definition of distress and some related explanations.)¹

Domesticated animals: Species selectively bred by humans over hundreds and often thousands of generations, in order to alter their genetics to create animals that are dependent, docile, predictable, and controllable, and that no longer occupy an ecological niche in the wild.

Exotic animals: Species that are non-domesticated, non-indigenous wild animals, whether captured from the wild or captive-bred.

Feral cats: Unsocialized cats who may be one or more generations removed from a home environment and who may subsist in a colony of similar cats living on the fringes of human existence. Feral cats have missed the window of developmental opportunity during which they could be socialized to live with people.

Hybrid exotic animals: Individual animals that are the offspring of wild/exotic animals that have bred with either domesticated animals, or other wild/exotic animals.

¹ The Alberta Animal Protection Act states that an animal is in distress if it is
(a) deprived of adequate shelter, ventilation, space, food, water or veterinary care or reasonable protection from injurious heat or cold,
(b) injured, sick, in pain or suffering, or
(c) abused and subjected to undue hardship, privation or neglect.

The provisions for ventilation and space mean that animals kept in holding facilities are entitled to fresh air and sufficient room to carry out normal activities. The term “veterinary” is to clarify the type of care, and to ensure that animals receive proper medical attention when needed.

The requirement for reasonable protection from injurious heat or cold makes it an offense to fail to protect animals from extreme temperatures. The type of protection varies according to species, and sometimes by breeds within a single species. However, all species require some form of protection from the elements. Dogs left outdoors, for example, need a degree of protection dependent on their breed hardiness. Some livestock species such as pigs require enclosed structures, while windbreaks are acceptable for cattle and horses.

Tame/captive-bred exotic or wild animals: Individual wild animals that have been habituated to living amongst humans but have not been selectively bred, and therefore still retain the genetic biological and behavioural characteristics of their non-captive counterparts.

Wild animals: Species that have genetically evolved in complex ecological systems resulting in mutual interdependencies with other animals and the surrounding environment. Wild animals all have an ecological niche.

Introduction

Objects of the Society

1. To promote, primarily within the city of Calgary, but also provincially, nationally, and globally, a humane ethic encompassing respect for all animals.
2. To provide a shelter for lost or unwanted animals in which their comfort, safety, and health are maintained in an exemplary environment and compassionate atmosphere.
3. To alleviate the suffering of animals and eliminate cruelty and neglect.
4. To promote responsible practices which will reduce the number of lost or unwanted animals.
5. To reunite lost pets with their rightful owners.
6. To ensure that animals that cannot be placed in good homes are humanely euthanized.
7. To recruit to our membership caring individuals dedicated to animal welfare and humane issues.

(NOTE: The above Objects of the Society were submitted for ratification at the Annual General Meeting of the Calgary Humane Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals held in the City of Calgary on April 27, 2011.)

Calgary Humane Society Vision

A community in which all lives are respected and treated with compassion.

Calgary Humane Society Mission

To help as many animals as we can.

Calgary Humane Society Business Planning Goals

- To reduce the number of unwanted companion animals in Calgary and surrounding areas.
- To increase adoptability and find suitable homes for as many companion animals as possible that come into our open admission facility.
- To provide a healthy, clean, loving environment for sheltered animals for the duration of their stay.
- To develop and promote outreach programs that support responsible pet ownership and address animal welfare, protection and safety issues.
- To secure and maintain the resources needed to implement and sustain CHS programs directed towards helping as many animals as we can.
- To take a leadership role in collaborating with and encouraging collaboration among like-minded groups.

The Calgary Humane Society is an animal welfare organization, which means the Society recognizes that the use of animals for human purposes is legal, and that animals so used must be treated humanely. The phrase “animal welfare” refers to an animal's quality of life, and this is affected by their physical health and the feelings they experience.

Animals experience good welfare when they are able to experience positive feelings (arising from pleasurable activities and the fulfillment of their behavioural and social needs), and when they are free from poor physical health and negative feelings (such as pain, discomfort, hunger, thirst, fear, and frustration). Animals that are largely healthy, pain-free, comfortable, and unstressed are generally said to have good welfare.

Good animal welfare is widely thought to be achieved if animals are provided with the internationally recognized “Five Freedoms,” described first by the Farm Animal Welfare Council of the UK:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from discomfort
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease
4. Freedom from distress
5. Freedom to express natural behaviours that promote its well-being

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